Volunteer Services Position Description

Title: Pet Therapy
Position Reports to: Assigned Department
Location: Sparrow & St. Lawrence Campus
Age of Population Served: ALL

General Purpose: Sparrow offers visits with certified therapy dogs for patients, Caregivers and guests. Our pet therapy dogs are accompanied by their owner and both the dog and owner/handler must be approved by Volunteer Services. We consider therapy dogs for our program who are registered through Therapy Dogs International (TDI) and Sparrow conducts additional assessments to ensure the dog and handler are a good fit for a healthcare setting. Our placements with patients include Hospice, Pediatrics, Trauma Services and general patient care areas where a pet therapy visit has been requested. We also have areas that our Pet Therapy dogs visit such as family lounges, offices and other areas as requested.

Essential Duties:
This description is intended to cover the minimum essential duties assigned on a regular basis. Volunteers may be asked to perform additional duties by their department.

• Pet Therapy volunteers will visit patients, family members, visitors and Caregivers to help ease anxiety, reduce stress in a variety of settings including patient rooms, family lounges and in work areas.

Required Responsibilities of the Volunteer:
• Handler will wear a light blue smock or golf shirt with the volunteer logo with dress pants and closed-toe shoes. The dog and the handler must wear their Sparrow ID Badge while on duty. The dog will wear their Sparrow bandana.
• Dog must be certified by Therapy Dogs International (TDI). The dog and handler will be assessed by the Volunteer Services Department for final acceptance into the program.
• A dog must be a minimum of two (2) years of age and should be in the handler’s home for more than six months.
• The therapy team must successfully pass Sparrow’s training for pet therapy volunteers.
• Copy of annual TDI certification must be submitted in the Volunteer Office.
• The following health documentation is required:
  o Annual Veterinary check-up, current on rabies vaccination and core vaccinations including but not limited to distemper, hepatitis, adenovirus, and parvovirus.
  o Negative heartworm test and certification that the Therapy Dog is presently and routinely receiving preventative medication.
  o Sparrow Hospital maintains the right to require additional examinations/testing of the Therapy Dog, if it deems necessary, which is at the Handler’s expense before allowing the Therapy Dog entry or continuation in the Pet Therapy program.
• The handler must show proof that the dog is licensed.
• Therapy Dogs may not participate in the Pet Therapy Program for a minimum of one week after the resolution of the following: fleas, mites, ticks, ringworm, diarrhea, vomiting, abnormal sneezing or coughing, skin and soft tissue infections, skin lesions, eye or nose discharge, treatment for infection, or immunosuppressive therapy.
• The dogs cannot be fed a raw diet. In addition, raw treats such as rawhide treats or pig’s ears are not permitted.
• The dog must be clean and well-groomed, which means free of dirt, debris, visible dander and smell. The dog should be brushed the day of the visit to remove excess dander and hair. The nails need to be trimmed and filed to avoid scratching a person.
• The dog needs to wear a clean collar and leash. The dog needs to be on the leash and the handler should be holding the leash while on the hospital premises so that the handler is always in control of the pet.
  o The leash can only be between four-to-six feet in length.
  o The collar must be a nylon or leather with a buckle.
  o Choke chains, prong collars, snap collars, retractable leashes, or slip collars are not allowed.
• The handler will notify the Volunteer Office if there are any health or behavioral changes inside or outside of the hospital. If the dog develops a fearful response or has a change in health including a loss of hearing or sight that should be immediately reported to Volunteer Services.
• The handler will not accept any treats offered to the dog.
• The handler will not allow the dog to jump, bark or lick surfaces while volunteering.
• Volunteer a minimum of 20 hours annually after the initial year.
• Pay Annual membership dues of $1.00 to the Sparrow Women’s Hospital Association.
• Demonstrate knowledge and maintain respect for patient’s right to privacy by following the HIPAA Privacy and Security policies and procedures.
• Adheres to ICARE values and standards of behavior (Innovation, Compassion, Accountability, Respect, Excellence) and Sparrow Volunteer Promise.
• Role model behaviors that value diversity of our patients, volunteers, associates, and customers and supports creating an environment that is inclusive, welcoming and respectful.
• Communicates with patients, families and customers using AIDET (Acknowledge, Introduce, Durations, Explanation, Thank).
• Works in a safe manner and promptly reports any hazards identified in the work environment or related to assigned responsibilities.
• Observe hand washing protocols.
• Obtain an annual flu vaccine.
• If the team is assigned to Women & Children’s Services, the volunteer must provide proof of immunity to the Mumps, Measles, and Rubella.
Physical Aspects of this position:
This position requires sitting, standing, walking and moving around the hospital facility.

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<th>Occasionally</th>
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Work Environment:
The Pet Therapy Volunteers are assigned to various departments. The position may involve going into patient rooms and maneuvering through the facility.

Last updated 08/13, 9/11, 8/07, 4/16, 11/19