

PETS AS THERAPY

General Guidelines on Conducting a Pets As Therapy Visit

- Please wear your photo ID badge and ensure that your PAT Dog or PAT Cat has their ID tag attached to their collar
- **ONLY a PAT Dog or PAT Cat which is registered to the volunteer with Pets As Therapy may be taken on a visit or to an event.** Should any unregistered dog or cat be used, the insurance will be invalid for the unregistered animal and volunteer team
- For reasons of safety:
- You should **only handle ONE PAT Dog or PAT Cat which you MUST be the owner of.** This is to ensure that you have full control of your dog should an emergency situation arise
- Please arrive promptly for your visits, dressed in comfortable, neat, appropriate, identifiable attire
- If for some reason you will be late or have to reschedule your visit, be sure to call the establishment as far ahead as possible
- With small PAT Dogs and PAT Cats it may be possible to sit on a chair next to the recipient so that they can stroke the animal. If this is not possible then you may **with the permission of the establishment** place the animal on the patient's/resident's lap or bed. If you do this you should:
 - Make sure the nails are kept short and smooth
 - Ask a member of the establishment's staff to place a cushion/thick blanket on the resident/client's lap
 - Place the animal gently on the bed and do not allow them to jump onto the bed
- Please make sure your PAT Dog or PAT Cat does not jump up or offer a paw on visits. Some people who we visit are elderly and very frail with paper-thin skin
- Please keep **your PAT Dog or PAT Cat on a lead which MUST be held by you at all times.** No long training leads, flexi-leads, extendable leads, slip-leads, head-collars, check chains or restraining harnesses are allowed
- You may only visit an establishment with **ONE PAT Dog or PAT Cat per visit** even if you have more than one animal registered

General Guidelines on Conducting a Pets As Therapy Visit Continued:

- If an establishment ask you to take in any other pets, which are not registered with the Charity, written permission must be obtained from the establishment stating that they understand that the pets are not official Pets As Therapy visitors and therefore they understand they are not covered by Pets As Therapy's insurance or requirements
- You must always be accompanied by a member of staff when on visits to patients in mental health units, with vulnerable adults or children, (see Volunteer's Handbook for further details)
- Please do not use official Pets As Therapy visits as time for training and socialising puppies, kittens or other dogs or cats. This increases the risk to patients and staff and is unfair on the animals
- If you are working with phobic adults or children, involved in stroke rehabilitation work, special needs schools or READ 2 DOGS, please request a copy of the guidelines, (see Volunteer's Handbook for further details)
- Dogs or cats should not be allowed to enter food preparation areas. It may be useful to find out what times food is served to avoid visiting at these times if at all possible
- Don't let your pet pick up anything from the floor - it may be a dropped pill or something else hazardous to his or her health
- Please do not directly accept any donations to the Charity during your visits. These should be sent directly to the Pets As Therapy Head Office

Incidents Whilst on Pets As Therapy Visits or Events

Whilst an extremely rare occurrence, it is very important that even the smallest unfortunate event is recorded at the time. Please use the incident report form in your handbook, keeping a copy for yourself and sending one to the Head Office with any added comments. This is a safeguard for you, your companion animal and Pets As Therapy.

Stopping Pets As Therapy Visits

If the establishment asks you to stop your visit, or a programme of visits, please do so immediately and without question and please let us know. If you need to stop visiting, again, please let us know so that we can keep our records up to date.

For further information please contact the Pets As Therapy Head Office, Tel: 01865 671440
Email reception@petsastherapy.org or visit www.petsastherapy.org

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