



# PET ASSISTED THERAPY

## **Kosciusko Leadership Academy Class of 2018**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this white paper is to introduce the opportunity available for bringing Share-A-Pet, a nationally recognized Pet Assisted Therapy (PAT) to Kosciusko County. Share-A-Pet was founded in 2003 in Fort Lauderdale, FL and properly prepares an owner and dog how to become a certified PAT team through testing, hands-on training and placement support.

Pet Assisted Therapy has gain popularity within the U.S. and in many countries worldwide due to the continuous research finding dogs' unconditional love can reduce stress, loneliness and anxiety and improve a person's physical well-being through activity. PAT is used within multiple types of facilities and by many organizations. PAT can be seen in hospitals, short-term care centers (cancer treatment facilities, behavioral treatment facilities), long-term care facilities (assisted living, nursing homes, group homes for the disabled), schools (primary and college), children's centers, court rooms, funeral homes, and many other places. Within Kosciusko County alone, there are two major hospitals, approximately a dozen facilities providing short or long-term care, and several schools and colleges. All could benefit by having a PAT program available within their facility.

A few local facilities have owners and their dogs visiting their facility; however, after researching the availability of therapy dog certification organizations, it became apparent there are none available within a 100-mile radius of Kosciusko County recognized by the AKC. Several local dog trainers will prepare dogs for therapy work by using the AKC Canine Good Citizen (CGC) test requirements along with additional obedience commands, but none offer support beyond the training (American Kennel Club).

Because of Erica's prior association with Share-A-Pet when she lived in Fort Lauderdale, FL, she saw the time was right to start a chapter of Share-A-Pet in Kosciusko County. Share-A-Pet oversees and assists PAT team members in every aspect of the volunteering process – from completing the certification process to providing liability insurance to establishing them in a facility and serving as their liaison. Since Share-A-Pet is an established Pet Assisted Therapy organization, they already have available all the necessary backend support including, procedures for conducting orientation meetings, testing and placement, membership management, and marketing materials. Minimal requirements are needed to start a chapter locally. The goal is to launch the local Share-A-Pet chapter by Fall 2018.

## BACKGROUND

Between the years of 2009 and 2012, cadet Erica Elliott lived in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. During her years in Florida, she became involved with a non-profit organization Share-A-Pet (SAP) that provides Pet Assisted Therapy to facilities throughout the south Florida area, San Francisco and New York. Erica got involved with SAP so she could give her yellow Labrador Retriever, Merlin, a retired hunting dog, a job. Having owned dogs for most of her life, Erica was personally aware of the unconditional love a dog provided, but never connected how that love could help others in need until she contacted the founder, Sachin Mayi, and learned about Share-A-Pet. Merlin had an amazing demeanor, and she knew he would make a great therapy dog.



Share-A-Pet oversees and assists PAT team members in every aspect of the volunteering process – from completing the certification process to providing liability insurance to establishing them in a facility and serving as their liaison. There are a small number of trainers in the area who will train and certify a dog for pet therapy, but none of them offer the same support as Share-A-Pet.

Events happened in 2012 that led Erica to moving to Silver Lake, IN, and Merlin's health deteriorated to a point he was no longer able to provide pet therapy. Despite these events, Erica still maintained a friendship with the founder of SAP, Sachin, and his wife, Dr. Bindu Mayi over the past 6 years. Her hope was one day she'd have another dog become certified through the SAP program, and find a way to start a chapter of Share-A-Pet in Kosciusko County.

In 2014, Erica got a Goldendoodle puppy named Winston who she planned to train to become a therapy dog. When Winston was about a year and a half old, he got a chance to show Erica he had the right material to become a therapy dog when she took him to see her grandmother (Grammy) at Peabody care facility in North Manchester. One particular incident that she will never forget was the day her Grammy passed away. Erica had received a call from her mom saying Grammy was experience the 'death rattle', and the time was near so she'd better get up to Peabody. Erica debated on taking Winston with her since she knew having him there could provide comfort during this difficult time, but hesitated because she was afraid of how he might act and become a disruption. Ultimately, she decided to take him, and it was the best decision. He not only provided comfort to her and her mom,

dad and aunt, he also showed just how incredibly sensitive a dog could be. As Grammy took her last breath, Winston gently, without prompting from Erica, climbed onto Grammy's bed, walked slowly beside her and lay down next to her placing his head on her chest next to her chin. He stayed beside her while the family said their goodbyes. It was at that moment, Erica knew Winston had the right stuff to become a therapy dog.



## SITUATION

Today, our community is faced with several physical and mental health challenges that are on the rise due to an aging population and social changes. Many of the conditions can lead to depression, loneliness, boredom, helplessness, anxiety and stress.

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, nearly half of the population turning 65 today will develop a disability and need long-term services and support. Nineteen percent are expected to have needs that will last less than a year, and about fourteen percent are expected to have needs that extend beyond five years (Favreault and Dey). Twenty-six percent of people staying in a nursing home receive a visitor only one time a week, while another thirty-three percent receive a visitor only a few or no visits a month (Khatutsky G).

Other factors affecting a person's well-being can be due to a change in their situation. For example, many college students feel pressured during exams or over-whelmed when leaving home for the first time. Elementary students might struggle with learning how to read, and feel helpless. A child might experience being from a broken family and feel confused or unwanted. The loss of a loved one brings on emotions of sadness. All these feelings can lead to increased anxiety, stress and loneliness.

## SOLUTION

Studies have shown that an environment infused with the ability to love and be loved alleviates loneliness, helplessness and boredom. Positively transforming organizations such as hospitals, nursing homes, care centers, children's centers and schools begin with filling them with love. When patients

have access to the unconditional love of therapy dogs, they not only benefit physically, but mentally and emotionally as well.

There have been dozens of studies conducted that have shown the positive impact PAT can have on individuals and improve their quality of life. Those benefits can be:

- Relieves loneliness, helplessness and boredom
- Reduces anxiety symptoms
- Promotes loving interaction
- Lowers blood pressure
- Reduces the need for medications
- Provides companionship
- Encourages physical activity
- Inspires life and living
- Prolongs and improves life

### ***COMMUNITY NEED AND SUPPORT***

Within Kosciusko County, there are a myriad of organizations servicing the necessities of those with disabilities, short and long-term care needs, and child/youth development. In summary, there are two major hospitals, approximately a dozen facilities providing short or long-term care, and several schools and colleges in the area. Appendix B provides a list of the facilities within the county.

The KLA cadets developed a survey to assess the level of interest local facilities would have in possibly offering Pet Assisted Therapy to their residents, patients, employees, or students. Eleven organizations responded to the survey, and 10 out of the 11 respondents expressed interested in learning more about PAT and how it could possibly be an added service within their facility. When asked during the survey, "Please provide any additional input you feel might help in assessing your interest in Pet Assisted Therapy," one respondent went so far as to say, "*We would love to see this offered in Kosciusko County. Having a trained therapy pet occasionally available for our children's treatments would be very motivating for them. Pets can also have a positive calming effect for some of our children with special needs. Thank you for exploring this possibility!*" Another respondent even said they would be interested in having their own dog certified.

After researching the availability of therapy dog certification organizations, it became apparent there were none available within a 100-mile radius of Kosciusko County recognized by the AKC. Several local dog trainers will prepare dogs for therapy work by using the AKC Canine Good Citizen (CGC) test

requirements along with additional obedience commands, but none offer support beyond the training (American Kennel Club).

Through KLA, recognizing a need within our community and Erica's experience with pet therapy, the team saw an opportunity to begin the steps of starting a chapter of Share-A-Pet in Kosciusko County.

### **SHARE-A-PET**

Share-A-Pet Pet-Assisted Therapy offers patients an unconditionally loving environment. Share-A-Pet is one of only a few nationally recognized Pet Therapy organizations. Unlike many others though, they offer certification and insurance for people and their therapy animals to provide pet-assisted therapy in hospitals, short and long-term care facilities, treatment centers, children's centers and schools

## **ABOUT SHARE-A-PET**

*Share-A-Pet began in December of 2003 as a man and his dog with a mission. Founder Sachin Mayi and his loving yellow lab, Tenzin, wanted to share their love with those in need. They were graciously received by the Broward Children's Center in Ft. Lauderdale, FL, where Tenzin was able to get responses from children who were not responding to other therapies. They were so amazed to see these miracles with the children that they decided to contact other facilities and see how they could benefit them as well.*

*Everywhere they went they found that there was a great need for pet-assisted therapy. Many facilities had been on waiting lists for pets for as long as two years. Sachin and Tenzin went to work, and within a short time they had established a rapport with several care facilities. Once they saw the effect they were having on the wonderful people in these facilities, they couldn't resist going to visit them and decided to dedicate their lives to serving those in need by offering pet-assisted therapy to as many facilities as they could.*

*This dedication and its positive, loving effects caught the attention of the press and others interested in participating in the program in January of 2005. Since then Share-A-Pet has registered close to 1,000 highly qualified volunteers, pet assisted therapy teams and leaders across the nation who dedicates their time to serving those in need. The program has expanded to include children's centers and nursing homes, but also hospitals, cancer centers, and schools with our "Pawsitive Reading" Program. SOURCE: [www.shareapet.org](http://www.shareapet.org)*

## **IMPLEMENTATION AND SUPPORT**

Since Share-A-Pet is an established Pet Assisted Therapy, they already have available all the necessary backend support including, procedures for conducting orientation meetings, testing and placement, membership management, and marketing materials. The following would be needed in order to start a chapter locally:

- ✓ A local program director
- ✓ A dog friendly facility to host orientation meetings and testing
- ✓ Facilities willing to partner with Share-A-Pet for Pet Assisted Therapy
- ✓ Dog Trainers willing to train to the requirements of the Therapy Obedience Professional (TOP) test
- ✓ TOP Testers to conduct the testing locally
- ✓ Local volunteers to help and dog owners willing to have their dog become certified
- Funds to promote the program

Fortunately, because of the demand for a service like Share-A-Pet in our community, many of the above items have already been addressed. Those items with a checkmark next to them are ones the team has already been able to secure or at least have preliminary verbal agreements in place. However, the most critical element still needed is financial support to generate awareness for the program.

The \$1,000 Northerner Award would provide the initial funding to help the team start the chapter of Share-A-Pet in Kosciusko County by generating awareness for the program. While the marketing materials have been created by the main organization, there is still cost in localizing and printing them.



## **APPENDICES**

Appendix A: Sources

Appendix B: Kosciusko County Facilities Who Could Benefit from PAT

Appendix C: Certification Process

Appendix D: Therapy Obedience Professional (TOP) Testing Requirements

Appendix E: PAT Volunteer Program Progression Checklist

Appendix F: PAT Guidelines

## APPENDIX A: WORKS CITED

American Kennel Club. American Kennel Club. 18 March 2018 <[www.akc.org/sports/title-recognition-program/therapy-dog-program/therapy-dog-organizations](http://www.akc.org/sports/title-recognition-program/therapy-dog-program/therapy-dog-organizations) >.

Favreault, Melissa and Judith Dey. Long-Term Services And Supports For Older Americans: Risks And Financing Research Brief. 1 July 2015. 18 March 2018 <<https://aspe.hhs.gov/basic-report/long-term-services-and-supports-older-americans-risks-and-financing-research-brief>>.

Khatutsky G, Ormond C, Wiener JM, Greene AM, Johnson R, Jessup EA, Vreeland E, Sengupta M, Caffrey C, Harris-Kojetin L. Residential care communities and their residents in 2010: A national portrait. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics, 2016.

## APPENDIX B: LOCAL FACILITIES

### Hospitals

- Kosciusko Comm Hospital 2101 Dubois Drive, Warsaw, IN 46580 574-267-3200
- Parkview Warsaw, 1355 Mariners Drive, Warsaw, IN 46582 574-372-0000

### Senior Care

- Kosciusko County Council on Aging/Kosc Comm Senior Services, 800 North Park Avenue, Warsaw, IN 46580, 574-267-2012
- Grace Village Retirement Community, 337 Grace Village Drive, Winona Lake, IN 46590 574-372-6200
- Miller's Senior Living Community, 1634 S County Farm Road, Warsaw, IN 46580 574-267-5292
- Courts of Colfax-Retirement Apartments, 600 N Colfax St. Warsaw, IN 46580 574-269-4334
- Warsaw Meadows Care, 300 E Prairie Street, Warsaw, IN 46580 574-267-8922
- Lake City Place, 425 Chinworth Court, Warsaw, IN 46580 574-207-4158
- Timbercrest Senior Living, 2201 East Street, North Manchester, IN 46962 260-982-2118
- Retired Tigers Seniors Apartments, 320 W Main Street, Warsaw, IN 46580 574-269-2187

### Care Facilities

- Seasons HomeCare, 1101 Husky Trail, Warsaw, IN 46582 574-268-9000
- Cardinal Services, 504 N Bay Drive, Warsaw, IN 46580

### Schools/Colleges

- Grace College Erica
- Ivy Tech
- Warsaw Community Schools, 1 Admin Drive, Warsaw, IN 46580 574-371-5098
- Tippy Valley Community Schools
- Wawasee Community Schools
- Warsaw Christian School 909 S Buffalo St, Warsaw, IN 46580 574-267-5788
- Lakeland Christian Academy 1093 S 250 E, Winona Lake, IN 46590 574-267-7265
- Sacred Heart School 135 N Harrison St, Warsaw, IN 46580 574-267-5874

### Pre-Schools

- Presby Preschool, 210 S High Street, Warsaw, IN 46580 574-267-4034
- Greater Warsaw Cooperative Preschool, 2032 S 150 W, Warsaw, IN 46580 574-267-7300
- Head Start, 811 S Buffalo St, Warsaw, IN 46580 574-267-2451
- TNT Childcare & Preschool Ministry, 1515 Provident Drive. Warsaw, IN 46580
- Kiddie Kollege, 902 College Avenue, Winona Lake, IN 46590

### Other Facilities

- Baker Youth Club
- Kosciusko Community YMCA
- Joe's Kids
- CASA

## APPENDIX C: CERTIFICATION PROCESS

### Share-A-Pet Certification Process

- STEP 1:** Attend an Introductory Orientation meeting with your dog.  
All paid \*members will get up to 4 free training sessions, before they take the TOP test.
- STEP 2:** Take the TOP test.
- STEP 3:** Undergo a minimum of three trainings in a facility.
- *SHADOW ME (without your dog)*
  - *SHADOW YOU (with your dog)*
  - *FACILITY INTRODUCTION (with your dog)*

Once all trainings within a facility are completed, the member will be set up for regular visits to a facility of their choice. All members receive ongoing support from Share-A-Pet headquarters.

**COMMITMENT:** We ask that you commit at least 44 volunteer hours in a year, so the residents/patients/children you visit can truly benefit from the cumulative effects of your pet therapy visits.

\*Annual Membership (\$120) includes the following:

- 4 free training sessions
- 1 year certification as a pet therapy team
- \$1 million liability insurance coverage
- T-shirt
- Certified therapy dog tag
- Lanyard
- ID badge
- Therapy dog diploma
- Opportunities to get together with other volunteers through regular yappy hours, picnics, Easter event etc.

## APPENDIX D: TOPS TESTING



# Therapy Obedience Professional Dog Certification Requirements



### TOP-1 Polite greeting

This exercise demonstrates that the pet will allow a friendly stranger to approach and speak to the handler. The evaluator walks up to the dog and handler and greets the handler in a friendly manner, ignoring the dog. The evaluator and handler shake hands and exchange pleasantries. The dog must show no sign of resentment or shyness, and must not break position or try to go to the evaluator. **The dog must not jump or bark.**

### TOP-2 Petting

This exercise demonstrates that the dog will allow all types of petting. With the dog sitting or standing at the handler's side, the evaluator pets the dog on the head and body. The evaluator should engage in exuberant, sudden and clumsy petting. The handler may talk to his or her dog. The dog must not show shyness or resentment.

### TOP-3 Grooming and handling

This exercise demonstrates that the dog is well groomed with filed nails and parasite free and will welcome being groomed and examined. The evaluator inspects the dog to determine if it is clean and groomed. The dog must appear to be in healthy condition (i.e., proper weight, clean, healthy and alert). The evaluator examines the ears, picks up each front foot, hugs the dog, and gently tugs its tail. It is not necessary for the dog to hold a specific position during the examination, and the handler may talk to the dog, praise it and give encouragement throughout. The dog must not be uncomfortable being touched in any way. **The dog must not growl or bark.**

### TOP-4 Sit and down stay

This exercise demonstrates that the dog will respond to the handler's commands to sit and down and remain calmly in place. The handler may take a reasonable amount of time and use more than one command to get the dog to sit and then down. The evaluator must determine if the dog has responded to the handler's commands. The handler may not force the dog into position. When instructed by the evaluator, the dog should remain in each position for one minute.

### TOP-5 Walking on a Loose Lead

This exercise demonstrates that the handler is in control of the dog. The dog may be on either side of the handler. The dog's position should leave no doubt that the dog is attentive to the handler and is responding to the handler's movements and changes of direction. The dog need not be perfectly aligned with the handler and need not sit when the handler stops. The evaluator should instruct the handler to walk a course that includes a right turn, a left turn, and an about turn with at least one stop in between and another at the end. The handler may talk to the dog along the way, praise the dog, or give commands in a normal tone of voice. The handler may sit the dog at the halts if desired.

### TOP-6 Reaction to Another Dog

This exercise demonstrates that the dog can behave politely around other dogs. **The dog must not growl at the other dog(s).** Two handlers and their dogs approach each other from a distance of about 20 feet, stop, shake hands, and remain in place for 30 seconds. The dogs should show no more than casual interest in each other. Neither dog should jump on the other dog or its handler. Slight curiosity and sniffing are okay.

### TOP-7 Reaction to distraction

This exercise demonstrates that the dog is comfortable at all times when faced with common distracting situations in a nursing home or hospital. The evaluator will select and present two distractions. Distractions should include rolling a wheelchair or a walker towards the dog, dropping a crutch or cane, and creating loud noises. The dog may express natural

interest and curiosity and/or may appear slightly startled but should not panic, try to run away, show aggressiveness, or bark. The handler may talk to the dog and encourage or praise the dog throughout the exercise.

#### **TOP-8 Wheelchair petting**

This exercise demonstrates that the dog will remain in place when instructed to do so by the handler. The handler will walk the dog up to a person in a wheelchair. Large dogs need to sit next to the wheel chair during the exercise and small dogs (under 20 lbs) need to sit calmly on the lap of the person in the wheelchair. The handler should ask the dog to stay while being petted and then walk around the dog from one side to the other and behind the chair with the dog remaining in place the whole time. The handler may use encouragement to get the dog to stay. Handlers may choose to tell dogs to "stay" or "wait" or they may simply walk around, giving no instructions to the dog. The dog must not show resistance to petting or struggle to get away from the wheelchair. **The dog must not jump on the individual in the wheelchair.**

#### **TOP-9 Separation from owner**

This exercise demonstrates that the dog can maintain position and not react poorly when the owner walks further away. While a dog is being held on leash by another person, the handler will walk away for 1 minute in the room, approximately 20 ft. away, while maintaining loose eye contact. The handler can instruct the dog to stay as leaving. The dog should remain in position until the owner returns and not whine or show undue concern.

#### **TOP-10 Walking through a crowd with walkers and wheelchairs**

This exercise demonstrates that the dog can move about politely in pedestrian traffic and is under control in hospital and nursing home situations. The dog and handler walk around and pass close to several people (at least three). One of the three should be walking with a walker. The dog may show some interest in the strangers but should continue to walk calmly next to the handler without evidence of over-exuberance, shyness or resentment. The handler may talk to the dog and encourage or praise the dog throughout the test. The dog should not jump on people in the crowd or strain on the leash.

#### **TOP-11 Leave it**

This exercise demonstrates that the dog is trained to leave a high value item on the floor, such as a toy or food. The handler will be instructed by the evaluator to lead the dog to the item. The dog may show interest in the item but must not pick the item up, and should easily walk away from it. Handler should instruct the dog to 'leave it' when appropriate.

#### **TOP-12 Taking a Treat**

This exercise demonstrates that the dog is capable of taking a treat gently from the hand of someone. The dog must demonstrate control in taking a treat and should not take it with too much exuberance. The dog's teeth should not touch the person's hand.

#### **Equipment**

All tests must be performed on 4 or 6ft. non-retractable leash. Dogs should wear well-fitting buckle or slip collars made of leather or fabric. Special training collars such as pinch collars, head halters, etc. are not permitted in the TOP test. The owner/handler can bring the dog's brush or comb to the test as well as a few appropriate treats for their dog.

#### **Encouragement**


Owners/handlers may use praise and encouragement throughout the test. The owner may pet the dog between exercises. Food and treats are only permitted during the final test exercise. Use of toys, squeaky toys, etc. to get the dog to do something is not permitted.

#### **Failures – Dismissals - Exceptions**

Any dog that eliminates during testing must be marked failed. Any dog that growls, snaps, bite, attacks, or attempts to attack a person or another dog must be dismissed from the test. Any dog that fails to pass all twelve items, unless otherwise accepted, must also be marked failed.

If a dog fails two or less items on the test, they will be given an opportunity to pass these failed items whenever the tester is available. Dogs will have two chances to pass each item on the test during a test. Dogs that fail more than two items will be required to retake the entire test. Dogs may retake the test as many times as is necessary, but must pay for the test each time. © Share-A-Pet

### APPENDIX E: PAT VOLUNTEER PROGRAM PROGRESSION CHECKLIST



**“Pet Assisted Therapy – sharing love, improving lives”**

Volunteer’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Pet’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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**ORIENTATION MEETING** Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Presenter: \_\_\_\_\_

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**TOP TEST** Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Tester’s Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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**EVALUATIONS**

***I. SHADOW ME*** Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluator’s Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

***II. SHADOW YOU*** Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluator’s Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluator’s Notes (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer’s Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

*I have reviewed and understand the PAT Guidelines reviewed with me during the Facility Introduction.*

***III. FACILITY INTRODUCTION*** Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluator’s Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX F: PAT GUIDELINES

### Share-A-Pet Guidelines for Proper Pet-Assisted Therapy

1. **It is important that you be aware of and follow all the procedures requested of the facility. Some may require paperwork to be kept on file, and many require closed toe shoes. Some may require that a member of their staff accompany you on the visit. Always present yourself in a professional manner as you are a representative of Share-A-Pet.**
2. **Make sure your animal is clean, groomed and parasite free. Do not apply flea protections to the fur within three days of a visit (i.e. Advantage). If your dog is a shedder, please brush him/her before visiting the facility. And please carry a hand towel to wipe off any drool.**
3. Have an appropriate leash and collar and be dressed properly (Share-A-Pet shirt and ID vest/bandana). Do not use choke collars, prong collars or retractable leashes on the pets. You must wear your Share-A-Pet shirt and ID badge.
  - a. Most people you visit in the facilities are not of the era of cut off or short shorts or clothes like jeans with the pre-worn with holes look or bare midsections with belly button rings. We are there to make our residents happy as well as being a representation of the dignified organization that we are, so dress respectfully.
4. Allow your pet a chance to go to the bathroom prior to entering facility. (Clean up any mess inside and out).
5. Refrain from carrying purses during your pet-assisted therapy (PAT) visit. Carrying a purse is dangerous as it inevitably swings around when volunteers bend over for their dog, and could hit an unsuspecting patient. This is a huge potential liability for you and for the organization. Please leave your purse in the car trunk (IF safe to do so) or with an entrusted non-participating friend or family member. A fanny pack is a good solution, but "NO PURSES" are allowed during visits. Please be aware that Share-A-Pet is not responsible for any lost or stolen possessions during PAT. It is best if you don't leave your purse visible in your car or with the person at the front desk.
6. Announce yourself at the front desk or check-in area. Follow facility rules for visitors. That may mean obtaining a badge or sticker or signing into a book.
7. Keep pet close to you and monitored at all times. Even when engaged in conversation, have your pet in clear control 100% of the time. Monitor your pet so that he/she does not jump on anyone.
8. Show pet-positive reinforcement while performing pet-assisted therapy by praising.
9. Remember that we are the visitors at each facility and that facility staff RULE! When we near their workstation, always acknowledge the staff there with a polite hello or a pleasant greeting. Keep in mind that we are representatives of Share-A-Pet, and our manners reflect upon our organization.
10. Some of the staff may not be comfortable with your pet. Be aware and respect them with an appropriate distance of reassurance. Do not try to "help others get over their fears."
11. When facility staff are in the hallways, step aside and let them through without obstruction. Be attentive to their movements. Move on and out of their way.
12. When facility staff is attending patients/residents/students, please respect their privacy. Move on to the next room. If a curtain is drawn, do not enter.
13. When you approach people, please do so with proper care and announce yourself at the door. Some residents may enjoy seeing the pets but may not desire to pet or interact directly with them. When greeting people, use one of the following remarks or customize one that fits you, your pet and the people you are visiting: "Hello, do you want to pet Frankie today?" "Hello, do you want to pet the therapy pet today?" "Hello, do you want to say hi to the pet today?" "Hello, do you want to see the pet today?"
14. Be cognizant that some people are extremely fearful of animals. If they are not able to communicate with words, consistently survey the look in their eyes or their body language before approaching them. Many patients/residents cannot verbalize their feelings in a recognizable manner. Keep a polite distance, and maintain control of your pets until you are sure it is okay to approach.
15. Never force your pet upon patients/residents who are incoherent. They could possibly have allergies and cannot say so. They could possibly be in extreme fear, but they are not able to verbalize it. Move on.



16. Make sure your pet's nails are trimmed, so that "giving a paw" to a resident/patient will not result in a scratch or tear in the skin. Some volunteers prefer to put leather "booties" on their pets to prevent the possibility of scratches.
17. When you visit a hospital or a long-term care facility, be aware that germs from outside and from the floor can prove harmful to a patient/resident. Pets are not allowed to lie on the patient's bed or jump up. The facility staff may see this to be unacceptable and could possibly lead to you being asked to leave the facility.
18. Hold small pets up so residents can see and pet them.
19. Medium and large pets are encouraged to maintain "4 on the floor". You may stand behind your pet and raise their front paws up while holding them so the bedridden can greet or see your pet. If your pet is trained to stand up at the very edge of the bed rails (not the bed) **upon command**, this may be acceptable. This facilitates greeting by the bedridden patient who cannot see the pet on the floor. Always ask permission from the patient/resident before giving this command.
20. For our larger breed of therapy dogs who drool, please bring a towel to wipe off the drool before your dog interacts with the patient/resident/student.
21. When you are participating in a group visit, be conscientious about standing around a patient/resident as a group. It can be overwhelming to the patient/resident to have a crowd of people looming over their chair/bed.
22. Each pet-assisted therapy visit may vary in length depending on the pet, the facility need, and your need.
23. Be conscientious of your pet's needs and energy level. Do not force your pet to do pet-assisted therapy if they are resistant for any reason. If they become overly anxious or are having an off day, just leave and come back another day. It is OKAY. If your pet is overly anxious, growly or having an off day, it is OKAY to come back another day.
24. Refrain from using cellphones and wearing perfumes while performing pet-assisted therapy.
25. Refrain from smoking before and while performing pet-assisted therapy, so that our clothes do not smell of cigarette smoke. This is a **MUST SEE TO** item in any facility we may visit.
26. Do not attempt to assist the resident/patient/person with special needs by moving them or adjusting them in any way. Always summon a caregiver or nurse.
27. Do not make gifts of food as residents may have food restrictions that you may not be aware of.
28. Report any incident to the facility as well as to Share-A-Pet headquarters.
29. After a pet-assisted therapy visit, it is quite normal for your pet to sleep for a couple of hours. They are like sponges and have absorbed all of the emotions of those who they visited. We need to acknowledge that they have worked very hard. Please give them plenty of praise, and their favorite treats may be in order!
30. Be kind, courteous and loving at all times. The goal is for you, your pet and the people you are visiting to have fun. Be comfortable, be natural and enjoy!

#### **PROPER PET-ASSISTED THERAPY:**

- We arrive at the facility in our Share-A-Pet shirt, closed toe shoes and pet ID vest/bandana.
- We announce ourselves to the facility receptionist.
- We refrain from using strong smelling lotions/perfumes/colognes.
- We ensure that we and/or our clothes do not smell of cigarette smoke.
- We perform pet-assisted therapy according to the guidelines outlined above.