



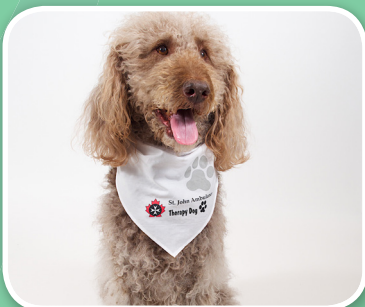
WHAT MAKES A GOOD THERAPY DOG?

Therapy Dogs should have
the following traits:

Social
Polite
Calm
Well-behaved
Tolerant
Healthy
Friendly
Clean

A **GOOD** Therapy Dog is friendly, outgoing
and empathetic while still being obedient.

A **GREAT** Therapy Dog has all of
these traits, plus a handler that
is outgoing, friendly, sensitive,
patient, and dependable.



BECOMING A THERAPY DOG VOLUNTEER

If you are looking for a unique and rewarding
volunteer experience for you and your dog, the
St. John Ambulance Therapy Dog Program
may be right for you!

Contact us to obtain an application form, or
download one from the Community Services
section of our website:

www.sja.ca



St. John Ambulance

SAVING LIVES
at work, home and play

*The Therapy Dog Program is a free
community service program provided
by St. John Ambulance—NL Council,
a registered charity.*

St. John Ambulance

Newfoundland and Labrador Council
8 Thomas Byrne Drive
Mount Pearl, NL
A1N 0E1

Telephone: (709) 726-4200

Toll free: 1-800-801-0181

Email: therapydog@nl.sja.ca

Website: www.sja.ca

Charitable Registration No.
84277 9118 RR 0001



St. John Ambulance

Therapy Dog 



COMMUNITY SERVICES
Therapy Dog Program

ABOUT THE THERAPY DOG PROGRAM

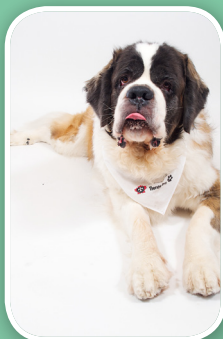


With a history of more than 900 years, St. John Ambulance is one of the oldest humanitarian organizations in the world today. The St. John Ambulance Therapy Dog Program builds on our proud

tradition of community services by bringing the benefits of pet companionship to those who are isolated, ill, or residing in long term care facilities.

PROGRAM BENEFITS

The health benefits of pet companionship have been documented in an array of medical literature. At the most basic level, the act of stroking or touching a dog may lift the spirits of those who are in hospital, nursing homes, or feeling otherwise isolated and in need of socialization.



Other Program benefits include:

- Reducing stress levels
- Lowering blood pressure
- Calming the distressed
- Comforting the despondent
- Distracting the pain-ridden



WHO WE VISIT

The majority of visitations take place in long-term care facilities, hospitals, or retirement communities. However, a visitation schedule may be arranged for any organization or institution who would benefit from dog visits.



HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS

We take the utmost care to ensure that the Therapy Dog Program is delivered to the highest standards:

Volunteer Screening

All potential volunteers complete an application process which includes a Certificate of Conduct and Vulnerable Sector Check.

Dedication and Devotion

Volunteers and their dogs commit to regular visits over an extended period of time. Much of the program's effectiveness lies in the fact that residents develop relationships with specific dogs, and look forward to the visits on a regular basis.

Assessing Temperament

All potential Therapy Dogs must complete the St. John Ambulance Therapy Dog Evaluation, administered by a qualified evaluator. Using simulated circumstances, the evaluator assesses the dog's response to situations that the dog may encounter during visitations. The evaluation is considered a temperament check, not an obedience check.

HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS (cont'd)

Health Check Records

The health of each Therapy Dog must be confirmed every three years in writing by a veterinarian. The Program requires vaccination for rabies, parvovirus, distemper, and adenovirus.

Monitoring

During the initial stage of a visiting schedule, experienced Therapy Dog handlers accompany the new volunteers to ensure that visits proceed well, and that the new volunteers are comfortable in the surroundings.

Communication

Volunteers communicate with their Unit Coordinators on a regular basis for ongoing mentorship, guidance, support, and to provide a record of visits made. Volunteers will receive communication from Provincial Office about upcoming group visits, special/seasonal visits, and Therapy Dog social events.

Recognition

The contribution of volunteers is recognized with annual social events, which include certificates and gifts for participation in the Therapy Dog Program. Volunteers may also become eligible for service medals and awards through The Order of St. John, which is one of six registered Orders in Canada.

