

Infection Prevention & Control guidance on: Resuming Pet Therapy in WRHA School Based Immunization Programs

Service animals

- Either for staff or client can be allowed in the clinic/area
- Only the handler can touch the service animal and they must practice strict hand hygiene before and after contact with the animal.

Animal Assisted Activities (AAA)

- All animals entering a site/facility delivering health care must meet criteria outlined in the WRHA AAA policy/guidance document [WRHA Infection Prevention & Control Program](#) (reference Acute Care guidance for criteria and terminology until the Community document updated)
- Only animals used for AAA and service animals are allowed in the vaccine clinic. All visitations should be restricted to dogs (i.e. exclude cats and other animals)
- Therapy Dog must be registered or certified for AAA/AAT (Animal Assisted Therapy).
- Dog and AAA Handler must wear appropriate identification while in the clinic and follow clinic setting PPE and Hand Hygiene guidance.

Prepare

- Identify locations that have suitable space to have a dedicate area for certified therapy dog and handler
- Notify client/students in advance of expectations around Therapy Dog in setting – one on one visits only and will be available for clients needing additional support
- Contact with the animal is restricted to the handler and the clients. **Clinic staff shall not have contact with the animal.** If the handler also has another role in the clinic (e.g. immunizer), they must not care or have contact with clients at the same time as caring for the animals

Set up/process

- Therapy dog and Animal Assisted Activities (AAA) Handler would be located at a designated location (table or room)
- At the designated location, hand sanitizer (ABHR) would be accessible and all persons visiting dog will be prompted and compliant with performing hand hygiene with ABHR before and after the visit
- AAA handler, volunteer and/or school collaborators will prompt clients/students to perform hand hygiene before and after dog interaction
- If there is contact with animal excretion/salvia, the clients and/or the handler must go to a hand washing station to wash their hands with soap and water.

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- Volunteer or school collaborators will manage clients/students to ensure distancing (2m/6ft) is adhered to
- Volunteer or school collaborators will direct clients/students in a manner to avoid gathering or congregation scenarios

After visit

- Clean table/chair used by Therapy Dog and Handler with disinfectant wipe

Injuries caused by animals:

- Report all injuries caused by an animal to the clinic manager/designate and the animal handler. Individuals injured by an animal shall be evaluated and treated promptly by medical personnel, as appropriate for the type of injury.
- Animal bites should be reported immediately to the City of Winnipeg Animal Services Agency by phoning 311 and should be documented in the client chart if it involves the client.
- Animals having caused intentional or serious injury shall be permanently banned from the clinic.

Infection Prevention and Control recommended signage (in addition to standard immunization clinic signage as per WRHA PPH Immunization clinic CPG)

Clean your hands poster [W-00839.pdf \(wrha.mb.ca\)](#)

Please respect distancing [respect-distancing-poster-eng.pdf \(sharedhealthmb.ca\)](#)