Information for people using Assistance dogs

Osborne Park Hospital (OPH) supports the rights of persons who rely on assistance dogs to participate more easily in society, especially in the healthcare settings.

A person with a disability requiring an assistance dog may be an employee, a visitor or a patient / client.

Patients who use assistance dogs are permitted to bring the dog with them to hospital for outpatient appointments provided the animal is registered with the appropriate agency.

Patients who are admitted onto wards are requested to arrange for the dog to be cared for away from OPH where appropriate. For instance, patients who are in bed do not need the guide dog. However, patients who use seizure dogs are permitted to have the dog beside their bed as the dog can still perform its duty when lying close by.

Dogs that are not registered are not permitted inside the hospital

Responsibilities

• The handler is to assume responsibility for the assistance animal.
• Assistance animals must obey dog control laws and be under the control of their handler at all times
• When a handler contravenes a law or commits an offence, they are subject to the same processes as anyone else
• In accordance with legislation, all assistance animals must be appropriately trained and certified / registered with an accredited organisation
• The handler must carry an identification card designating the dog as certified / registered
• For those dogs not defined as ‘guide’ or ‘hearing’, a letter of authority is required from the Local Government minister authorising the dog as an assistance animal
• Assistance animals will be recognisable by:
  o A harness (guide dog) or coloured distinctive vest / cape on the dog (e.g. orange vest for hearing assistance dog)
  o A coloured and branded leash may be used
  o An ID badge worn or carried by the handler
Standards for assistance dogs in public
Assistance dogs receive their own etiquette lessons during training so they should behave appropriately in all situations

- The dog should work calmly and quietly on harness, leash or other tether and is not to disrupt the normal course of business

- The dog should be well behaved at all times and settled when not working. When the team is seated the dog will be unobtrusive and out of the flow of traffic; generally tucked under a table or chair. The dog must be able to lie quietly beside the handler without blocking aisles, doorways etc.

- The dog should not vocalise (bark, growl, whine) unnecessarily and it should show no aggression towards people or other animals.

- The dog should respond to its handler’s commands to maintain its concentration.

- The dog should not solicit (beg) attention, food or annoy members of the public.

- The dog should be clean, groomed and free of offensive odours.

Restrictions
Case by case consideration is to be given to restricting visits by persons using assistance animals to patients / clients who are:

- Immuno-suppressed or immuno-compromised;

- Dog phobic or have been bitten by a dog;

- From culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and/or religious groups

- Known to be allergic to dogs;

- Psychotic, hallucinating or confused

If you have further queries, please contact:
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These guidelines were developed using the best evidence based practice in the literature and in consultation with the relevant organisations providing assistance / service animals.