IC9:0800 Pets: Selection and Care of

1.0 STANDARD

Residents and staff shall be protected from animal-borne disease (zoonosis). Facility pets must be:

- In good general health
- Good tempered
- Clean and well groomed
- Examined at least annually by a veterinarian and have up-to-date vaccinations
- Selected with consideration to the needs of residents and staff with severe allergies to pets.

The standard applies also to any pet visiting the facility.

Wild, farm, or stray animals are NOT suitable facility pets. Turtles and reptiles are known sources of Salmonella bacteria, and are not suitable as pets for a residential care facility.

All injuries related to contact with pets require an incident form to be completed. Bites that break or puncture the skin must be reported to the Public Health Inspection Branch of the local health unit.

All pet visitations must have the approval of administration. In addition to infection control, the administration of a pet therapy program must also take into consideration liability issues.

DEFINITION:

Service Animal: A specially trained animal trained to assist a person with disabilities such as sight, mobility, sound alert and seizure alert.

2.0 PROCEDURE

For visiting pets, the pet owner/handler is responsible for his/her pet. For pets residing at the facility, an individual must be designated as responsible for the pet(s). The individual responsible for pet care must not be a food service worker.

The responsibilities in pet maintenance include:

- maintain control of the pet at all times.
- feed, exercise and toilet the pet
- clean the pets’ eating, sleeping and litter areas
- litter boxes are cleaned according to litter manufacturer's instructions.
- waste is discarded in leak-proof bags in facility garbage.
- wear disposable PPE as required to handle pet waste
- perform hand hygiene after contact with animal waste
- bathe and/or groom the pet
- monitor the health and safety of the pet
- medicate the pet as the need arises
- arrange veterinary appointments for the pet
- maintain a record of the veterinary visits, and immunizations
- ensure supply of pet products
- monitor and evaluate facility pet programs

Residents and staff are encouraged to perform hand hygiene after direct contact with the pet.

Pets are restricted from visiting residents in isolation rooms, and with residents who have open draining wounds, pneumonia or blood stream infections.

Pets are never allowed in the kitchen, on table tops or counter tops, in medication rooms or in clean supply rooms.

Resident cats and dogs must be spayed or neutered.

Animals experiencing signs of illness (fever, gastroenteritis, fleas, parasites, worms, skin lesions) shall not be allowed to visit with residents

Litter boxes and cages are not allowed in the kitchen, food storage areas or dining room(s).

REFERENCES