



Animals In WCDHB Facilities Procedure

Procedure Number

CHC-IC-0003

Version Nos:

7

1. Purpose

This Procedure outlines the process for the keeping of patient pets in a West Coast District Health Board (WCDHB) Facility, as well as access to WCDHB Facilities for other types of animals.

2. Application

This Procedure is to be followed by all staff throughout WCDHB

3. Definitions

For the purposes of this Procedure:

Pets are taken to mean goldfish, budgies, canaries and cats.

4. Responsibilities

For the purposes of this Procedure:

Ward/Unit/Facility Manager is required to receive and approve requests from patients for the keeping of a pet

Clinical Nurse Specialist - Infection Control is required to:

- oversee all aspects of this Procedure
- monitor the performance of WCDHB staff members in relation to this Procedure;

Staff Members are required to:

- ensure they abide by the requirements of this Procedure;
- abide by all WCDHB Infection Control Policy and Procedures;
- abide by all WCDHB Health and Safety Policy and Procedure.

Patients/Residents are required to:

- ensure they abide by the requirements of this Procedure;

5. Resources Required

This Procedure requires:

- Written agreement for the keeping of a pet in a WCDHB Facility
- Pet feeding dishes
- Yellow rubbish bags
- Litter box

6. Process

- 1.00 At the discretion of the Ward/Unit Manager, patient/residents may have a pet with them during their stay in a non-acute setting. However if there are any valid concerns that a patient/resident or staff member may catch an infection from a pet, especially if the patient/residents or staff member's immunity is reduced through age, illness, therapy or pregnancy, then the pet will not be allowed to be kept with the patient..



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- 1.01 There is to be a written agreement within the facility to ensure full understanding of the following:
- i) The types of animals allowed. (Only mature, housetrained pets are suitable); and
 - ii) The control and behaviour of animals while on the premises; and
 - iii) The route of entry and movement in the facility; and
 - iv) The areas where pets are not allowed; and where they are to be
 - v) The insurance and liability of owners and handlers.
- 1.02 There are to be no pets, (except for Goldfish) within acute patient areas. However, goldfish in a well-maintained aquarium may be kept with the patient in acute areas.
- 1.03 Guide dogs are not affected by any constraints except the Operating Theatre, Grey Hospital.
- 1.04 The number of pets is to be limited, and they must be appropriate to the environment in which they are to be housed.
- 1.05 Pets should not be permitted to lick patients, or jump up on them in a manner which may cause accidents. After patients have touched animals, they are to thoroughly wash their hands
- 1.06 All pets should be regularly groomed and checked for signs of infection or other illnesses.
- 1.07 If pets become ill, a vet is to diagnose and treat the animal.
- 1.08 All pets are to have received the relevant inoculations prior to coming into a WCDHB Facility. This is the responsibility of the pet owner, or their family/whanau/caregiver.
- 1.09 Dogs are to be wormed every six months. This is the responsibility of the pet owner, or their family/whanau/caregiver.
- 1.10 Claws are to be trimmed to reduce the risk of scratching. Any scratch on a patient or resident patient should be promptly treated with a suitable antiseptic.
- 1.11 All pets, especially dogs and cats are to have their coats cleaned regularly, preferably by their owner.
- 1.12 Bedding is to be cleaned regularly and insecticides used as necessary, on the environment and the pet to control fleas. Specialist advice should be sought if problems occur.
- 1.13 Pets must not be treated in the same facility or area as patients.
- 2.00 Feeding Pets**
- 2.01 Pet feeding areas must be kept clean.



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- 2.02 Pets should have their own feeding dishes, which should be washed separately from dishes and utensils that are used for patients/residents and staff.
- 2.03 Recognised brands of pet food are to be used. Once the container has been opened they are to be kept away from other food for human consumption and covered with an appropriate plastic can cover. Pets are not being fed in the kitchen or other food preparation areas.
- 2.04 Pet food not consumed in 30 minutes should be discarded except for dried cat food, which is to be kept in an auto food dispenser.

3.00 Litter Box Care

- 3.01 The Manager of the Facility is to ensure that a staff member has the responsibility of ensuring that litter boxes are cleaned regularly.
- 3.02 This staff member is to be healthy, not immunocompromised and not involved in food preparation or service or direct patient care. Pregnant women are not to perform this task due to the risk of contracting Toxoplasmosis which affects the unborn baby.
- 3.03 Staff are to wear aprons and gloves when cleaning the litter boxes.
- 3.04 A disposable liner is to be fitted to the litter box to facilitate easy cleaning.
- 3.05 Litter is to be changed daily.
- 3.06 Discarded litter is to be sealed in double yellow rubbish bags and secured for incineration.
- 3.07 The litter box is not to be sited near food preparation areas, storage areas or near eating places.
- 3.08 The litter box is to also to be disinfected weekly.

4.00 Visits of Pets to Patients

- 4.01 Pet owners who have been hospitalized can often fret for their animals and their recovery may well be enhanced by a visit by their pet. Pets may visit their owners (except where the owner is in an acute area).
- 4.02 Visits are to occur at a designated place (preferably outdoors).
- 4.03 Visits should not be at meal times.
- 4.04 Any droppings are to be collected in a plastic bag, disposed of into double yellow rubbish bags, which is then sealed for incineration.



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7. Precautions and Considerations

- At the discretion of the Ward/Unit Manager, patient/residents may have a pet with them During their stay in the Hospital or long term care facility.
- There is to be a written agreement between the patient and the Unit/Ward/Facility Manager
- Guide dogs are not affected by any constraints except the Operating Theatre, Grey Hospital

8. References

New Zealand Standard – Infection Control NZS 8142:2008

Guidelines for Environmental Infection Control in Health Care Facilities June 6, 2003/52(RR10); 1-42

Recommendation of CDC and the Healthcare Infection Control practices Advisory Committee (HICPAC)

9. Related Documents

WCDHB Infection Control Procedure Manual

WCDHB Health and Safety Policy and Procedure Manual

Revision History	Version:	7
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