

Nonprofits Fund Dog Flu Research

Researchers will study how dog flu is transmitted and how to monitor the disease.

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Morris Animal Foundation and the American Veterinary Medical Foundation are partnering to fund research into avian and canine influenza viruses. The research will look at disease transmission and how to monitor and contain the viruses.

“Canine and avian influenza viruses are serious infectious diseases that affect animals and people. Understanding the spread of these viruses and how they can jump species is critical,” Morris Animal Foundation President and CEO Patricia Olson, DVM, Ph.D., said.

“The role of veterinarians serving as public health professionals bridges the gap between human and animal health,” said Anna van Heeckeren, DVM, chair of the AVMF grants/awards committee.

“Understanding influenza virus infections in dogs and birds will help us prepare for a potential pandemic affecting both animals and humans, so it makes sense for the AVMF to fund these kinds of studies,” said Heeckeren.

The dog flu study will determine the prevalence of influenza virus infections in shelters and identify the factors associated with its introduction and spread, said the study’s lead researcher, Cynda Crawford, DVM, Ph.D., of the University of Florida.

“We hope to develop effective guidelines for managing respiratory infections,” Crawford said.