

animals are good for us
be good to them

we care



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friends for life: How pets keep older people healthy and active

*“Animals give us daily companionship and support.
We care for them”*

Brussels, 25 February 2013 – As part of the Europe 2020 Initiatives the EU is promoting innovative partnerships on active and healthy ageing. With scientific evidence now proving that keeping animals makes you healthier IFAH-Europe is launching a new campaign promoting the benefits of pets for the elderly.

The campaign aims to highlight the various ways in which animals not only bring companionship and pleasure but many other benefits to those in a later stage of life. It will run via a Facebook page entitled [We Care](#) and will be supported with more in-depth information on how to care for pets available from the IFAH-Europe website. Continuing with the motto “Animals are good for us, be good to them. We care”, the campaign kicks off with an invitation to share short videos showing how older people enjoy life with their pet and giving a brief statement on what their pet means to them and how they care for them. Young people can encourage their parents/grandparents to participate and post the video on our Facebook page.

The initiative was presented at [European Pet Night](#) on 20 February 2013 where a wide range of stakeholders and EU decision-makers met to discuss the benefits of pets and responsible pet ownership. As demonstrated at the event by Activ'dog, a Belgian charity providing training for and organising pet-assisted therapy and activities, the presence of a cat or a dog at a nursing home brings joy into what can become a routine way of life and helps stimulate both physical activity and social interaction.

Research has shown that stroking dogs and cats can lower your blood pressure and heart rate helping people to live longer. Taking your dog for regular walks or playing with your cat not only keeps them healthy and active but it provides us with a daily exercise routine. Studies indicate that pet owners require fewer visits to the doctor. The health and social benefits are clear with doctors in some cases even prescribing the adoption of a pet to combat depression, loneliness, inactivity, neurosis and stress.

Our favourite videos will be linked to our [European Pet Night YouTube](#) channel and may be used for future video material for use at trade fairs, conferences and exhibitions on companion animals.



Videos can be posted directly to the **We Care** Facebook page - www.facebook.com/WeCare_petsEurope - where full details on the campaign can be found.

- Ends -

NOTE TO EDITORS:



IFAH-Europe is the representative body of manufacturers of veterinary medicines, vaccines and other animal health products in Europe. It promotes a single market in veterinary medicines across the EU ensuring the availability of medicines to protect the health and welfare of animals. For further information on IFAH-Europe, please visit www.ifaheurope.org

Visit our We Care Facebook page to find out more on the campaign:
<http://www.facebook.com/pages/WeCare.petsEurope>

Visit IFAH-Europe's website section on companion animal health:
<http://www.ifaheurope.org/CommonTP.aspx?SubMenuId=58&MenuId=17>

Watch our event videos on the European Pet Night YouTube channel:
www.youtube.com/europeanpetnight

European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing:
http://ec.europa.eu/research/innovation-union/index_en.cfm?section=active-healthy-ageing