



Information for people using assistance dogs

Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital (SCGH) supports the rights, safety and wellbeing of people with disabilities including those who use assistance (service) dogs.

In order to protect the health and safety of all patients, visitors and staff, the following apply to people who use assistance dogs:

- Patients who use assistance dogs are permitted to bring the dog with them to Hospital for outpatient appointments provided the animal is registered with an appropriate agency
- Patients who are admitted onto wards are requested to arrange for the dog to be cared for away from the Hospital where appropriate. For instance, patients who are in bed do not need their 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
- Staff and volunteers may also bring registered dogs to the Hospital
- Dogs that are not registered are not permitted inside the Hospital.

Responsibilities

The following guidelines apply to registered handlers and their assistance dog or assistance dogs in training:

- The handler assumes responsibility for the assistance animal
- Assistance animals must obey dog control laws and be under the control of their handler at all times
- Where 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 dogs must be appropriately trained and certified / registered with an accredited organisation
- The handler is expected to carry:
 - The identification card that designates the dog as certified or registered
 - A letter from the Minister for Local Government authorising the dog as a “bona fide” assistance animal
 - An ID badge which may be either worn or carried
- All assistance dogs are expected to wear:
 - A harness (guide dog) or coloured / distinctive vest or cape (e.g. the vest for a hearing assistance animal is orange).
 - A coloured and branded leash.

This information is available in alternative formats on request

Animal behaviour

Assistance dogs are expected to behave appropriately in all situations including in a hospital:

- 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 out of the flow of traffic (eg 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 bark, growl or whine unnecessarily
- The dog 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 beg attention, food or annoy members of the public
- The dog should be clean, groomed and free of offensive odours.

Please be aware that in certain circumstances it may not be possible for a registered assistance dog to enter the hospital. Examples include:

- If the handler or patient being visited has low immunity (immuno-suppressed or immuno-compromised)
- If the patient being visited or a staff member providing direct care is dog phobic or have been bitten by a dog
- If the patient being visited or a staff member providing direct care is known to be allergic to dogs
- If the handler or patient being visited is psychotic, hallucinating or confused.

If you have further queries, please contact:

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By Telephone: (08) 9346 2855

By Post: Disability Access and Inclusion Plan Coordinator
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This information was developed using the best evidence based practice in the literature and in consultation with the relevant organisations providing assistance / service animals. It has been developed to provide practical advice for the handler who may be involved in activities or visiting, working within, or as a patient of this Hospital.