

HOW TO REQUEST A PET THERAPY VISIT.

HHHC Staff: Use the standard Volunteer Request Form to make a referral for pet therapy visits. This form is available in both the Nashua and Merrimack offices. Mark "pet therapy" as the goal of the visit. If this is a home-based client visit, it is important that you note if there are children or any other animals in the house, and if the patient or family has any related allergies.

HHHC Patient or Family Member: Simply tell any one of the HHHC staff or volunteers that you are interested in a pet therapy visit and we'll put you on our schedule as soon as possible.



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON HHHC'S
PET THERAPY PROGRAM,
PLEASE CONTACT:

Tanya Prather
HHHC Patient Care Volunteer Coordinator
424-3822
volunteer@hhhc.org

"Working Together
to Promote the
Human-Animal
Health Connection"

Home Health & Hospice Care
www.hhhc.org

Delta Society®
www.deltasociety.org

Leash on Life of Southern New Hampshire



the pet therapy program of
HOME HEALTH & HOSPICE CARE
and an affiliate of
DELTA SOCIETY®



WHAT IS "PET THERAPY"?

Pet therapy is the use of pets (usually dogs and cats) as agents of healing and/or comfort for humans. It is not a new concept. Interest in the therapeutic possibilities of the human-pet connection reach back to the early 20th century. However, it wasn't until the 1960s that pet therapy began to be considered seriously.

PET THERAPY...

- ◆ Relieves stress
- ◆ Provides a conversational "ice breaker"
- ◆ Lowers blood pressure
- ◆ Lowers cholesterol
- ◆ Evokes good memories
- ◆ Encourages socialization
- ◆ Offers entertainment
- ◆ Provides mental stimulation
- ◆ Offers warmth, nurturing, and empathy

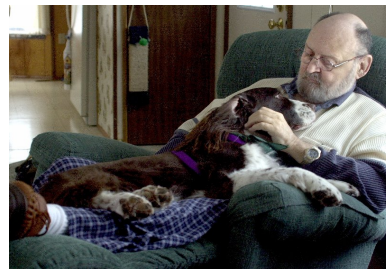
HOW DOES HOME HEALTH & HOSPICE CARE USE PET THERAPY?

The first pet therapy dog at HHC was "Mitch", an English Springer Spaniel. Mitch began visiting at the Community Hospice House in July 2001. Today our many pet therapy teams, both canine and feline, visit not only the Community Hospice House but they also visit:

- ◆ in patient's homes
- ◆ in nursing homes
- ◆ during children's bereavement activities
- ◆ as part of fund raising and public relations activities

OUR ROSTER OF FURRY FRIENDS.

Since its inception in 2001, our program has grown by leaps and bounds (and tail wags and purrs). Our canine therapy pets now range from a less-than-ten-pound peppy Pomeranian to a 100 +pound Leonburger with lots of breeds and sizes in between.



TWO'S COMPANY...THREE'S BETTER!

Whereas many pet therapy teams consist of the pet and the owner/handler, we do it a little differently at HHC. Because we sometimes visit in more complex situations, we have added what we call a "co-partner" to our pet therapy teams. The owner/handler focuses on creating a successful interaction between the animal and the person being visited. Meanwhile the co-partner can monitor and manage the overall environment, which may include family members and friends. We have found this approach to be very effective.

OUR PET THERAPY TEAMS ARE TRAINED AND REGISTERED.

- ◆ Therapy pet handlers/owners and team co-partners must complete a 30-hour Home Health & Hospice Care Volunteer Training course.
- ◆ Pet handlers must complete a Delta Society Pet Partners® Team Training course.
- ◆ Pet handlers and their animals must be tested/registered every two years by passing the Delta Society Pet Partners Skills Test and Pet Partners Aptitude Test.

A FEW WORDS ABOUT DELTA SOCIETY.

Home Health and Hospice Care is proud that our pet therapy program, Leash on Life of Southern New Hampshire, is a Delta Society Pet Partners affiliate. Delta Society has been the force to validate the important role of animals for people's health and well-being. They are a leading international resource for the human-animal bond.

AND LASTLY...

Although we are all volunteers, our pet therapy visits are serious work that require a commitment to the program and personal time. More importantly, our work is both fun and extremely fulfilling. We are ever mindful that our therapy pets must be happy doing their "work", too! It would be unfair to accept anything less.