

## Clinical Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

# PET THERAPY FOR PAEDIATRIC INTENSIVE CARE

<b>SETTING</b>	Seahorse Paediatric Intensive Care Unit only (PICU)
<b>FOR STAFF</b>	All clinical staff
<b>PATIENTS</b>	For the critically ill children on Seahorse PICU receiving PET Therapy

## Standard Operating Procedure

This is a simple guide to all staff who are involved with the care of patients having organised visits from a trained 'Pets-as-Therapy' dog and volunteer.

### General principles

- All volunteers must have Trust clearance, completed Trust induction, and be registered with Pets-as-therapy (PAT)
- All volunteers must be clearly identified as PAT volunteers (Trust ID badge and volunteer lanyard)
- All dogs must be identifiable as PAT dogs (PAT branded collar/coat).
- All visits must be planned in conjunction with the unit matron at least one week in advance of the visit
- On visit day the nurse in charge (NIC) must be involved in overseeing the visit
- All volunteers must be accompanied and supervised at all times by a member of staff (allocated by the NIC)
- All dogs must be on a lead at all times and no food/treats are to be given to dogs at any time while on Seahorse PICU
- Dogs can sit on the owner's lap. Dogs should not be allowed to sit on a patient or directly on the bed.
- No visits if unit closed
- No visits if any patient/parent or attending member of staff has a serious dog allergy or phobia

### Who is eligible for a visit from a PAT dog?

Parents (and/or patients if appropriate) should be able to give verbal consent, informed through the reading of an information sheet beforehand, and noted on the patient record

The choice of suitable patient will be the responsibility of the NIC and consultant on service. The patient should be of a developmentally-appropriate age and have some conscious awareness of his/her surroundings

### Who is not eligible to have a visit from a therapy dog?

- Patients with fresh healing surgical incisions
- Patients whom are highly infectious (may often be in cubicle)
- Patients with or significant immune-compromised (may often be in cubicle)
- Patients with diarrhea or vomiting
- Patients with a known animal based allergy
- Patients with an identified fear of dogs

- Patients with acute delirium

## Preparation for visits

Visits will last for approximately 10 minutes per patient, and there will usually be a maximum of three visits in a day. The therapy dogs can become overloaded with stimulation and very exhausted. Ad-hoc visits to patient's bedsides are discouraged for this reason. Please discuss with the NIC and volunteer if there is such a request.

Please make sure patients hands are washed before and after visit.

Please lower patient's bed if possible so as to allow easier access to dog, and eliminate the need for animals to have to jump on bed.

Please make sure that the pet's access to patients is clear of objects such as tables, toys, and other equipment that is not in use. Please try and minimise trip hazards for animal and volunteers.

**Table A**

<b>REFERENCES</b>	RCN guidelines <a href="https://www.rcn.org.uk/professional-development/publications/pdf-006909">https://www.rcn.org.uk/professional-development/publications/pdf-006909</a> NICE guidance Pets as Therapy Policies <a href="https://petsastherapy.org/what-we-do/faqs-2/#policies_1">https://petsastherapy.org/what-we-do/faqs-2/#policies_1</a>
<b>RELATED DOCUMENTS AND PAGES</b>	None
<b>AUTHORISING BODY</b>	PICU Governance Group
<b>SAFETY</b>	Any safety concerns or queries please contact NIC
<b>QUERIES AND CONTACT</b>	Voluntary Services Manager