

Factors affecting time to adoption for dogs rehomed by a charity in the UK.

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The objective of this retrospective cohort study was to determine the factors affecting the time until adoption of dogs rehomed by the Dogs Trust. The Dogs Trust is the largest dog welfare charity in the UK, rehoming over 10000 dogs in 2004. There were 13338 records included in the study, representing 11663 dogs. Data were extracted from the Dogs Trust database for the period February 2001 to June 2004 including all rehoming centres in the UK which were using the database system during this time period. A survival analysis was conducted using Kaplan Meier plots and multivariable Cox regression. The results of the study showed that the median 'survival time' for all dogs was 28 days (95% CI 28 – 29 days). The variables which affected the time till adoption were breed, purebred status, size, sex, neuter status on arrival at a centre, age, coat colour, veterinary history and rehoming centre. A potentially important variable, temperament, had to be excluded from the multivariable analysis due to a large number of missing values. The results indicate that small-sized, female, purebred dogs from the gundog breed group, aged less than 1 year and only needing routine veterinary treatment whilst in kennels were rehomed at the fastest rate.