



Zorgbeest

3. Introducing a new cat into the care facility and AAI-program

- When a new AAI-cat arrives at the facility, he or she not only has to get used to his or her new role as AAI-cat, but also needs to adjust to the new environment, the unfamiliar cats and the caregivers in the facility.
- Let the cat gradually grow accustomed to the new surroundings and caregivers and evaluate if this is proceeding well. Afterwards you introduce the new cat to the other cats.
- The new cat must be introduced gradually to the resident cat group:
 - Provide three rooms: an AAI-room, a resting area for the cat group and a separate room for the new cat.
 - For several days the new cat remains in the separate room without visual contact with the cat group.
 - Introduce the scent of the new cat in the resident cat group by giving them a cloth with the smell of the new cat (e.g. bedding material..). This action should be accompanied by something positive, such as food.
 - Let the cats gradually grow accustomed to each other by visual contact (e.g. glass door).
 - Afterwards you introduce the new cat progressively into the cat group.
 - A successful introduction of a new cat includes evaluation of stress behaviour of the cats at every step.
- A test period is more than recommended, for some individuals the adaptation process might only take a few days or weeks, whereas others may never be able to adapt. In these cases the new cat should be accommodated elsewhere.
- Provide sufficient escape routes and hiding space (number of cats +2).