INTENT / PURPOSE

This policy ensures the safety and well-being of residents, patients, clients, volunteers, employees and physicians by providing guidance in the management of all animals brought as pets on to Fraser Health (FH) premises. Regular contact with a dog or similarly qualified animal has been determined to be of benefit physically, socially and/or emotionally to some individuals. This policy upholds Fraser Health’s values of respect, caring and trust. Service animals are exempt from this policy.

This policy applies equally to all individuals associated with Fraser Health including:

- Employees
- Patients
- Clients
- Residents
- Volunteers
- Physicians and medical staff
- Students
- Health Service providers
- Visitors to Fraser Health facilities

POLICY

Patients and visitors are not permitted to bring pets to a FH site, unless they are participating in the pet therapy or visitation program and have completed the required screening and registration.
Employees, volunteers and physicians are permitted to bring pets to work and participate in the pet therapy program if they have completed the required screening and certification registration. Visitation must take place on the employee’s or physician’s own time.

Prior to entering a FH facility, all pets (e.g. pet therapy teams, residing pets, family pets, etc.) will be screened and registered by:
- Volunteer Resources Department (VRD), or
- Site Administration, or
- Program Director/Manager or designate

Pet screening will ensure that the pet is:
- properly immunized (up to date vaccinations and whose owners can provide valid documentation)
- housebroken (care and clean-up of the animal is the sole responsibility of the owner)
- good tempered (animal owners are responsible for the behaviour of their animals)
- in good health, clean and well groomed (evidence of grooming within the previous 48 hours may be required ensure allergen mitigation)
- appropriate to visit (animals in season will not visit)

Patients/residents/clients/staff who have open wounds or burns should be protected from contact with animals.

Wild animals, farm animals, reptiles, turtles or stray animals are not permissible in FH facilities.

A visitor ID badge for all approved animals will be provided to allow others in FH facilities to identify approved animals. Animals will be transported in kennels or other suitable transportation mechanism, or otherwise on approval from the hospital site administration. This will ensure maximum reduction of allergens and unwanted interaction with animals. All handlers will sign in and out with VRD.
In the event a patient or staff member is allergic to or has a phobia about animals, the Hospital shall modify appropriate policies, practices and procedures to permit an animal to remain with a patient in an inpatient room; for example:

- The patient may be moved to another comparable room, and/or
- Modification of staff schedules, and/or
- Other nondiscriminatory methods, such that the presence of the animal does not pose a direct threat and is feasible within the context of the overall functioning of the unit, or hospital (e.g. in consideration of site congestion, infection control and outbreaks, etc.).

Any patient or staff member with an allergy to animals shall provide verification within a reasonable time frame of request.

**STANDARDS**

Healthcare Staff on units allowing animal visitation have the authority to remove animals from the units if they deem the animal is a risk to any patients.

The Animal Handler must maintain control of the animal and provide food and water, washroom breaks as necessary while the animal is in a FH facility.

The Animal Handler is responsible to immediately remove the animal from the facility if the animal becomes out of control.

For pets kept in Residential Care Facilities please see Pets Residing in Residential Care Clinical Protocol
Pet Therapy Animals/Teams

Participation of Pet Therapy Teams in FH Clinical Programs must have prior written approval of the Program Director.

All Pet Therapy Teams must be screened and registered with VRD or Site Administration prior to visiting.

All handlers must be members in good standing with St. John Ambulance Therapy Dog Program, Pets and Friends, or other recognized program and be able to provide valid documentation.

All animals will be examined at least annually by a registered veterinarian - documentation will be provided (to VRD or Site Administration) to ensure maintained good health and current vaccinations.

Pets will be prohibited from entering food preparation and serving areas and will be restricted from shared dining room space while residents/patients or clients are eating.

Each site will provide a list of areas where Pet visits are allowed and not allowed.

Family Pet Visitation

Patient/resident or family pets must obtain prior approval from Program Director or Manager (or designate).

Pet visitation must occur in a private room or other suitably private location.

The pet must be on a leash or in a cage and under the control of the owner at all times as per bylaws of city and municipality for public places.

All responsible owners/family will be informed of this policy and unit-based pet visitation procedures (as developed by the Program for visitation on the unit). Programs are responsible
for developing pet visitation procedures in alignment with the FH Clinical Practice Guideline for pet therapy.

**Overnight Visitation**

Patients or residents who wish to have an overnight visit with an animal must adhere to the policies outlined above in addition to the following:

1. Animal handlers must stay overnight with the animal and provide own sleeping cots or beds for the animal.
2. Animals are not allowed to leave the patient room unless accompanied by an animal handler.
3. Animals must remain on leash at all times.
4. If an animal is permitted on a patient/resident bed, a barrier (i.e. sheet, blanket, etc. provided by the handler) must be placed between the animal and hospital sheets.
5. All visitations must be approved by patient’s unit staff and physician prior to a visit.
6. Patients/residents that share rooms must have approval of visitation from others in rooms prior to visit. If patient/resident is no longer able to provide formal consent, their family must be contacted for approval. If no approval is provided, overnight visitations are not allowed to proceed.
7. If any allergies and phobias are identified with staff, patient or residents and policy, practice or procedure couldn’t be modified to accommodate the overnight visitation, the visitation will be postponed until such a time when all parties concerns have been addressed.
8. Owner agrees to accept sole responsibility for any damages pets may cause.

**DEFINITIONS**

**Pet Visitation** - pets who visit facilities with families or friends for individual patient visitation (not registered with Volunteer Resources Department).

**Pet Therapy Teams** - pets trained to provide affection and comfort to people in FH facilities.
POLICY TITLE
PET VISITATION

AUTHORIZATION
Vice President, Clinical Operations

DATE APPROVED
April 2014

CURRENT VERSION DATE
May 2015

Pets Residing - pets that live within a Fraser Health facility.

Service Animal - animals that have been trained to perform tasks that assist people with disabilities on a daily basis.

Animal Handler - person/persons responsible for the care of the animals brought into Fraser Health facilities that have taken a course, and are certified.

REFERENCES

1)  BC Guide Animal Act
    http://www.bclaws.ca/Recon/document/ID/freeside/00_96177_01

2)  Pet Therapy Program - City Bylaws - Leash Laws

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| Langley      | http://www.lapsbc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/City-of-Langley_A
|              | nimal_Control_Bylaws.pdf                                             |
|              | Animal_Control_bylaws.pdf                                            |
POLICY TITLE
PET VISITATION

NUMBER
TBA

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3) Infection Control Manual – Acute Care 1C90200 Pets in Hospital
   http://fhpulse/quality_and_patient_safety/infection_control/Infection%20Prevention%20%20Co
   ntrol%20Manual/1C90200%20Pets%20in%20Hospital.pdf

4) Pets and Friends
   www.petsandfriends.org

5) St John Therapy Dog Program
   www.sja.ca/Ontario/CommunityServices/Programs/Pages/TherapyDogServices.aspx

6) Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement –
   http://volunteer.ca/content/canadian-code-volunteer-involvement-2012-edition

7) Administrators Volunteer Resources of British Columbia (AVRBC) Standards of Practice –
   http://www.avrbc.com/standards_practice.html

8) BC Human Rights Act
   http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/00_96210_01

9) Human Rights Code
CORPORATE POLICY, STANDARDS and PROCEDURE

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10) College of Veterinarians of British Columbia – annual dog exam
http://www.cvbc.ca/cfm/index.cfm?It=103&Id=41

11) Johns Hopkins Service Animal for Patient/Visitor Policy
http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/the_johns_hopkins_hospital/_docs/service_animal_2010.pdf

APPENDICES

A  -  Pet Visitation Checklist
B  -  Pet Registration Form
POLICY TITLE
PET VISITATION

AUTHORIZATION
Vice President, Clinical Operations

DATE APPROVED
April 2014

CURRENT VERSION DATE
May 2015

APPENDIX A

Pets Entering Fraser Health Facilities
Suitability Checklist

All pets entering a Fraser Health facility (i.e. family/client pets or staff pets) will be reviewed by facility administration or designate prior to visiting. Volunteer Resources or designate will screen pet therapy dogs prior to volunteer placement. **Wild, farm, reptile, turtle or stray animals are not suitable indoor facility pet visitors.**

Name of Owner ____________________________________________________________

Type of Animal/Breed __________________________________________________________

Name of Animal ______________________________________________________________

1) Does the animal appear to be in good health, clean and well groomed? Yes_____ No ____

2) Is the animal housebroken and does the owner agree to accept the sole responsibility for the care and clean-up for any animal related incidents? Yes_____ No _____

3) Does the animal appear to be good tempered and socially well adjusted? (Does the animal aggressively seek attention? Avoid physical contact? Appear fearful/aggressive?) Yes___ No _____

4) Is the owner able to provide documentation from a veterinarian for current vaccinations and statement of good health? **If so, have them submit a copy prior to visiting.** Yes_____ No _____

5) Who is the animal going to visit with and why? (People with allergies, fear of animals or open wounds or burns are not suitable for pet visitation)

6) What challenges/barriers may need to be addressed prior to visit? i.e. shared room? Patients/Residents with allergies/fears?

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PET VISITATION

### NUMBER
TBA

### AUTHORIZATION
Vice President, Clinical Operations

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May 2015

7) Is the owner aware of restrictions for dining/shared areas during mealtimes?
   Yes ___ No ___

8) Has the animal owner received a copy of the Pet Policy? Yes___ No _____

9) Is the owner aware of the appropriate hand hygiene routines and required barrier methods for beds if the animal will be in contact with the patient/resident and their bed?
   Yes ___ No ___

I ________________________ (administrator/delegate) have met with the pet and owner and determined the pet to be suitable for entering Fraser Health facility in order to enhance the life of a resident, patient or client. The owner has been given a copy of the Pet Policy and agrees to abide by the policy recommendations.

Vaccination Record provided  _____ Yes  _____ No
(To be submitted prior to visit)
### APPENDIX B

**Fraser Health Volunteer Resources**  
**Pet Registration Form**

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Submit completed forms to Volunteer Resources

For Office Use Only:

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<th>Vaccination Record</th>
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