



County of Lehigh Cedarbrook Nursing Homes

Policy:

Issued By: Administration, Therapeutic Recreation
Offices Affected: All
Issue Date: April 2003
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I. POLICY

Cedarbrook Nursing Homes provides pet therapy through a multifaceted approach including Pet Facilitated Therapy, Companion Visits, and Residential Pets. Pets will be carefully selected to meet the individual needs for the residents involved in the pet therapy program.

Pet Facilitated Therapy is provided for the residents of Cedarbrook Nursing Homes through structured and supervised pet visits. The animals/pets are scheduled through a variety of resources such as but not limited to Lehigh Valley Zoo, Pleasure of Your Company Therapy Dogs Inc., Therapy Dogs International, 4-H Clubs, local farms, and local kennels.

Companion pet visits with resident's, family's, volunteer's and staff's pets are unstructured visits which occur during visiting hours once the pet has been registered with the Therapeutic Recreation Department.

Residential pets are those pets residing at Cedarbrook Nursing Homes through two or more calendar days.

All pet therapy/programs are implemented with the approval of Administration within the Pennsylvania Long Term Care Facilities Licensure Regulations.

II. PURPOSE

- A. To enhance residents' quality of life through physical, emotional, and social stimulation and contact with pets.
- B. To meet specific individualized therapeutic resident goals.
- C. To assure that the health, safety and well being of the residents, staff, visitor, and volunteers are maintained when animals are present.
- D. To provide leisure education by increasing resident and staff's knowledge of animal habitat, needs, care and feeding.

- E. To guide staff in the selection, care, health, and safety of the animals.

III. INCLUSION

All residents may be included with the following exceptions:

- A. Residents who express or show fear of animals
- B. Residents with conflicting health diagnosis
- C. Residents who do not wish to participate

IV. GENERAL POLICY REQUIREMENTS FOR THERAPY PETS, COMPANION PETS AND RESIDENTIAL PETS:

- Pets are not permitted in the kitchen, food service areas or dining rooms simultaneously with the preparation or serving of food.
- Pets are not permitted in utility rooms, linen storage areas, drug preparation areas, sterile and clean supply rooms, or areas where soiled or contaminated materials are stored.
- Any resident or staff participation in the visitation or care of a pet do so voluntarily.
- Pets are not permitted in rooms of residents who do not want pets in their room.
- The introduction of pets will not pose a threat or nuisance to the residents, staff, or visitors because of size, color, odor, sound, disposition, or behavioral characteristics. Aggressive or unprovoked threatening behavior will mandate the pet's immediate removal.
- Pets must be with their owners at all times.
- Pets must wear a leash or be in a cage/tank at all times and additionally be controlled by verbal commands.
- Pets that require a license must wear an identification tag on the collar, choker, or harness.
- Domestic pets on a leash must be housebroken if more than four months old.
- Pets found to be infested during the visit with external parasites (ticks, fleas, or lice) or which appear sick, vomit, or have diarrhea must be removed from the premises to be examined by their veterinarian.
- Wild animals such as turtles, reptiles, and carnivorous birds are not permitted in the facility unless they have been cared and treated in the home as a pet with yearly examination.
- Pet accidents will be cleaned up in accordance with infection control policies and procedure. See Policy: Infection Control

- Pets must be determined not to be in estrus (in heat) or show signs of inappropriate sexual behavior.
- The owner shall be liable and responsible for the animal's behavior and activities.
- In the event that a resident is injured (scratched, clawed, bitten) by an animal, nursing staff must be notified to examine the injury and complete an incident report. See Policy: Animal Bites
- Pets which do not conform to the requirements will not be permitted to visit at the Cedarbrook Nursing Homes.

V. COMPANION PET VISITS:

A. POLICY

It is the policy of Cedarbrook Nursing Homes to encourage and allow individual pet owners to bring their pets to the facility for the residents' enjoyment. The pet shall have all necessary health certificates including current rabies shots as customary for their species.

B. PROCEDURE:

1. One Time Visit

- a. The owner and the pet will report to the Therapeutic Recreation (TR) office to inform TR staff of the resident they wish to visit.
- b. TR staff will check that the pet is clean and of gentle temperament.
- c. TR staff will give the owner general guidelines for the one day visit.

2. Regular Visits

- a. All owners who intend to bring their companion pet for regular visits must register their pet.
- b. Pet Registration must be completed through the Therapeutic Recreation Department. FOUNTAIN HILL: In the event that a TR staff member is unavailable, the receptionist will follow the procedure. If the receptionist has any question regarding the cleanliness and temperament of the pet, they are to check with the nursing supervisor.
- c. Owners should call the Cedarbrook-Allentown Therapeutic Recreation (TR) Department at 610-336-5681 or the Cedarbrook-Fountain Hill Therapeutic Recreation Department at 484-895-2354 to schedule an appointment to register their pet or stop during office hours. At Fountain Hill, the pet owner should report to the receptionist who will notify the TR Department.

DURING THE APPOINTMENT:

- The TR staff member will check the pet for cleanliness and gentle temperament. The pet must be well groomed, free of odor, free of parasites, obedient, and enjoy people.
- Domestic pets such as cats and dogs will need proof of:
 - License
 - Animal Health Record
 - Documentation of inoculation in accordance with state regulations
- Companion dogs or cats shall be housebroken if more than four months old.
- Companion pets which do not conform to the requirements will not be permitted to visit at the Cedarbrook Nursing Homes.
- TR staff or pet owner will fill out the Pet Therapy Application (attachment #1) reviewing all the information required.
- Pet owner will sign waiver form (attachment #2).
- Upon approval, the pet owner will receive a copy of the Pet Policy and Procedure and a yellow registration card. The card should be kept in the owner's possession when bringing their pet into the facility.
- A copy of all registration forms will be kept on file in the Therapeutic Recreation office.

DURING VISITATION:

- The pet owner will report to the department or nursing unit supervisor at the time of arrival to determine if any residents, employees, volunteers are afraid or allergic to pets.
- Residents should only be allowed to handle or be in contact with the animal while supervised.
- In the event that any resident is injured (scratched, clawed, bitten) by the animal, the attending nurse must be notified to

YEARLY:

- Companion pet owners are required to bring a copy of their yearly veterinarian health statement in order to renew their pet registration.