



*Photo courtesy of the  
City of Charles Sturt's  
Companion Animal  
Program, 2016.*

# MY BEST FRIEND

## COMPANION ANIMAL PROGRAMS IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA TOOLKIT

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“For many older owners their pet is their life and their reason for getting up in the morning. For many, the pet may have been jointly owned with a deceased partner, or a repository for memories of dispersed family and friends. The emotional and psychological bond with a pet can be a vital component to older people’s sense of well-being and happiness too.”

(McNicholas, 2009).

This Toolkit is the result of the energy, enthusiasm and contribution of many people – especially:

City of Charles Sturt – in particular Deb Whetstone, Team Leader Community Care, for her pivotal role in trialling the first South Australian council delivered companion animal program and her support and contribution to this toolkit ;

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And to the many, many others who gave of their time and wisdom to inform the content of this Toolkit – thank you!



# Dedication

“She's my best friend”

My mother-in-law, in the concluding years of her life, often referred to her dog as 'my best friend'.

She was not socially isolated or vulnerable and enjoyed the membership of her local community. However, she was physically of poor health and had been for many years. Her husband's subsequent deterioration of health due to dementia, impacted on the level of isolation she experienced and the increasing level of care support she required. This stage in her life was one of constant change and of hanging on (often tenaciously) to what remnants of independence she had for herself and for her husband. In this setting, her dog didn't replace her human relationships but significantly became her most constant, reliable and trusted companion. Her 'little dog', gave her purpose, efficacy and comfort and she delighted in the affection this little dog gave her, as she cuddled up next to her day in and day out.

This Toolkit is dedicated to Maire. She was lucky to have, Theresa, an unfailing friend, who when her second to last dog had to be euthanased, was there to drive her to the veterinarian. She was there also to take Maire and her last dog, Tipperary to veterinary and grooming appointments. How would she have managed in the absence of this support? Would she have felt the pressure to relinquish this best of friendships? If she kept her dog knowing she couldn't fully and consistently meet her care and needs, how would this have impacted on her but also on her own dignity of being able to look after someone so precious to her? Luckily, it never came to this for Maire, but it can and does for many socially isolated older people living in the community with pets. Longstanding companion animal programs that have operated in Australia – and especially in Victoria for up to twenty years, are testament, not only to the need but the importance this support provides to individuals and to communities.



## Maire and Tipperary

Marie followed her much loved husband into a residential aged care home in 2014 and she entrusted Tip into the care of daughter-in-law and family.

This photo was taken on a visit to 'The House'.

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# INTRODUCTION

“I feel like many other ageing people with dogs. My dogs have given me so much love and the will to go on living so much that I would not be without them.”

(Response from City of Charles Sturt's initial Companion Animal Program Survey)

# Introduction

This Toolkit is the result of a one year project undertaken by RSPCA South Australia with gratefully received funding from a Positive Ageing Grant provided by the Office for the Ageing, Government of South Australia.

RSPCA South Australia is indebted to the commitment and support of the City of Charles Sturt who have generously provided procedural documents from their Companion Animal Program (CAP). The City of Charles Sturt has paved the way for other councils to implement their own CAP as they have developed a comprehensive suite of forms, surveys and a project brief which can be shared and used. This council has demonstrated leadership by exploring different ways to improve the lives of residents, their pets and the broader community and to be responsive to current positive ageing and volunteering strategies.

RSPCA South Australia recognises that the welfare of pets is inextricably linked to that of their owner. For older people, maintaining the human animal companion bond (HACB) can play an important role in a positive ageing experience.

The therapeutic benefits of pet ownership have been well documented. People who keep a pet have been reported to adapt more quickly to stress associated with bereavement and other adverse events; require fewer visits to the doctor; have stronger emotional stability and maintain a sounder state of health. Pets have particular therapeutic benefits for socially isolated older people. Pets provide loyal companionship and help older people to remain in their own home longer. However, age, illness or disability can prevent owners from seeking veterinary attention for their pets and sadly, sometimes older people are less aware of the needs of their pet. Equally, the unique bond between older people and their pet is so strong that some owners often sacrifice their own health and well-being out of concern for their pet.

Based on the evidence of existing CAPs throughout Australia, the provision of pet service support not only meets a significant service gap for the most isolated and marginalised older people and their pets in our community but creates a special opportunity to engage a broader demographic of new volunteers and in doing so, enriches the local social capital of communities.

The essence of a CAP recognises the power of pets, the meaning and purpose they give to people and the mutual benefits of ensuring the health and wellbeing of both human and pet delivered at a grassroots level.

This Toolkit, while focussed on the needs of older people and pets, is also relevant to any individual who due to a disability or receiving palliative care treatment, would benefit from this support.



# WHAT IS A COMPANION ANIMAL PROGRAM?

“Thank you for this service you offer it has made a difference in our life, as well as T’s. Sometimes it is hard to walk T, as well as looking after my partner who has Dementia. I thank you again.”

(From City of Charles Sturt’s CAP Resident Survey, 2016)

# What is a Companion Animal Program?

A companion animal program may also be known as a pet care support program. In essence, companion animal programs provide support to people living at home who may no longer be able to carry out some of the caring needs for their pet, due to ageing or some other form of incapacity.

Companion animal programs aim to further a person's ability to live independently and with dignity, by respecting and supporting the continuation of the companion animal bond through practical pet support.

## Theories underpinning the benefits of a CAP

The following theories help explain why pets can have such deep significance in people's lives, especially in an ageing context and why helping to preserve this human animal bond (HAB) can be fundamental to supporting a positive ageing experience. They can also help explain some of the motivations and benefits that draw people in our community to volunteer their time to CAPs.

- Social Connectedness – humans are essentially social beings and social connections are fundamental to our humanity and to our well-being
- Attachment Theory – our need to feel secure and cared for as well as the need to provide security and a care that nurtures our psychological health
- Biophilia Theory – describes the human innate need to be connected to nature. The etymology of the word translates to a love of nature
- Active Communities – mobilises social capital at a grass roots level for civic engagement and renewal, with community members as active participants involved in setting agendas.

## Services offered

Companion animal support is a growing commercial interest with the advent of privately run pet nanny services and aged care providers increasingly listing pet care support as one of the services they may provide to clients. However, isolated and vulnerable members of our community may be disconnected from services for various reasons (including financial) and reluctant to engage with well-intended service providers. Companion animal support that is locally based, delivered by trained and carefully matched volunteers that is either free or requires a small co-payment or annual membership, can be a powerful means to engage and support at risk groups in our community.

The range of assistance CAPs provide, can vary from basic, general support (the exercising of a person's dog), to more individualised support for a broad range of pets. CAP support can include:

- Dog walking – including for older dogs the opportunity for a sniff walk.
- Pet grooming;
- Pet bathing;
- Administration of treatments like flea and worm medication;
- Transport to veterinary or groomers appointments;
- Assistance with pet toilet areas – including help with kitty litter trays, bird cage or fish tank cleaning;
- Pet feeding for short absences be they emergency treatment or overnight hospital or respite care;
- Foster care for longer absences;
- Re-homing pets within the community should the need arise.



## The associated economic and social benefits of delivering CAPs

The ageing population and anticipated cost to our health system is ubiquitously discussed in the media in alarmist terms, alongside policies to manage future implications.

Health and community service practitioners recognise that there are physical and social determinants of health that if responded to, can help communities actively and positively age and thus reduce avoidable costs to our health system.

Commonly cited health and well-being benefits derived from pets include:

- Improved physical health of owners;
- Emotional and psychological benefits;
- Improved self-personal care;
- Reduced suicidal ideation;
- Reduced loneliness and a source of comfort for people experiencing grief and loss;
- Greater social interactions

It is suggested that if pet owners visited the doctor as often as non-pet owners, this could equate to an additional \$3.86 billion to our national health expenditure and that people who daily walk their dog for 30 minutes, may save the health budget \$175 million annually.

## Minimising risks to deliver a successful CAP

The following table summarises options to manage risks associated operating a CAP.

Risks with utilising volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk can and is mitigated through careful recruitment, induction and training that includes police and reference checks.</li> <li>• Numerous providers in South Australia offer Community Visitors Schemes, Dog Visitor and Homestay Programs that successfully manage risks associated with enabling volunteers to provide unsupervised support to vulnerable people in their homes.</li> <li>• The City of Charles Sturt's CAP takes a positive risk management approach that carefully considers potential risk and how to mitigate them. The Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (SA) is intended to keep workers and volunteers safe through the adoption of responsible and rigorous practice and due diligence – it should not be used as a barrier to explore new ways of responsibly supporting communities.</li> </ul>
An apparent lack of resident interest in a CAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing relationships with health centres, community services and centres (especially those with a focus on older people) are an important conduit to link residents with the program. Residents who may most benefit from a CAP are likely to already be socially isolated – a strong network with care and health providers is invaluable.</li> <li>• Referrals by trusted people or services will help negate the implication that a person is incapable of caring for themselves or their pet properly.</li> <li>• Many CAPs report that once established, both residents and volunteers are easily attracted through local word of mouth.</li> </ul>

A lack of community consultation and community support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing positive ageing/elder reference groups may become a powerful ally for validation as well as a source of advice on how to best tailor the program to local needs.</li> <li>Referring to individuals or agencies that have previously run a CAP or creating a network of partners/colleagues with expertise in this area who can be called upon for advice can assist.</li> </ul>
Poor 'buy in' from staff tasked to develop and deliver the program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not everyone likes pets and some staff/community members may even disapprove of pets based on personal or cultural values.</li> <li>Some specific training for staff may be required to address these issues and to return the focus of support to one that is identified by the resident/client as described in the <i>Imagining Possibilities</i> (BPP, 2014).</li> <li>Ultimately, CAPs are a tool for supporting positive ageing initiatives not about requiring individuals to be pet lovers.</li> </ul>
Resourcing concerns – especially in light of My Age Care reforms and funding uncertainty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many CAPs around Australia are CHSP (previously HACC) funded but there are examples of civic models that operate on a volunteer base and survive on the goodwill of its founding members and small community grants and donations. While not ideal, this indicates that community embraced programs do not need to be expensive to operate. However funding uncertainty undermines sustainability and can erode community enthusiasm and goodwill.</li> <li>The City of Charles Sturt were recognised with a 2016 COTA Positive Ageing Award Resthaven Award for a community program (CAP) delivered at under \$10,000 – evidence that the utilisation of existing expertise, resources and collaboration can deliver a cost effective program for councils.</li> <li>Other resource opportunities include:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Universities through mandatory student placement, e.g. social work students are required to undertake two 500 hour placements with an appropriate agency. To date, two social work placements in Adelaide have played an important role in the inception and establishment of this State's first council-based CAP.</li> <li>TAFE through animal studies students (e.g. veterinary nursing) may be interested in participating research projects or volunteering in CAPs and sharing their expanding expertise in animal care with program participants and peers.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



Concerns about attracting volunteers

- CAPs around Australia report being popular, drawing volunteers from a range of age groups and it is common to have more volunteers registered than residents requesting the pet support service.
- Some CAPs successfully allocate more than one volunteer to a resident based on assessed needs. In most circumstances, it is ideal to carefully match one-to-one and this can be especially true for pets who have a nervous/anxious disposition but for a highly social dog, more than one volunteer might be required.
- Another important element of CAPs is that it draws a broad age-range of volunteers, especially if the program has the flexibility to be available outside of office hours. Many CAPs attract students or working adults, who are only available during weekend or out of office daylight hours. Volunteers in CAPs get their 'pet' fix, interaction with an older person and the community on weekend or early (daylight) week day hours.

### How is a CAP complimentary to PERMA Plus and its health and wellbeing aims?

PERMA Plus is based on Martin Seligman's positive psychology theory that identifies ways that individuals can develop resilience and well-being and consequently reap the associated health benefits. A number of South Australian Councils (including the City of Charles Sturt) are working in collaboration with The Resilience and Well-being Centre at the South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute (SAHMRI, 2016) to deliver PERMA Plus programs for residents.

The synergies of CAPs with a PERMA Plus approach are described below.

- **Positive emotion** is reported by people as a consequence of having pets. This includes a strong attachment towards their pet, a sense of receiving unconditional love and acceptance (including physical touch) and the dignity of being able to care for a sentient being – particularly significant when people feel their independence is diminishing.
- **Engagement** is supported or enhanced by interacting with a sentient being and being in tune and responsive to a pet's needs.
- **Relationship** – pets can be wonderful facilitators of human relationships especially where social shrinkage is experienced.
- **Meaning** – for some people, their sense of identity and purpose can be entwined in their relationship with their pet, as they can provide not just companionship and joy but also meaning, purpose and connection to life.
- **+ Plus** – In addition to the above, Companion Animal Programs also support optimism, physical activity, nutrition and sleep by focusing on pet care needs. This can aid people to consider their own care needs to be healthy so they can care for their pets.

# TYPES OF COMPANION ANIMAL PROGRAMS

“The volunteers and Council  
are marvellous to do this.”

(From the City of Charles Sturt’s  
Companion Animal Program Survey, 2015)

“I think this is a great service. Many  
clients worry about the care of their pets.”

(From the Western Links Age Care Providers survey, 2016)



# Types of Companion Animal Programs

There are approximately 20 community-based and volunteer-assisted existing CAPs in Australia. They fall into three broad categories, all of which rely upon volunteers to provide pet care support:

- Council/community centre delivered (Self-funded/Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) funding).
- Animal welfare/veterinary care base (not-for-profit)
- Civic community-based (independent not-for-profit).

In Australia, PetLinks of South Port Day Links in Melbourne has been operating a CAP since 1996. All States and the ACT have some form of CAP currently operating (see Appendix for a summary of existing community-based CAPs). The following table summarises key features of each type of CAP with an example of an existing program.

Model type	Key features
Council/community centre based	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding may include CHSP, council funds and other government grants or a combination; the program is part of a suite of support services to address health and well-being and general community social cohesion.</li> <li>• Existing program staff include program coordinators for social support and volunteer coordinators provide valuable coordination and administrative support to volunteers who provide pet care.</li> <li>• These services may struggle to formally respond to foster care needs directly and this is a significant support gap in a council setting – however, community-based programs have reported strong local networks that can help with foster care and boarding.</li> <li>• Examples – City of Yarra &amp; City of Charles Sturt:  <a href="http://www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/Services/Older-persons-services/home-and-support-services/Companion-Animal-Support-Program/">http://www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/Services/Older-persons-services/home-and-support-services/Companion-Animal-Support-Program/</a>  <a href="http://www.charlessturt.sa.gov.au/CompanionAnimalProject">http://www.charlessturt.sa.gov.au/CompanionAnimalProject</a> </li> </ul>

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Animal welfare-based	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The RSPCA New South Wales POOPs program is internally funded.</li> <li>• Community Services staff provide administrative and coordination support (including direct pet care support) with additional pet care support being provided by volunteers (e.g. dog walking, grooming etc.).</li> <li>• RSPCA New South Wales POOPs also supports clients with payment plans to help clients manage unplanned pet expenses included necessary treatments.</li> <li>• A number of RSPCA New South Wales branches also provide POOPs-type services but this varies according to the capacity and sustainability issues of each branch.</li> <li>• Cherished Pets is a recent companion animal program that in 2015 was trialled successfully in Geelong, Victoria. It is the charitable arm of a veterinary practice which arose because of veterinarian Dr Alicia Kennedy's first-hand experience of the distress for both animals and older people living at home who with some support could continue to enjoy a positive human companion animal bond.</li> </ul>
Civic community-based	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• POOPs WA Inc is an inspirational civic program that operates on the energy and enthusiasm of its volunteer board and the services of one part time central administrator.</li> <li>• Over the years it has attracted funding from a range of sources including small government grants and other charities.</li> <li>• Its backbone is its volunteers that includes area volunteer coordinators for each of its 5 localities, who assist with the matching of local residents and volunteers and provide a broad range of support based on volunteer capacity.</li> </ul>

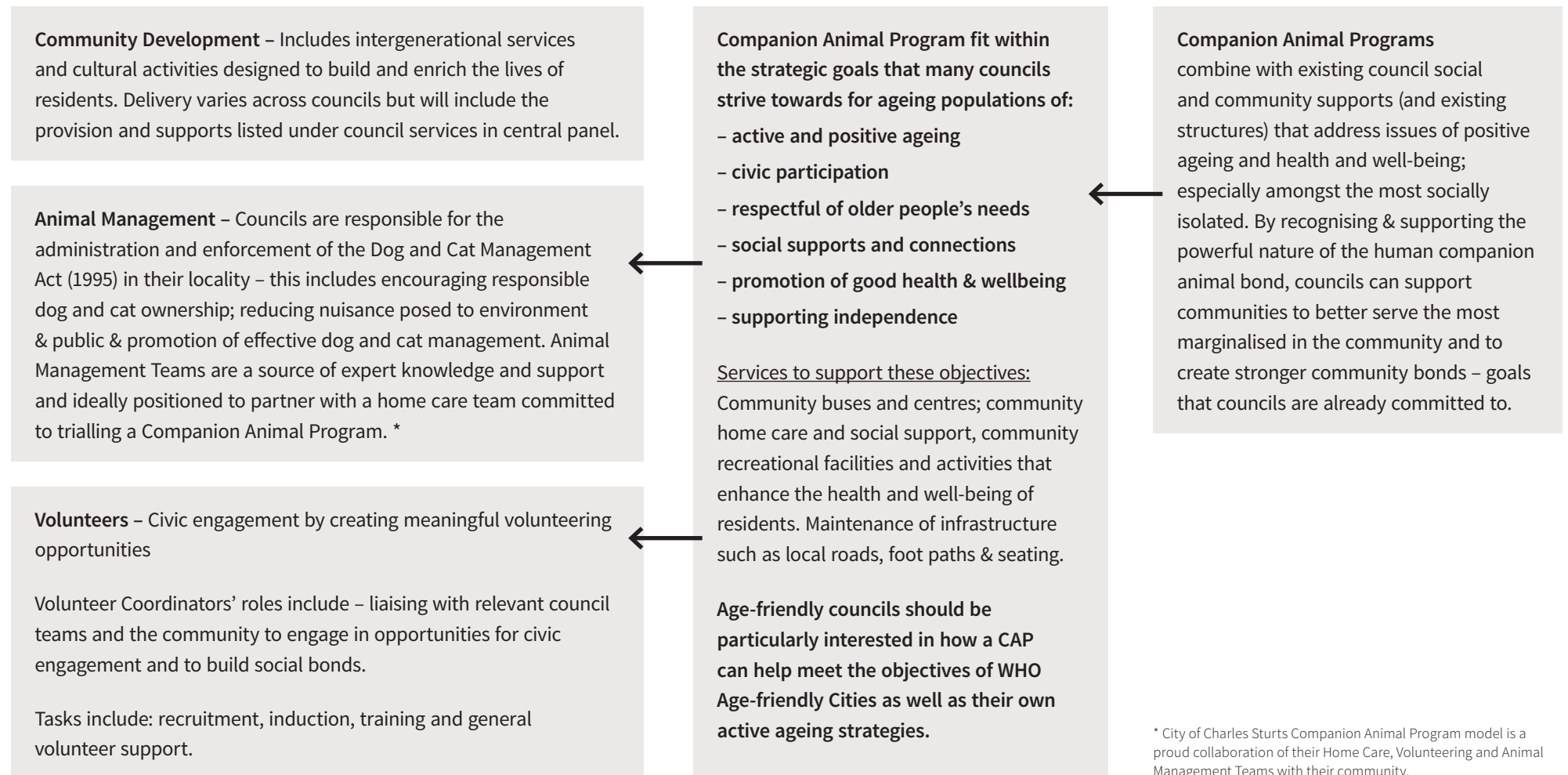
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## Councils: Ideal Companion Animal Program Providers – An Illustration

**Councils are trusted by their community to provide unique, relevant & holistic support**

Responsibilities at a local government level include: Health, Community Support, Environment and Infrastructure.



# IMPLEMENTING A COMPANION ANIMAL PROGRAM

“I was looking forward to doing more  
volunteering and this is perfect.”

(From the City of Charles Sturt’s  
Companion Animal Program Survey, 2015)

“Q is a very caring person and a dog lover  
to boot, could not have picked a better  
person, my dog thinks she is the best ever.”

(From the City of Charles Sturt’s  
CAP Resident Evaluation survey, 2016)

# Implementing a Companion Animal Program

The following table outlines suggested key steps involved in trialling a CAP.

These are based on a review of existing CAPs.

Steps	Activity	How
1	<p>Determine need in the community.</p> <p>Alignment with current national, state and local strategies:</p> <p>Age-friendly cities; Positive Ageing; Civic Renewal &amp; Volunteering Strategy.</p> <p>Local assets: Interested community groups; aged care providers; community centres; animal services.</p>	<p>Access existing advisory groups – e.g. Peer group on ageing, or form a dedicated group; survey local aged care providers; survey registered dog owners (potentially over 65yrs only) see Appendix B; run a focus group – membership could be a combination of residents with pets, aged care providers and animal service/welfare providers or homogenous groups of the above.</p> <p>Is there existing in-house evidence of a need – including home care teams and animal management requests for companion animal program type support?</p> <p>NB – existing research about the health benefits, social capital and attenuating loneliness and grief associated with pet ownership that can be drawn upon.</p> <p>Kingborough Council, Tasmania, introduced pet care support as an additional support service under existing HACC social supports as a direct response to a review of the needs expressed by their advisory panel on ageing.</p>
2	Assemble CAP team	<p>Ideally comprising of the community development team and their target population (e.g. aged care/community care etc.), animal management and volunteer coordinator.</p> <p>Consider opportunity to engage with external members such as peer advocates, animal welfare/animal services representatives, aged care providers and other CAP providers for support and advice.</p>
3	Develop the project brief	<p>Consider sample project brief provided (see Appendix A) – determine in consultation with your project team and guided by results of community engagement/needs analysis, what the primary aims and objectives will be for your trial CAP.</p> <p>What are the sustainability issues – can the CAP fit under existing social support/animal management program funding? Are there grant or other opportunities that can help cover establishment/trial costs?</p>



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4      Develop  
documentation

See Appendix for the following samples:

- Program brochure/leaflet; (see Appendix L)
- Volunteer role description; (see Appendix F)
- Resident application form; (see Appendix G)
- Pet assessment form (tool) & agreement; (see Appendix M)
- Program manual; (Balwyn Evergreen's Companion Animal Volunteer Support – CAVS – program manual)
- Consider developing a CAP matching template;

Other relevant forms – volunteer application and agreement forms

Create a plan for capturing trial data to assist in its evaluation and on-going improvement.

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5      Training

See section on Training – including recommendation of taking a Better Practice Project/Active Service Model approach (empowerment and strengths-based approach) in relation to volunteer and resident engagement.

Some animal handling/behaviour training is highly desirable. It is essential that volunteers be briefed on South Australian Dog and Cat Management Act (1995) that identifies the person in effective control of a dog (e.g. a volunteer dog walker) as legally obliged to carry poop bags and to clean up after a dog that defecates in a public space – and in the unlikely situation that a dog attacks or harasses another animal or person, the volunteer may be legally liable.

- Consider collaborating on a tailored CAP training with participating council animal management/home care teams who then provide in-house training for volunteers; OR
- Arrange a rolling regional training program in collaboration with participating council providers for CAP volunteers. Councils could alternate hosting the volunteers from their own and participating regional CAPs.
- Are there any reputable and co-located animal welfare providers who can accommodate CAP volunteers into existing volunteer animal handling/behaviour training?
- Develop an on-line training program that when submitted is evidence of volunteers completion and understanding of the role, rights and responsibilities (something that could be developed as part of a social work student placement).

NB: POOPs WA Inc. use an online application, induction and training model as part of their enlistment process. RSPCA New South Wales POOPs provide a face-to-face induction/training session but accommodates those who are unable to physically attend by providing an electronic training option.

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6	Enlisting volunteers/ advertising/receiving referrals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide clarity on the eligibility criteria for participation – include the council's right to make the final decision about whether a resident/pet/volunteer is considered suitable for the program in order to fulfil their duty of care to all involved.</li> <li>• Utilise networks to personalise recruitment, especially residents – referral is an important consideration as eligible residents may be reluctant to ask for pet care help because of the sense of agency and protectiveness towards their pet – a trusted care worker/friend/GP/relative can be an important source of referrals.</li> <li>• Other CAP's experience has been that this is a popular volunteering activity that draws application from across the life stages.</li> </ul>
7	Assessment and risk mitigation	<p>Confirm –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eligibility of resident;</li> <li>• The assigned assessor to conduct home visit to assess any WH&amp;S issues in the home</li> <li>• Go through program agreement with resident;</li> <li>• Carry out pet assessment with a particular focus on learning as much about the pet as possible – especially its temperament and any phobias – sign off.</li> <li>• Ask the <u>owner</u> to attach leash to their dog – either flat collar or harness (NB for a large, strong dog, the use of a front-connecting harness minimises the dog's ability to pull).</li> <li>• Assessor to take the dog for a walk around the block to determine whether the dog is suitable for a volunteer dog walker.</li> </ul> <p>(Dogs not suitable for dog walking, may appreciate environment enriching activities (see Resource Links and References page)).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure assessor carries poop bags, flat collar and leash no longer than 2 meters (owner should have their own). Carrying high value treats like fritz and cheese can assist the dog walker.</li> <li>• The initial assessment with the resident can be a good opportunity to find out whether there are other needs and provide or support a referral to in-house support or external services – including pet care support services, such as veterinary treatment/grooming etc can be carried out at initial assessment of resident.</li> <li>• Take a photo of the pet and make a 'pet passport' that contains crucial information about the pet's needs, personality, emergency contact that can be provided to the volunteer.</li> </ul>

City of Charles Sturt take a 'positive risk' approach to guide their risk mitigation process. (See Appendix D for SOP and Resource Links and Reference page for more information about managing risk).

8	Matching	<p>Robust matching has been reported by a number of existing CAPs as a key component for the success of the program. It is essential that a triangulated approach be taken that considers the <b>volunteer</b> (preferred activities, experience, health &amp; location and availability); <b>resident</b> preferences (timing of support, gender of volunteer); <b>pet</b> (in relation to temperament and people/environmental phobias). <b>In particular, the volunteer must have an interest in people and not just pets.</b></p> <p>Depending on the team structure of your CAP, normally the CAP program coordinator (who may also be the pet assessor) meets with the volunteer coordinator to match volunteers and resident.</p> <p>The first meeting is facilitated by either the volunteer coordinator or program coordinator with the resident, pet and volunteer at the resident's home. The program purpose and participants' rights and responsibilities are again discussed. If after this initial meeting, either the volunteer or resident wish to decline match, this is supported.</p>
9	Monitoring and supporting	<p>Contacts and procedures for unexpected events, including resident not home when scheduled volunteer arrives (see Appendix P for Disability SA flow chart if concerns arise). City of Charles Sturt provide volunteers with a calling card that they can leave in the letterbox/under the door and a clear process for reporting issues.</p>
10	Evaluating and celebrating	<p>The regular evaluation of programs is common place and is especially important when trialling a new program to achieve continuous improvement. All program participants should be encouraged to actively participate formally and informally to the evaluation of programs so that timely adjustments may be made and to help create a sense of partnership between all parties.</p> <p>It is recommend that a culture of reporting concerns and near misses be encouraged, recognising the WH&amp;S benefits but also the program partnership opportunities.</p> <p>Celebrate and recognise the participants experiences, growth and stories by creating formal or informal opportunities for members of CAPs to come together – how this is done varies in existing CAPs with some CAPs providing an inclusive celebration across social support services, others are more personalised and may include the awarding of certificates to outstanding volunteers.</p>



# TRAINING CONSIDERATIONS FOR A COMPANION ANIMAL PROGRAM

“Would be a wonderful service to have available for either our staff to utilise for clients, or families / clients to have available for our clients.”

(From the Western Links Aged Care Providers survey, 2016)

# Training considerations for a Companion Animal Program

It is worth noting that many of the longstanding CAPs contacted, while providing generic training, do not all deliver specific animal handling/behaviour training. Many report that CAPs attract volunteers who bring a love of animals, experience and knowledge about animal handling. Some providers deliver their training (including animal behaviour/handling) via an electronic PowerPoint presentation that covers things like:

- Overview of organisation and program mission;
- WH&S, media & communication, reporting, reimbursements and insurance coverage;
- Specific policies, procedures and program paperwork;
- Communication, interpersonal skills including dealing with difficult clients – rights and responsibilities;
- Understanding basic dog and cat body language;
- Basic dog and cat handling;
- Self-care.

Some additional training suggestions:

- Some CAPs encourage volunteers to support pet health by providing a guide on potential health issues to be aware of including abnormal behaviour and appearance. (See Companion Animal Volunteer Support Program (CAVS) Manual in Resource Links and References page).
- If not already available, consider developing an intranet site for your volunteers and program participants where this information (including training slide shows/youtube clips, forms, role descriptions and useful links can be accessed as the need arises).
- Consider using Survey Monkey as a training tool for your induction to record confirmation that induction training and forms etc. have been completed. This survey could include a few pointed questions that require the person to have read the documents and to include their personal details, full name etc. as evidence of understanding and agreeing to uphold the policies and procedures of the organisation. Note that providers like WA POOPs Inc has a website that acts as a recruitment portal, providing online information about their program, including information for people who wish to volunteer, details of the process to become a volunteer and an on-line induction slide show.

**Current aged care and disability services practice models that compliment a CAP and provide useful training components for new community service/animal management staff and volunteers:**

- **Better Practice Project** – <http://www.agedcommunity.asn.au/providers/better-practice-project/>
- **Active Service Model** – <http://www.wimmerapcp.org.au/wp-gidbox/uploads/2014/02/Home-and-Community-Care-toolkit.pdf>
- **PERMA +** – <http://www.wellbeingandresilience.com/perma-plus-1> (see description of applicability to CAP).

The US PAWS Start-Kit for Human Assisted Support Services (see Resource Links and References) provides some useful instructions for program coordinators and volunteers – including very practical tips when conducting an interview with a program participant.

The type of training provided will vary according to the type of CAP that is trialled. However below is a sample of the type of legislative requirements that need to be complied with as well as information that will assist volunteers to:

- a) be fully cognisant of what they are signing up for;
- b) to opt out sooner rather than weeks or months after commencing and,
- c) minimise risk through anticipation of issues and the provision of training and structures to address issues expediently for the benefit of the program and all involved.

Councils will already have an induction process that covers the following areas:

- Volunteering legislation;
- Police check and reference check;
- Privacy and confidentiality;
- Work health and safety;
- Media and communication;
- Insurance coverage;

In addition the following should be included for CAPs:

- Dog and Cat Management Act 1985 – laws pertaining to pet owners.
- Councils' animal management by-laws and in particular those relating to dogs and cats for example <http://www.charlessturt.sa.gov.au/dogs>
- Role description; (see Appendix for samples)
- Clarity about what activities are provided and how to respond to requests outside role remit (Balwyn Evergreen Centre CAVS Manual Information for Volunteers and Clients in Resource Link and References).
- Administration and reporting structures;
  - Description and explanation of paperwork required;
  - 'What if' document/s to capture appropriate response for particular events (see PAWS & DCSI flow chart and adapt to own needs).
- Unique statement about the organisation and how a CAP fits into the mission of the organisation;
  - This may include a statement about councils' commitment to engage with community to create liveable, safe and healthy cities for all its citizens and explain how a CAP fits with this mission.

### **Animal management training**

South Australia is unique in having a Dog and Cat Management Board whose role it is to enforce the 1995 Dog and Cat Management Act and whose provisions are enforced by local councils. Animal Management teams, like that of the City of Charles Sturt, are an example of bringing together the expertise of two departments – animal management and home care support to share expertise and knowledge to create better service provision for their community.

In a South Australian context, the following apply and it is essential that volunteers taking dogs for a walk be aware of the following (See Resource Links and References for link to Dog & Cat Management Board):



- Whomever is in effective control of a dog must clean up after a dog has defecated in a public place;
- When walking a dog, you are required to carry doggy poo bags, even if the dog does not defecate;
- The person (friend, neighbour, family member) when out in public with a dog is deemed to be in control and responsible for any harm caused (not the absent owner) in the unlikely case of the dog biting another animal or person.
- In all of the above situations, the person in control of the dog at the time of the incident (not the owner) may be deemed liable and attract the relevant penalty.
- Leashes must not be more than two metres long;
- The dog must have a current dog registration attached to its collar;
- Under new dog and cat management laws that come into effect from July 1 2018, all dogs must be microchipped by three months and desexed by six months. Desexing exemptions apply to registered breeders and the owners of working livestock dogs. A qualified Veterinarian can also grant an exemption on medical grounds.
- Some interstate CAPs preclude dogs classified as “Dangerous Breeds”. The RSPCA’s policy is that any dog, regardless of its breed, may be dangerous. Each individual dog should be assessed for suitability in the program based on its behaviour. Note that the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 lists five prescribed breeds with restrictions on them that include wearing a muzzle in public. These are American Pit Bull Terriers, Fila Brazilieros, Japanese Tosas, Dog Argentinias and Presa Canarios.

#### Mitigating risk:

- Dogs in CAPs are assessed using an assessment tool questionnaire as well as taken for a short walk away from the home as part of the assessment for participating in the program. A dog deemed unsuitable for dog walking may be able to be provided with other support but not if it poses a risk that cannot be mitigated. (See Appendix for sample Pet Profile Form);
- Consider excluding dogs that are not de-sexed from a walking program or ways to support and encourage the de-sexing of participating animals;
- Careful and robust matching of volunteers – including resident and volunteer match but also volunteer and dog match to accommodate physical demands for a volunteer but also dog’s needs e.g. a small dog may be intimidated being walked by a tall, male volunteer.
- Consider whether you wish your volunteers or dogs to stand out as CAP participants – this kind of visibility through the donning of a name badge or the dog wearing a coloured bandana can help inform the community about the program. Community members may be more cautious approaching a volunteer, understanding that both the volunteer and dog may wish to avoid this interaction. Making volunteers more visible can also be a great way alert your community to this great program and potentially help build social capital.
- Training of volunteers – (see Appendix for samples of recommended training for CAPs provided by Fiona De Rosa and Animal Welfare League of South Australia (AWLSA) – noting that the AWLSA providing the dog handling training for the City of Charles Sturt’s CAP trial).

#### In addition to the above, some additional considerations for training:

- Promotion of force-free training methods that focuses on positive reinforcement;
- Promotion of the Five Freedoms – to educate the community about pets’ fundamental needs;
- Animal behaviour including learning to read animal body language;
- Required equipment for dog walking – e.g. flat collar or ideally a front-attach harness – especially useful when walking a larger dog as it diminishes the dog’s pulling power.

- Ways to avoid risky situations;
  - Learn about the animal's nature and any fears and avoid these situations;
  - Establish a walking route with advice from the owner. This walking route may involve avoiding built up areas, busy roads or schools at drop off and pick up if these are issues for the dog you are walking.
  - Provide advice on how to quickly avoid or distract a dog should the need arise, for example, crossing the road to avoid another dog walker or large walking group. Dogs need to remain on their leash and for this reason, dogs should not be taken to parks or reserves where there is a high chance that other off-leash dogs will approach;
  - It is essential to develop a weather policy for both dogs and volunteers. Some dogs **do not** cope well in windy, or rainy conditions or if an electrical storm is forecast as some may become highly anxious and their behaviour may be unpredictable. Hot weather is also an issue both for volunteers' health and wellbeing as well as dogs. Walking of dogs should be avoided during the heat of the day and especially during a heat wave because the asphalt can absorb a lot of heat that may burn dog's paws.

Consideration of the above will assist the CAP to achieve the best possible outcomes for everyone.

# RESOURCE LINKS AND REFERENCES

“My dog D is a Miniature Poodle is greatly improved with the walking support and is much appreciated as I cannot walk him due to my own incapacibilities. D’s health is greatly improved with regular exercise.”

(From the City of Charles Sturt’s  
CAP Resident Evaluation survey, 2016)

# Resource links and references

## Positive/active ageing information:

Living well at home: CHSP Good Practice Guide. 2015

<https://agedcare.health.gov.au/programs-services/commonwealth-home-support-programme/living-well-at-home-chsp-good-practice-guide>

Office for the Ageing. South Australia (2014) Prosperity Through Longevity:  
South Australia's Ageing Plan – Our Vision 2014-2019

Office for the Ageing. South Australia (2014) Strategy to Safeguard the Rights of Older South Australians  
2014-2021

Office for the Ageing. South Australia (2015) Strategy to Safeguard the Rights of Older South Australians  
2015-2021: Our action plan.

## Older people and pets:

“Identifying the Need for Companion Animal Support for the Home and Community Care Target Population”  
– prepared by Lynn Fitzpatrick, Real Animals and People and the National Ageing Research Institute.  
<http://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/completed/aged-care/submissions/subdr0894-attachment.pdf>

Animal Welfare League – Positive Ageing in the Company of Animals  
<http://petfriendlyagedcare.com.au/>

Pets Are Wonderful Support (PAWS)

[http://www.shanti.org/paws\\_pdf/paws\\_start\\_up\\_kit.pdf](http://www.shanti.org/paws_pdf/paws_start_up_kit.pdf)

[http://www.shanti.org/paws\\_pdf/Safe\\_Pet\\_Guidelines.pdf](http://www.shanti.org/paws_pdf/Safe_Pet_Guidelines.pdf)

PAWS refer in their Start-up Kit to a ‘Volunteer Handbook’. This handbook was generously shared and focuses on providing guidance to volunteers in their human interactions, especially about developing skills in listening, being respectful of clients and anticipating potential human issues with suggestions for appropriate responses.

Pets and Positive Ageing Inc.  
<http://petsandpositiveageing.com/>

PAWS Start-up Kit (United States)  
[http://www.shanti.org/pages/paws\\_start\\_up\\_kit.html](http://www.shanti.org/pages/paws_start_up_kit.html)

International Federation on Ageing  
<http://www.ifa-fiv.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Companion-Animals-and-Older-Persons-Full-Report-Online.pdf>

The Pets for the Elderly Foundation  
<http://petsfortheelderly.org/articles.html>



## Volunteering and risk management:

Office for Volunteering

See resources for Facts Sheets and other useful information to support volunteering initiatives.

<http://www.ofv.sa.gov.au/>

DCSI screening information:

<http://screening.dcsi.sa.gov.au/screening-process/organisations/aged-care-sector>

Safe Work Australia – Volunteers Work Health and Safety Laws

<http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/swa/model-whs-laws/guidance/volunteers/pages/volunteers>

Pets for Life – Caloundra

Australian research conducted on the Queensland, Pets for Life Program by Honours Occupational Health students. One paper explores the meaning of pet ownership for older people in the program and the other on the reasons that drew volunteers to want to participate in this program. The research papers are available to access at the bottom of the Pets for Life media tab:

<http://www.petsforlife.org.au/media>

Borondora Volunteers Handbook

<https://www.boroondara.vic.gov.au/residents/volunteering/aged-and-disability-volunteering>

Volunteering Australia Standards

[http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/wp-content/uploads/National-Standards-Documents-FINAL\\_Web.pdf](http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/wp-content/uploads/National-Standards-Documents-FINAL_Web.pdf)

Community Visitors Scheme Federal Department of Health – for relevant information about the management of a program for vulnerable people living at home being supported by volunteer visitors:

<https://agedcare.health.gov.au/older-people-their-families-and-carers/community-visitors-scheme/community-visitor-scheme-cvs-frequently-asked-questions-faqs>

PAWS WA volunteering overview

<https://www.paws.org/get-involved/volunteer/>

LGA risk mitigation

<http://www.lga.sa.gov.au/webdata/resources/files/>

22%20-%20Understanding%20Risk%20Management%202015.pdf

Risk Management Tools – Office for Volunteering

<https://www.sa.gov.au/topics/family-and-community/community-organisations/managing-a-community-organisation/managing-volunteers/risk-management>

## Animals – information and advice resources

Dog and Cat Management Board:

<http://www.dogandcatboard.com.au/>

Including lots of good information and advice and links to useful publication and facts sheets for dogs and cats:

<http://www.dogandcatboard.com.au/publications>

And particularly useful to share with volunteers about South Australian law in relation to dogs:

<http://gooddogsa.com/media/>

W1siZiIsIjIwMTUvMDMvMzAvOGtpbDVtYW1iN19EQzE4Ml9GQV9XRUFfLnBkZiJdXQ/DC182\_FA%5BWEB%5D.pdf

Lili Chin – US website

<http://www.bing.com/images/search?q=Doggie+Drawings+Lili+Chin&FORM=RESTAB>

RSPCA – Five freedoms, information about suitability of different species/breeds as companion animals – policies and procedures and position papers.

[http://kb.rspca.org.au/Five-freedoms-for-animals\\_318.html](http://kb.rspca.org.au/Five-freedoms-for-animals_318.html)

Also see RSPCA's website for information, policies, discussion and position papers.

Companion animal policies

<http://kb.rspca.org.au/77/>

Information, position, discussion and research papers (including on topics like the prevention of dog attacks in the community):

<http://kb.rspca.org.au/files/>

RSPCA Queensland

Well over 50 individual Fact Sheets covering topics relating to dogs and cats that help understand triggers, observe behaviours and what they mean and provide examples of useful strategies to adopt.

<http://www.rspcaqlld.org.au/what-we-do/training/animal-training-fact-sheets>

SA Health – Fact Sheet – Caring for Pets in extreme weather

<http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/67b46600431be25eb468ff5fdb58e26/Heat-Caring-for-pets-fs-PH-EMU-20111122.pdf?MOD=AJPERES>

Seattle PAWS – lots of useful information relating to animal behaviour.

<https://www.paws.org/library/>

### **Miscellaneous**

Community Engagement Handbook 2008

<http://www.lga.sa.gov.au/webdata/resources/files/>

Community\_Engagement\_Handbook\_March\_2008\_-\_PDF.pdf

Joseph Ibrahim's website:

<http://www.profjoe.com.au/all-cases-list/dignity-of-risk/>

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# APPENDIX

“Dogs are part of the family. We need support like this to help keep our family together.”

(Response from City of Charles Sturt’s initial Companion Animal Program Survey)

# Appendix

## City of Charles Sturt – CAP documents

Project Brief .....	A
Companion Animal Program Survey (For Pet Owners) – Initial community expression of Interest survey .	B
Companion Animal Program Survey (Resident) – Evaluation of program.....	C
Standard Operating Procedure – Companion Animal Project.....	D
Companion Animal Project – Coping with the weather .....	E
Volunteer Role Description: Companion Animal Project Visitor .....	F
Companion Animal Project Assessment .....	G
My pet is home alone – card .....	J

Not included here, but part of the Council’s package of forms for CAP volunteers is a generic volunteer program checklist and volunteer confirmation forms that must be completed.

See City of Charles Sturt’s website for copies of their Companion Animal Project brochures for residents and for volunteers:

<http://www.charlessturt.sa.gov.au/CompanionAnimalProject>

## Additional resources:

Pets and Older People – sample project brief; (NB Monica Du Plessis, Manager Community Wellbeing, has authored an excellent companion animal project brief to include the needs of older people and people with a disability). .....	K
Sample brochure for residents and volunteers.....	L
Sample Pet Profile Form.....	M
Sample Survey of Aged Care Stakeholders.....	N
Sample Survey of Animal Service Providers.....	O
Dealing with Animal Issues Flowchart – Disability SA .....	P
Australian community-based and volunteer supported CAPs table.....	Q

## Training Information:

Walking dogs in public spaces by Fiona De Rosa ..... R

AWLSA Community Dog Walking Workshop ..... S

See South Port Day Links Inc for dog walking and other role descriptions:

<http://www.spdl.org.au/www/content/default.aspx?cid=671>

Volunteer and Client Manual – see Balwyn Evergreen’s Companion Animal Volunteer Support Program  
“CAVS Manual – Information for Volunteers and Clients”

<https://balwynevergreen.files.wordpress.com/2015/08/cavs-manual-updated-august-2016.pdf>

# Project Brief

<b>Project Name</b>	City of Charles Sturt Companion Animal Project	
<b>Background / Context</b>	<p>The delivery of a Pilot Project to provide volunteers to assist City of Charles Sturt older residents and residents with a disability to keep their companion animals healthy and well, through volunteer engagement and assistance.</p> <p>This will be possible through the recruitment and management of a volunteer pool who will be able support residents with some of the following tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walking</li> <li>• Feeding</li> <li>• Grooming</li> <li>• Washing</li> <li>• Assisting to vet</li> </ul> <p>The project will consider the following Service Standards and Guidelines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Community Care Common Standard Guidelines</li> <li>• City of Charles Sturt Volunteer Policy</li> <li>• Companion Animal Service Protocols e.g. Eligibility Guidelines, Confidentiality, National Police Checks</li> <li>• Dog and Cat Management Act</li> <li>• WHS Act</li> <li>• Volunteer Risk Management Program</li> </ul>	
<b>Project Sponsor</b>	Bronwyn Webster	
<b>Project Client</b>	Community residing in the City of Charles Sturt	
<b>Stakeholders</b>	<b>Name/Position</b>	<b>Key Interest</b>
	City of Charles Sturt	Relevant staff and Community
	RSPCA	Animal management training Overflow of potential volunteers
	Dog and Cat management Board	Governance
	Flinders University Adelaide University	Social Student placement
	Animal Welfare League	Grooming Training
	Local Vets	Referral and Community education
<b>Project Objectives</b>	1) Older residents of the City of Charles Sturt and persons	



# Project Brief

	<p>with a disability are able to continue to look after their pets in situations in which they may have had to give up their care</p> <p>2) Older residents of the City of Charles Sturt and persons with a disability are able to enjoy the health benefits of a pet in situations previously where they may have had to give up a pets care</p> <p>3) ) Older residents of the City of Charles Sturt and persons with a disability with pets are have increased social networks that are meaningful to them</p> <p>4) Older residents of the City of Charles Sturt and persons with a disability have plans for pet care in the event of them being unwell</p> <p>5)Pets health and quality of life is maintained or improved</p> <p>6) Learnings from the project assist the City of Charles Sturt in their decision to consider the program in an ongoing capacity</p>
<b>Start Date</b>	November 2014- start up and project development
<b>End Date</b>	January 2016
<b>Key Deliverables</b>	<p>Development and mail-out of Survey to establish level of need in Community</p> <p>Establishment of procedures and support to administer the service to HACC eligible residents</p> <p>The effective recruitment and screening of volunteers</p> <p>Training and induction of volunteers to advise them about legislative requirements for walking dogs etc.</p> <p>Matching of Volunteers with animals and owners</p> <p>Program Commencement</p> <p>Mid Term and End Term evaluation</p> <p>Recognition of Volunteers at Corporate event</p>
<b>Key Milestones</b>	<p>November2014 – report to Council</p> <p>November 2014 – Survey developed and sent out</p> <p>December 2015 – results collated</p> <p>January 2015– Volunteers recruited, inducted and trained and Volunteers matched to pets and residents</p> <p>February 2015- Program commences</p> <p>July 2015 mid project evaluation and report</p> <p>December – feedback survey developed and sent out</p> <p>January 2016 Results collated – and report to Council</p>

# Project Brief

<b>Assumptions</b>	There is an unmet need in Charles Sturt Council has access to community Team leader Community Care and staff has time and budget available to oversee project Staff at Charles Sturt will cooperate Council wants to support the Companion Animal Project Volunteers will be available and suitable and will attend required training Be tailored to individual client circumstances and needs Comply with all legislative, standards and requirements	
	<b>Constraints</b> Pilot Project to be completed by January 2016 Staff availability to support project No specific funding available Volunteer availability and suitability	
	<b>Key Risks</b> Community does not have a desire to be involved Council not supportive of project Volunteers ability to manage other peoples pets	
	<b>Project Manager</b> Debra Whetstone, Dani Scuteri and Jennifer Jacobs	
<b>Project Team</b>	Position Team Leader Community Care	<b>Key Interest</b> Referral and assessment of clients Potential ongoing HACC project
	Project Officer Public Health and Safety	Animal Management and Training
	Volunteer Service Development Officer	Recruitment of Volunteers and matching to clients/pets
	Marketing team	Fliers and Webpage development



# Companion Animal Program Survey (For Pet Owners)

Save on postage! Complete this survey online – go to [www.surveymonkey.com/s/companion\\_animal\\_2014](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/companion_animal_2014)

The City of Charles Sturt is considering introducing a service to assist older residents and people living with a disability who need some help to care for their pets. This service may include taking your dog for a walk or helping to feed, clean or groom your pet. **The service would be provided by a volunteer and coordinated through Council.**

To help Council continue its planning, we invite you to complete the following survey and post back to: Deb Whetstone care of City of Charles Sturt using the enclosed envelope, or complete the survey online using the above web address by Monday 9 February 2015.

## 1. What type of pet/s do you have?

☐ Dog ☐ Cat ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. Describe what your pet means to you (you can indicate more than one answer).

- ☐ My pet is important to me
- ☐ My pet is very important and is part of my family
- ☐ My pet is important and provides me with company
- ☐ My pet is important and helps me feel safe
- ☐ Having a pet motivates me to go for a walk
- ☐ I enjoy having a pet, however I don't like going out and leaving it at home alone
- ☐ I enjoy having my pet now but probably wouldn't get another one
- ☐ Having a pet is not important to me

## 3. At the moment, are you able to care for your pet? (you can indicate more than one answer).

- ☐ Yes – all the time (skip to question 5)
- ☐ Yes – however some help would be good
- ☐ No – often it is difficult
- ☐ No – find it very difficult

## 4. What type of support do you require to help you look after your pet?

- ☐ Assistance with grooming and cleaning my pet
- ☐ Helping to feed my pet/s regularly
- ☐ Taking my pet for a walk or exercise and playing with my dog
- ☐ Assistance attending vet appointments
- ☐ Other (please describe) \_\_\_\_\_

**5. At the moment, do you have someone assisting you regularly or occasionally to help care for your pet?**

- ☐ Yes – A family member
- ☐ Yes – A neighbour/friend
- ☐ Yes – A support worker
- ☐ No

**6. If Council introduced this service for older residents; do you think you would use it? (Keeping in mind that the Companion Animal Service would be provided by a volunteer)**

- ☐ Yes – regularly (skip to question 9)
- ☐ Yes – occasionally (skip to question 9)
- ☐ No – not at all

*If you have answered 'Yes' please ensure you provide your details in Question 10.*

**7. If you answered 'No' to the previous question, please tell us the reason why you would not want to use the Animal Companion Service:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**8. If this service goes ahead, Council will be recruiting volunteers for this program. If you are not planning to access the services yourself, would you be interested in volunteering on this program?**

- ☐ Yes – please provide your name and contact details at the end of this survey
- ☐ No

**9. Other comments / questions:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**10. Your Details: (Optional)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for taking the time to provide feedback.**

*The personal information requested on this form is being collected by Council for assessing whether a Companion Animal Program for Older People is needed within the City of Charles Sturt. The personal information will be used solely by Council for the primary purpose or directly related purposes. The privacy of your information is protected by law and will be treated in confidence. You do not need to put your name on this survey form.*





## Companion Animal Program - Survey

We are conducting this service to evaluate the difference this service has made to participating residents and their dogs. Can you please return the survey in the enclosed "Reply Paid Envelope" before 14 October 2016.

### A little bit of information about you:

Age range: ☐ Under 65 ☐ 65 – 70 ☐ 71-75 ☐ 76 or over

### Your household:

Please indicate whether you are living independently as a single person or as a member of a couple of larger household:

☐ Single person ☐ Couple/family

### Please indicate who has the primary attachment or responsibility for the care of your dog

☐ Female ☐ Male ☐ Couple/family

40

### How would you describe your cultural identity?

☐ Australian ☐ Indigenous Australian ☐ Non-English speaking background

### Which of the following best reflects the nature of your accommodation?

☐ Private home owner ☐ Private rental home ☐ Public Housing ☐ Other

### How long have you been participating in the Companion Animal Program?

☐ 0-2 months ☐ 2-4 months ☐ 4-6 months ☐ 6 months or more

### How would you rate the information and support you have received for this service. (Please feel free to add any comments at the end of the survey).

☐ Very good ☐ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Poor ☐ Very Poor

PTO

**How often do you receive pet care support through the Companion Animal Program?**

☐ Once a fortnight    ☐ Once a week    ☐ Twice a week    ☐ Three or more times a week

**Is this enough?**    ☐ Yes    ☐ No

**If your answer was no, how often would you like to receive the service?**

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**At this stage, dog walking is the main support provided through the Companion Animal Program. Please rate your satisfaction with this service.**

☐ Very Satisfied    ☐ Somewhat Satisfied    ☐ Neutral    ☐ Dissatisfied    ☐ Very Dissatisfied

**Please tick what additional services you and your dog would benefit from now or in the foreseeable future:**

Grooming:    ☐ Now    ☐ Future

Washing:    ☐ Now    ☐ Future

Vet Visits:    ☐ Now    ☐ Future

Training/behaviour support:    ☐ Now    ☐ Future

Application of flea/worming treatments:    ☐ Now    ☐ Future

Foster care or boarding help:    ☐ Now    ☐ Future

Other:    ☐ Now    ☐ Future

If other, please describe:

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**How would you rate your dog's participation in the Companion Animal Program as having an influence over your own health and wellness?**

☐ Very high      ☐ High      ☐ Neutral      ☐ Somewhat      ☐ Not at all

**Have you noticed any behavioural changes in your dog?**

☐ Calmer      ☐ Less Barking      ☐ No changes      ☐ Other

If Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Do you feel your pet is benefiting and enjoys participating in the program?**

☐ Very true      ☐ True      ☐ Neutral      ☐ Somewhat      ☐ Not at all

## **Volunteers**

**How would you rate your Volunteer Visitor?**

☐ Very Good      ☐ Good      ☐ Fair      ☐ Poor      ☐ Very Poor

**Do you think your Volunteer Visitor is a good match for you?**

☐ Strongly agree      ☐ Agree      ☐ Undecided      ☐ Disagree      ☐ Strongly Disagree

**Do you think your Volunteer Visitor is a good match for your dog?**

☐ Strongly agree      ☐ Agree      ☐ Undecided      ☐ Disagree      ☐ Strongly Disagree

**How would you rate your Companion Animal Program Volunteers' care of your dog?**

☐ Very good      ☐ Good      ☐ Fair      ☐ Poor      ☐ Very Poor

**As a result of participating in the Companion Animal Program, do you feel better connected with your Council/Community?**

☐ Strongly agree    ☐ Agree    ☐ Undecided    ☐ Disagree    ☐ Strongly Disagree

**Has this service helped you consider your future care needs and those of your dog, especially in the case of an emergency?**

☐ Strongly agree    ☐ Agree    ☐ Undecided    ☐ Disagree    ☐ Strongly Disagree

**If this program could be expanded to include greater levels of assistance, would you be comfortable with making an affordable co-payment?**

☐ Yes    ☐ No

**Would you recommend this service to others?**

☐ Yes    ☐ No

**Comments:**

Please feel free to add any other comments you wish to make or, if you have a special story about how this program has made a special difference to you and your pet, please share it here.

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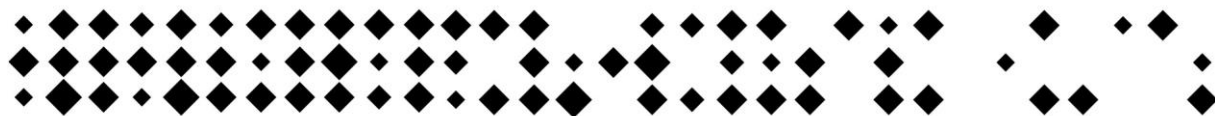
If you have any questions relating to this program or the survey please contact Cynthia Griffiths, Community Care Officer, Respite & Socialisation on 8408 1846. If you wish to be contacted please provide your name and contact number here:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Number: \_\_\_\_\_

***Thank you for taking the time to share your valued feedback.***





## Standard Operating Procedure – Companion Animal Project

<b>First Issued / Approved</b>	October 2015
<b>Reference number and version</b>	15/238822 – Version 2.0
<b>Review Frequency:</b>	Annual
<b>Last Reviewed:</b>	N/A
<b>Next Review Due:</b>	October 2017
<b>Responsible Officer(s):</b>	Project Officer – Public Health and Safety , Team Leader Community Care, Volunteer Service Development Officer
<b>Council File Reference:</b>	B9106
<b>Applicable Legislation:</b>	Dog and Cat Management Act 1995
<b>Relevant Policies:</b>	Dog and Cat Management Policy
<b>Related Guidelines &amp; SWP's</b>	N/A

### 44 1. Purpose

This document is designed to set out the procedure for the Companion Animal Project. The processes and procedures contained within it are to be adhered to at all times. The need for this document is to ensure the safety of all involved in the project namely the volunteers, clients and their pets.

### 2. Objective

The objective of this document is to create consistency and clear processes regarding the Companion Animal Project and to ensure all involved are aware of their responsibilities. Furthermore this document highlights the importance of adhering to the outlined procedures to ensure the safety of all involved.

#### 2.1 Responsibility

Project Coordinator Assist with the ongoing implementation and delivery of the project.  
Support the Coordinator of program  
Ensure that service visits are recorded  
Ongoing review of matches to support of clients and volunteers

Project Officer Public Health and Safety

Provide guidance in relation to any legislative responsibilities in terms of animal management, care and volunteer responsibilities.  
 Coordinate the training and visits by the Community Safety Officers.  
 Provide statistical data in relation to Charles Sturt Dog Ownership.  
 Assist with the ongoing implementation and delivery of the project.

#### Volunteer Service Development Officer

Assist in the recruitment/induction of the volunteers and any ongoing training needs  
 Assist with the ongoing implementation and delivery of the project.  
 Ongoing support to the Coordinator of the program

#### Community Safety Officers

Responsible for assisting the volunteers and clients in matching dogs to the volunteers to minimise the risk of any incidents and ensure both the dog owner and the volunteer are comfortable. Furthermore to provide assistance in animal handling enquiries and provide the volunteers with guidance relating to animal ownership and care.

#### Volunteers

Carry out their duties in line with this SOP and the Volunteer Role Description, and understand the responsibilities involved in this project as outlined within this SOP.

### **3. Procedure**

#### **3.1 Walking the clients dog**

Ensure the lead is placed on the dog securely prior to leaving the property. The dog lead must be less than 2m in length and can not be a retractable lead. If using a harness on the dog please ensure the harness is placed securely onto the dog and the lead attached prior to leaving the property.

45 Do not wrap the lead around your wrist or hand. If you need additional security in holding the dog during the walk hold the end of the lead with one hand and the middle of the lead with the other keeping the dog close to you.

Ensure you carry dog waste bags with you at all times when walking the dog as required under Charles Sturt By-Law No 5 and ensure you pick up any dog faeces the dog may produce.

Please remember that the person walking the dog is legally responsible for the dog that is being walked at the time therefore anything which may occur at the time the dog is being walked is the responsibility of the dog walker.

Notwithstanding the Council will ensure all volunteers involved are provided with adequate training to ensure they are able to comfortably and confidently undertake these tasks.

Please ensure the dog remains on the lead until it is safely secured back onto it's property and the dog owner is present at the time the dog is returned home. Therefore the dog is not to be taken off lead at any time during the walk and places where dogs congregate such as dog parks and fenced reserves are to be avoided.

### 3.2 Dog attack/ harassment while walking the dog

In an unlikely event that an attack or harassment does happen when you are in care and control of the clients dog please remember the following.

- All attacks/ harassments must be reported to Council
- Please attempt to get the details of any other dog owners or witnesses to the incident
- Attacks and Harassments are both equally investigated and treated as specified in the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995
- Depending on the outcome of the dog attack/harassment investigation if the dog you are in control of is found to be responsible you will be responsible for any expiations or ramifications as a result of the incident.

### 3.3 Expiations received while walking the dog

In an unlikely instance that an expiation is received for any breach of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 or Council By-Laws while the dog is being walked and in your control you are responsible for those expiations.

An example of this could be not picking up after the dog and subsequently receiving an expiation.

## 4 Monitoring and Review of Procedure

This procedure was endorsed by \_\_\_\_\_ to take effect on \_\_\_\_\_.

Thereafter it will be reviewed annually. The next date of review is \_\_\_\_\_.

## 5 Volunteer Acknowledgement

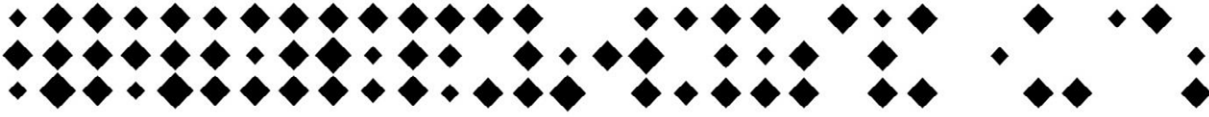
I acknowledge that I have received this procedure and understand my obligations , responsibilities and duties.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Volunteer Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Document History:	Version No:	Issue Date:	Description of Change:
	1.0	October 2015	New Document.
	2.0	October 2016	Clarification on Walking procedure and taking the dog off lead



# Companion Animal Project – Coping with the weather

## Tips for Residents and Volunteers

As we head into the summer months and the temperature climbs above 30°C, we should be considering our own wellbeing and those of our beloved companion animals. Therefore, within the Companion Animal Project it is important to take necessary precautions for both participants and animal safety.

### *During hot temperatures:*

- Keep out of the heat as much as possible. Do not walk dogs in hot, humid conditions
- Avoid going out between 11am and 3pm altogether. On hot days try to walk the dog early in the morning or in the evening when it is cool
- Avoid sand, concrete, asphalt or any other areas where heat is reflected and there is no access to shade – the ground is potentially very hot and will burn dogs' paws
- Make sure that the dog has shade and plenty of cool water
- Carry a bottle of water when outside the house, wear a broad-brimmed hat, put on sunglasses and apply SPF 30+ sunscreen
- Wear lightweight, light-coloured, loose fitting cotton clothing
- Take a cool shower or bath to cool yourself down after walking the dog when you feel hot. If this is not possible, use a wet flannel or towel to wipe yourself down

### *Other weather events:*

- 47 When extreme weather is forecast in South Australia, the RSPCA recommends that pet owners need to be extremely aware of their pets' safety and security needs. Therefore:

- Do not walk dogs during severe rain, storms or wind. They may become frightened or startled
- Do not walk dogs in light rain unless the dog, yourself and the owner are comfortable
- Navigate around wet, slippery surfaces after rain events to avoid falls
- Wear appropriate clothing and footwear for cold and/or wet weather protection

### *In general:*

- Consider the duration and intensity of the walk you are taking – adjust to the temperature and weather conditions as needed
- Take into account your personal health, fitness and acclimatisation – do not try and walk longer or faster than you are able.

***And most importantly, be considerate of the owner of the dog's wishes. For the walking of the dog to take place, all parties must be comfortable and happy for it to occur – on every single occasion!***

For questions and enquiries regarding weather, temperature or other concerns, please contact:

**Companion Animal Project Coordinator on 8408 1111**



## Volunteer Role Description

### Companion Animal Project Visitor

<b>Division</b>	City Services
<b>Portfolio</b>	Community Services
<b>Business Unit</b>	Community Care
<b>Level</b>	N/A
<b>Responsible To</b>	Coordinator Companion Animal Project

#### Objectives to the Position

A Companion Animal Project Visitor provides regular companionship and visits to a City of Charles Sturt resident (client) aged 65 years and older, who requires support in caring for the companion animal.

#### Key Responsibilities

Visit selected resident on a regular (e.g. fortnightly) basis.

Assist the client with caring for their companion animal. This may include exercising, bathing or grooming.

Provide the coordinator with a record of dates and times of visits.

Respect the rights of residents and exercise duty of care at all times.

Respect the decisions made by the owner regarding the care of their animal.

Report difficulties, issues or concerns during visits to the Coordinator.

Report to the coordinator if you are asked to undertake any financial or legal responsibilities or any other tasks outside the duties on this role description eg Shopping, as Council may be able to offer other services that can assist the resident.

Advise the coordinator if you wish to cease visiting on a temporary or permanent basis.

#### Key Personal Attributes

##### 1. Skills (including personal attributes)

Good communication skills.

Demonstrated reliability.

Being able to follow instructions and work within boundaries.

Able to work independently.

Customer Service focussed.

Good listening skills.

Be compassionate, cheerful and positive.

Be patient, understanding and tolerant of cultural and varied backgrounds.

Interest and experience in caring for animals.

Ability to work effectively with older persons.

Respect confidentiality.

## 2. Conditions

Participate in support meetings and training sessions where required.

Volunteers will be reimbursed for out of pocket expenses as approve by Coordinator.

Inform the Coordinator if they are experiencing any difficulties with undertaking their responsibilities.

Notify the Coordinator as soon as practical of any accident, incident or hazard while performing volunteer duties.

Notify the Coordinator if unavailable either on a temporary or permanent basis.

Notify the Coordinator if the role is not appropriate and another role may be sought.

Comply with WHS requirements:

- Wear the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) that is issued eg hat, gloves etc
- Sun Protection – long sleeves, pants and wide brimmed hat.
- Enclosed shoes to be worn.
- Read, understand and sign off on relevant training documents eg Safe Work Procedures (SWP), Safe Operating Procedures (SOP) and Safety Information Sheets (SIS) and risk assessments.
- Complete an Incident & Hazard Notification Form as soon as practical of any accident, incident or hazard while performing volunteer duties.
- Abide by any rules and regulations which are relevant to the program (these will be notified to the volunteer by the coordinator).
- Be aware of any risks and control measures (refer **Activity Task Risk Assessment – Companion Animal Project Volunteer**).

### I agree to:

- Abide by conditions as set out in the Volunteer Role Description.
- Wear my volunteer badge at all times while performing my duties.
- Adhere to the conditions, policies relevant to this position. (Refer to the Volunteer Information Handbook).
- Work within guidelines of Work Health Safety Legislation.
- Keep open communication with the Program Coordinator.
- Participate in training provided that is relevant to this position.

- Comply with the Volunteer Code of Conduct.

☒ This role requires a DCSI aged care clearance

### Category 1 Training

*To be completed prior to commencement of role:*

- Program Specific, On-site Induction
- Hazard/Incident reporting
- Legislative Training re: Responsibilities when taking care of another person's pet (SOP)

### Category 2 Training

*To be completed as soon as possible:*

- Corporate Induction which includes information on Animal Handling and Home Visiting older people.
- Manual Handling.

### Category 3 Training:

*Recommended training:*

- Customer Service
- Cultural Awareness
- Mental Health Basics

**Volunteer's Name (Print):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Volunteer's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Program Coordinator's Name (Print):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Program Coordinator's:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Volunteer Service Development Officer's Name (Print):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Volunteer Service Development Officer's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Manager's Name (Print):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Manager's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_



# Companion Animal Project Assessment

## Client Information

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

(Mr/Mrs/Ms) First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Suburb: \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Male ☐ Female Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Estimate

Country of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Language Spoken at Home: \_\_\_\_\_

English Skills: ☐ Good ☐ Reasonable ☐ Limited ☐ Interpreter Required

Indigenous Status: ☐ Non Indigenous ☐ Aboriginal ☐ Torres Strait Islander ☐ Not Known

## Referral Consent

Has client given verbal or written consent for the referral to Council of personal information? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Has client given verbal or written consent to allow future contact from the Community Care team including phone calls and written information? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Has client given permission to record personal information on the database and submit statistical data to DSS? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Has client been given verbal or written information on Rights, Responsibilities, Advocacy or Complaints? ☐ Yes ☐ No

## Other Services

Are there any other services/volunteers that visit the client? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Details (what for, what days and what organisation):

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## Client Information

Lives with: ☐ Alone ☐ Spouse/Partner ☐ Family Other \_\_\_\_\_

Accommodation: ☐ Own Home ☐ SAHT ☐ Private Rental Other \_\_\_\_\_

## Relevant Medical History

Principle Diagnosis: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobility Aides: ☐ Walking Stick – inside/outside ☐ Walking frame ☐ Wheelchair

Doctor: \_\_\_\_\_ Clinic: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Details: \_\_\_\_\_

Ambulance Cover? ☐ Yes ☐ No Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**OHW&S Issues**

Does the client have any behaviour issues (i.e. cognitive, personality, dementia)? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Details: \_\_\_\_\_

Are there any environmental safety concerns when providing services (i.e. broken steps, abusive neighbour)? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Details: \_\_\_\_\_

**Emergency Contacts**

**1. Contact:** (Mr/Mrs/Ms) \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_ English Skills: ☐ Good ☐ Reasonable ☐ Limited ☐ Interpreter Required

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Contact:** (Mr/Mrs/Ms) \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_ English Skills: ☐ Good ☐ Reasonable ☐ Limited ☐ Interpreter Required

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

**Pet Information**

Type of Breed: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Dog: \_\_\_\_\_

Size of Dog: ☐ Small ☐ Medium ☐ Large

Age of Dog: \_\_\_\_\_ Sex: ☐ Male ☐ Female De-sexed: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Any medical conditions (e.g. arthritis, diabetes, poor sight)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Veterinarian Information**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Suburb: \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Last Visit: \_\_\_\_\_



**What is the dogs' reaction to the following?**

Type of Interaction	What owner says	Observation
Traffic	<hr/>	<hr/>
Other dogs	<hr/>	<hr/>
Other animals	<hr/>	<hr/>
People	<hr/>	<hr/>
Children	<hr/>	<hr/>

**Dog's personality:**

Characteristic	What owner says	Observation
Dominant (humping)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Docile	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hyperactive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Timid	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Barking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Anxious	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Excitable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Boisterous	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Overly Friendly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any interesting habits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**What tasks are you finding it difficult to do for your pet? What would you like assistance with?**

<input type="checkbox"/> Walking	<input type="checkbox"/> Exercising/playing	<input type="checkbox"/> Feeding
<input type="checkbox"/> Veterinarian trips	<input type="checkbox"/> Coat care	<input type="checkbox"/> Human interaction/socialisation
<input type="checkbox"/> Other pet	<input type="checkbox"/> Other assistance (please specify) _____	

**Do you have any of the following?**

<input type="checkbox"/> Dog collar	<input type="checkbox"/> Dog lead	<input type="checkbox"/> Poo bags	<input type="checkbox"/> Pet comb/brush
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**When would you like a volunteer to provide support?***Please indicate when you would be available (please tick)*

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Morning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Afternoon	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evening	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Notes/comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**Other Pet/s**

Type of Pet: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Pet: \_\_\_\_\_

Size of Pet: ☐ Small ☐ Medium ☐ LargeAge of Pet: \_\_\_\_\_ Sex: ☐ Male ☐ Female De-sexed: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Any medical conditions (e.g. arthritis, diabetes, poor sight)

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**Other notes/comments**


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### Action Taken

[illegible]

Assessor: \_\_\_\_\_



## My pet is home alone

If I become ill or injured,  
please contact the  
people on the reverse  
side to care for my pet.



## My pet is home alone

If I become ill or injured,  
please contact the  
people on the reverse  
side to care for my pet.



## My pet is home alone

If I become ill or injured,  
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people on the reverse  
side to care for my pet.



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people on the reverse  
side to care for my pet.



## My pet is home alone

If I become ill or injured,  
please contact the  
people on the reverse  
side to care for my pet.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

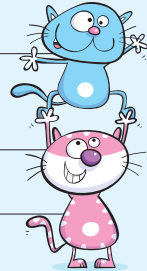


Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

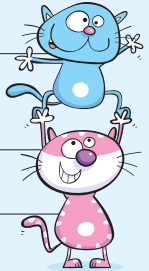


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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

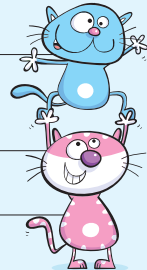


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Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

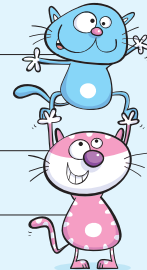


Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



## Project Brief - Pets of Older People – an opportunity for councils

### Project Description

What is a Pets and Older People service?

A Pets and Older People service is for Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) eligible older people, who have pets and for whom their experience of positive ageing, is in part supported and enriched through their relationship with their pet. This service recognises that alongside other in home care support services, including social, domestic and practical support, that community-based assistance with pet care is essential to the health and well-being of older people and their pets.

Based on the evidence from existing pet service programs, the provision of pet service support not only meets a significant service gap for the most isolated and marginalised older people and their pets in our community but creates a special opportunity to engage a broader demographic of new volunteers and in doing so, enriches the local social capital of communities.

This project brief recognises the power of pets, the meaning and purpose they give to people and the mutual benefits of ensuring the health and wellbeing of both human and pet delivered at a grassroots level.

### Objectives

- Support a minimum of 15 isolated or incapacitated older people to enhance their health and wellbeing;
- Improve the health and wellbeing of pets through access to support (exercised, groomed etc) at a minimum of once a week;
- Attract a minimum of 20 volunteers to participate in a program that enhances their well-being through their minimum weekly participation towards increasing their skill base and increasing their physical activity and ultimately their own sense of purpose ;
- Community social bonds increased by prospect of a) attracting new group of older people to access council's services and b) new cohort of volunteers to this program; with all three groups better informed and connected to their local community;
- Community collaboration through the establishment of a reference group made up of community stakeholders including animal service providers such as vets, groomers etc to add their expertise and develop loyalty schemes to support their businesses.

### Description of Tasks

General/primary mission is to strengthen community bonds at the local level to ensure the best welfare of older people and their pets via support that will provide the following activities:

	<p>Dog walking; basic pet grooming; bathing; assistance with cleaning pet areas; application of flea/worming treatments or other medications.</p> <p>It is envisaged that this support can be a conduit for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharing relevant information about programs and services that may be of interest to older people via their volunteer;</li> <li>• Volunteer able to observe and report of gaps in services that inhibit older people from ageing positively;</li> <li>• Assist individuals, communities and service providers (including councils) to consider and plan for the needs of pets and older people.</li> </ul>
<b>Primary Actions/Timelines</b>	<p>0-1 months – identify supporters within organisation to establish pilot companion animal support program; Determine strengths or weaknesses specific to your community (nearby relevant stakeholders or service providers with vested interest in this service); Identify internal units with shared interest/skills and capitalise on opportunity to collaborate, for example animal management team.</p> <p>1-2 months – seek formal recognition approval to proceed with pilot;</p> <p>2-3 months – refine and send out survey to determine community interest and need;</p> <p>2-4 months - collate responses;</p> <p>4-6 months – recruit, assess, train and match participants (minimum 5 older persons);</p> <p>6-12 months – Carry out pilot program; begin with weekly reports on progress of service for the first month; fortnightly for the second month and a minimum of once a month for the remaining 4 months of the pilot.</p> <p>Evaluation of pilot program to be carried out informally for the duration of the pilot with a formal evaluation of the service including the measurable impact the service has had on the residents, pets and older people to be concluded in the final month of the trial. Consider the opportunity for volunteer/residents and staff involved in program to have a social event. Promotion of service in local newsletter/newspaper/social media.</p>
<b>Expected Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reported improved health and well-being of older persons and pets;</li> <li>• Volunteers' lives enriched through participation in the service;</li> <li>• Greater community connection for all participant with their local community from awareness of services, including local places to walk/exercise pets (dogs);</li> <li>• Positive ageing opportunities realised through physical and social opportunities of program and development of local intergenerational awareness and bonds of active and positive ageing.</li> <li>• Identification of aspects to improve</li> </ul>

<b>Stakeholders</b>	Council	Relevant staff (admin & councillors)
	Government	Dog and Cat Management Board
	Tertiary Sector	TAFE: potential source of skilled volunteers/work experience by attracting student veterinary nurses & community services TAFE students to volunteer at service inception and long term;  University: Social work placement students to assist with establishment or development of program. Volunteering in this service could also support students' learning about social justice issues including systems and responses.
	Community	Older people Older people's pets Volunteers (ideally from same or adjacent suburb to that of older person & their pet. Community aged care service providers, including medical services (referrals).
	Animal Welfare	RSPCA South Australia, Animal Welfare League SA
	Businesses	Local Veterinary Clinics Force-free Dog Trainers Force-Free Groomers Pet Nannies/Pet Boarding Dog Day Care Services Pet Supplies
<b>Project Management Structure</b>	Project Manager (oversees service), project coordinator (manages residents/participants), volunteer coordinator (recruits and assists project coordinator to appropriately match participant, pet and volunteer. Animal Management officer support (assess animal and provide advice on animal-related issues) Communications/marketing (advice and consistency of corporate image).	
<b>Project Team</b>	Community Development & Home Care Support Team; Volunteer Coordinator; Animal Management; Community Older Person's Advisory Group	
<b>Steering Committee/Reference Group</b>	Local stakeholders including possibly existing older persons' advisory group (representative); councillor; force-free dog trainer/groomer; aged care providers.	

Budget and Resources	<p>(Note set-up of service would attract an initial investment of additional staff hours that would be reduced once program fully-operational to maintenance hours).</p> <p>15 hours per week of staffing across stated roles;</p> <p>15 volunteers times minimum of 1.5 hours of support equates to a minimum of 37.5 hours per week of support.</p> <p>RSPCA South Australia Toolkit – includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- examples of existing service models;</li> <li>- forms, policy and procedure samples;</li> <li>- training advice</li> <li>- sample promotional leaflets;</li> <li>- sample informational booklet for participants and volunteers</li> <li>- selected reference list that provides evidence to support provision of pet care.</li> </ul> <p>Existing resources – for example, existing social support volunteer drivers (prepared to assist with transportation of pets to vet visit appointments); Community Bus to transport participants/volunteers to training opportunities – focus groups etc; animal management expertise and equipment (animal cages to assist with transportation of cat etc to vet visit); local mobile vet or pensioner discount pet service providers. Trainee veterinary nurses and community services TAFE students as potential program volunteers; Social Work student placement to assist with the establishment/development of pet care support programs.</p>
Constraints and key risks	<p>CHSP and consumer directed care, provides older people with the opportunity to tailor and determine their own care needs – however, the market funding approach creates risk in the unpredictable future of funding for aged care providers. An inflexible and risk averse approach that limits program delivery to office working hours can create a missed opportunity for broad community involvement.</p>
Risk Management/Governance	<p>Work Health &amp; Safety policy/procedure;</p> <p>Contract clearly explaining service provision, rights and obligations for resident and volunteer.</p> <p>Training – basic animal handling &amp; animal council by-laws; Strengths-based/empowerment approach to supporting older people;</p> <p>Animal transportation policy/procedure;</p> <p>Emergency procedure;</p>
Policies and legislation	<p>Adherence required to any necessary legislative and stipulated internal policies and procedures.</p>

#### References:

“Guide to Preparing a Strategic Companion Animal Management Plan” NSW Department of Local Government July 2001.



## Volunteers

Do you enjoy engaging with older people and do you love animals? Both ingredients are essential to this program.

How might you benefit from giving your time to this program?

- Making new positive social connections
- Pleasure of helping an older person maintain their companion animal bond and independence
- Joy of interacting with animals
- Learn more about support available for older people in your community
- Learn more about pet care
- Improve your health and wellbeing by participating in this program

### ***What kind of commitment is involved?***

This may vary but in most cases, a commitment of an hour once a week is preferred. Matching is thoughtfully considered to ensure your skills and preferences and, the needs of the older person and their pet align.

## What else do you need to know?

### ***Legal responsibilities***

All participants will be provided with clear advice about rights and responsibilities, including any specific advice or training pertaining to the program.

Please note that the person walking a dog is legally responsible for the actions of that dog. A person walking a dog is required to carry doggy doo bags and clean up after the dog.



## Residents

Please contact us on the Council phone number provided about other needs you may have.

If we cannot provide the support you need, we can help direct you to someone who can. Your feedback matters, is respected and is treated confidentially. Please contact our staff to advise of any compliments, complaints or suggestions. Any negative feedback will not adversely affect the support we provide.



***Sometimes we need a helping hand to care for our pets.***

*Are you an older person living at home who needs some help to care for your pet?  
Or are you someone looking for a rewarding volunteer role?*

*Participating in a companion animal support program could be purrfect for you!*



## Our pets matter

Many people say that they would be lost without the companionship of their pet. Evidence suggests that pets may contribute to our lives in some of the following ways:

- Improved physical health
- Strengthening social connections
- Emotional well-being
- Companionship and safety
- Purpose and meaning

### Positive Ageing

Part of a positive ageing experience is being able to access support for things that matter to us.

At some stage, in addition to in-home care support for ourselves, we may need some help to care for our pets.

### Types of pet care

**(either long term or short term) may be:**

- Dog walking
- Pet grooming/bathing
- Administering flea/worming treatments
- Transport to veterinary /professional groomer appointments



- Connecting with other pet support services or aged care supports
- Developing a pet plan for unanticipated absences
- Help cleaning pet areas and bedding (Please note that any commercial services, including vet bills, treatments or professional grooming fees are the responsibility of the pet guardian).

### Eligibility for this program

This service is delivered as part of the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) which means you need to:

- Be living at home
- 65 years and over and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, 50 years and over.
- Registered with My Aged Care

**This program is free for eligible Council residents.**



## How does the program work?

Either you, a family member or an agency that supports you can refer you to this program. *(See contact details below)*. Information about your needs, preferences and pets needs will be collected.

A staff member will arrange to visit you and your pet at your home and will fully explain the program. If all parties wish to proceed, a volunteer will be sought.

A meeting at a mutually suitable time will be arranged between you, a staff member and the volunteer at your home. At any stage, you or the volunteer may withdraw from the program freely.

### Contact

Roger Rabbit

Ph: 8205 8000

Email: [rrabbit@rspcasa.org.au](mailto:rrabbit@rspcasa.org.au)

## Pet Profile Form

### Resident's Details

Resident's Name	
Address	
Phone Number	
Language Interpreter/support required?	

### Emergency Contact

Name		Relationship	
Phone number			

### Veterinary Information

Name of Veterinary Clinic		Phone Number	
Date of Last Visit/Purpose			

### Pet's Details

Name of Pet		Type/Breed of Pet	
Size of Pet	<input type="checkbox"/> Small (Under 10 kilos) <input type="checkbox"/> Medium (10-30 kilos) <input type="checkbox"/> Large (30 kilos plus)		
Age of Pet		Sex: Male/Female	De-sexed: Yes/No
Pet Registered:	Yes/No	Micro-chipped:	Yes/No
Age of pet when acquired		Acquired from: e.g. breeder / rescue	
Pet Training/Socialisation Background	Puppy classes / socialisation? Yes/No Level of formal training if any? (please list below) Is additional training support needed? Yes/No  <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>		

Pet's Medical History (arthritis, allergies, diabetes, vision/hearing impairment etc)

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Please indicate whether any of the following may cause distress or frighten your pet:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Traffic                              | <input type="checkbox"/> People (eg, crowds, men or small children) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Storms (including strong winds/rain) | <input type="checkbox"/> Loud or particular noises                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other Animals                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Other                                      |

If any of the above ticked, please include specific details, including the degree of reaction from the animal and methods employed for calming animal. Please provide separate sheet if necessary.

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Pet's Personality

Please tick which of these characteristics are true of your pet (particularly in an unfamiliar environment):

- |                                     |   |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Easy going | <input type="checkbox"/> Highly Excitable | <input type="checkbox"/> Timid              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anxious    | <input type="checkbox"/> Vocal            | <input type="checkbox"/> Strong & Energetic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reactive   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other 1          | <input type="checkbox"/> Other 2            |

Details:

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Has the animal ever bitten a person or another animal? Yes/No

If yes, what were the circumstances/severity and consequences?

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Pet Support Tasks Required:

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Walking           | <input type="checkbox"/> Basic Grooming                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Feeding            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stimulating play  | <input type="checkbox"/> Transport to vet/grooming appointments | <input type="checkbox"/> Flea/Worming       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pet Waste Removal | <input type="checkbox"/> Kitty Litter Tray Cleaning             | <input type="checkbox"/> Fish Tank Cleaning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other             |   |   |

(Please note that where support with a task cannot be provided by volunteers, support referring you to a local service may be possible. Any costs associated with service from an external party are paid for by the resident).

Please indicate which of the following equipment you will provide:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flat, Sturdy Collar (Dog)                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Flat Sturdy Dog Lead (no longer than 2 metres) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Well-fitted harness for dog walking               | <input type="checkbox"/> Poop Scooper (cat or dog)                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Poop Scoop Bags                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Pet Comb/Brush                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate Cleaning Agents for Pet/Pet Enclosure | <input type="checkbox"/> Other  |

What days are you available for a volunteer to provide support?

- ☐ Mon    ☐ Tues    ☐ Wed    ☐ Thurs    ☐ Fri    ☐ Sat    ☐ Sun

Time of Day (Noting that service can only be provided during daylight hours).

Preferred Time of Day: AM \_\_\_\_\_

PM \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer Preferences

- ☐ Male                      ☐ Female                      ☐ Either

Any other preferences for either the person or animal that should be taken into account?

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In the event of emergency, including hospitalisation or an unplanned absence from the home, do you have a pet support plan in place? Yes/No

## Assessment and Action Plan

Identified Risk	Description of Action/Steps in Place to Minimise Risk

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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## Western Community Aged Care Service Providers - Pets and Older People Project.

### Pets and Older People

**Your feedback is important to the future planning and expansion of volunteer-assisted companion animal support services in the City of Charles Sturt.**

1. What is the name of your organization?

2. Of your clients who live at home, approximately how many have pets?

- ☐ Up to 25%
- ☐ 25%-50%
- ☐ 50% or more
- ☐ Other (please specify)

3. It is common practice for pets to be assessed and recorded as a potential Work, Health and Safety consideration. Do you document client's pets as an important social/emotional support?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Other (please specify)

4. Do you discuss and document an emergency plan for your clients' pets?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

5. Is it common to receive requests for help with pet care needs?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

6. What are the most commonly requested pet care services?

- ☐ Transport to vet
- ☐ Transport to groomer
- ☐ Dog walking
- ☐ Pet feeding
- ☐ Pet boarding
- ☐ Pet foster care
- ☐ Cleaning pet areas
- ☐ Pet behaviour support
- ☐ Other (please specify)

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7. Do you believe that your clients with pets could benefit by having access to a volunteer-assisted companion animal support program?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

8. Would you refer clients to an existing volunteer-assisted companion animal support program?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

9. What barriers are you aware of that may prevent an older person from participating in a companion animal support program?

10. Do you have any other comments, questions, or concerns?

1. Please provide the name of your business and type of animal service that you provide.

2. What type of pets are you mostly assisting?

- ☐ Cats
- ☐ Dogs
- ☐ Birds
- ☐ Pocket pets
- ☐ Other (please specify)

3. What kind of treatments and or services do you provide?

- ☐ Vaccinations
- ☐ Flea \ Worming treatments
- ☐ Pet Care advice
- ☐ Grooming
- ☐ Diet advice
- ☐ Behaviour advice
- ☐ Pet Accessories
- ☐ Pet Food
- ☐ Pet Boarding
- ☐ Dog walking
- ☐ Pet Nanny Services
- ☐ Other (please specify)

4. Approximately what proportion of your clients, who are older or infirm, do you believe could benefit from a volunteer-assisted companion animal care support program?

- ☐ 0-25%
- ☐ 25-50%
- ☐ 50-75%
- ☐ 75-100%
- ☐ None

5. In your experience what is the main barrier to older or infirm people accessing your services?

- ☐ Cost
- ☐ Transport
- ☐ Lack of awareness
- ☐ General social disadvantage
- ☐ Other (please specify)

6. Do you believe that there is a need for a volunteer-assisted companion animal care program in your area?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

7. Would you refer clients to an existing volunteer-assisted companion animal care program?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

8. What sort of discounted services do you provide for eligible customers?

- ☐ Payment plans
- ☐ Senior's discounts
- ☐ None
- ☐ Other (please specify)

9. Would you offer a discounted service to people participating in a volunteer-assisted companion animal care program?

☐ Yes

☐ No

10. Do you have any other comments, questions, or concerns?



# Dealing with Animal Issues

When Disability staff and/or volunteers are faced with an animal issue relating to the welfare or protection of an animal in the client's home or community, the flowchart on the following page which outlines useful steps to follow has been kindly provided by Disabilities SA.

Firstly, determine if the animal is showing signs of pain or suffering, which will determine the level of action to take. In all instances, talk to the client, their family or representative about the concerns. If you believe the animal is suffering and the client does not agree to any intervention to assist the animal, contact the RSPCA immediately for assistance. The RSPCA has the resources and legislation available to attend to the animal's condition. If you feel uncomfortable about calling for assistance from the RSPCA, then contact your supervisor or the Animals Matter Coordinator for support.

If the client is agreeable to taking the appropriate action to attend to the suffering animal, then you may need to support the client to follow through on the necessary action.

Witnessing animal neglect and abuse can be very disturbing. Should you feel you need support to deal with the incident, counselling services are available through the Employee Assistance Program.

Once the animal has been attended to, and there is a plan for resolving the issues, complete the appropriate form.

When all actions have been taken, assess the outcome to ensure the actions were effective.

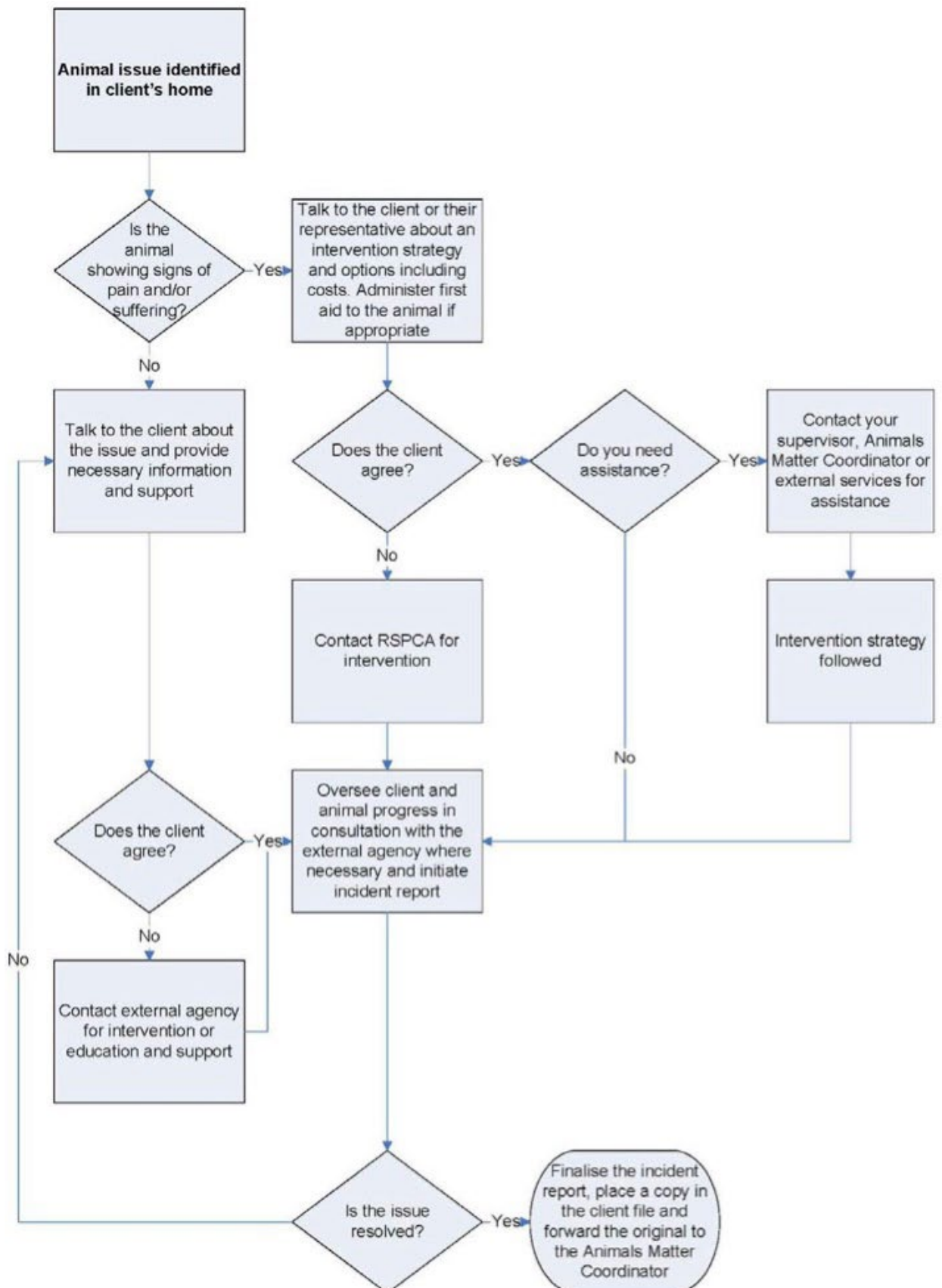
Forward the **original** completed form to your Animals Matter Coordinator and place a **copy** of the form in the client's file.

The Animals Matter Steering Committee will review and discuss the incidents as a basis for further developing the contents in this worker guide, identifying training and education needs for clients and staff, and strengthen relationships with external agencies.

(Excerpt from Disability SA "Animals Matter Handbook", 2016).

## Dealing with Animal Issues Flowchart

A sample of how to deal with animal issues flowchart from Disability SA “The Animals Matter” staff information booklet. Disability SA have an MOU with the RSPCA South Australia.





## Pets and Older People Project

### Companion Animal Support Program

#### Australian community-based and volunteer supported CAPs.

NB – providers included are non-commercial, volunteer-based with no fee or nominal fee.

State	Service's name and website
NSW	<b>POOPs NSW</b> <a href="https://www.rspcansw.org.au/our-work/programs-community-services/pets-for-older-persons">https://www.rspcansw.org.au/our-work/programs-community-services/pets-for-older-persons</a> Sydney Shelter with 4 additional RSPCA NSW branches providing differing levels of POOPs type support.
NSW	<b>Neighbourhood Pets</b> Inner West Sydney Neighbourhood Aid (IWSA)– partnership with RSPCA NSW <a href="http://www.iwna.com.au/">http://www.iwna.com.au/</a>
NSW	<b>CARE for Pets</b> Companion Animals Reward Everyone (CARE) <a href="http://www.careforpets.org.au/">http://www.careforpets.org.au/</a>
VIC	<b>Companion Animal Support Program</b> City of Yarra & North Richmond Community Health (NRCH) partnership <a href="http://www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/Services/Older-persons-services/home-and-support-services/Companion-Animal-Support-Program/">http://www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/Services/Older-persons-services/home-and-support-services/Companion-Animal-Support-Program/</a>
VIC	<b>PetLinks</b> South Port Day Links <a href="http://www.spdl.org.au/services/petlinks">http://www.spdl.org.au/services/petlinks</a> NB – Expression of interest form for Petlinks service. Also – see volunteer tab for application form and role descriptions for dog walkers and pet foster carers.
VIC	<b>Companion Animals Volunteer Service (CAVS)</b> Balwyn Evergreen Centre <a href="https://balwynevergreen.org.au/programs-and-services/services/">https://balwynevergreen.org.au/programs-and-services/services/</a> See CAVS Manual
VIC	LinkHealth – Community Health Centre – LinkPets – in and around City of Monash <a href="http://www.linkhc.org.au/index.php/programs-menu/community-programs/link-pets.html">http://www.linkhc.org.au/index.php/programs-menu/community-programs/link-pets.html</a>
VIC	Pet Companion Program Bridges Connecting Communities <a href="http://www.bridgescc.com.au/pets.html">http://www.bridgescc.com.au/pets.html</a>

State	Service's name and website
VIC	Lort Smith Animal Hospital See Lort Smith Home Support program. <a href="http://www.lortsmith.com/get-involved/volunteering/home-support-program/">http://www.lortsmith.com/get-involved/volunteering/home-support-program/</a> <a href="http://www.moreland.vic.gov.au/community-care/volunteering/lort-smith-home-support/">http://www.moreland.vic.gov.au/community-care/volunteering/lort-smith-home-support/</a>
VIC	Wyndham City Dog Walking Program Wyndham City Council <a href="https://www.wyndham.vic.gov.au/dog-walking-program">https://www.wyndham.vic.gov.au/dog-walking-program</a>
Vic Geelong	Cherished Pets <a href="http://www.cherishedpetcare.com.au/all-project-list/home-pet-care/">http://www.cherishedpetcare.com.au/all-project-list/home-pet-care/</a>
VIC –	Animal Aid for Seniors program – run through Cold Stream. <a href="http://animalaid.org.au/index.php/seniors-for-seniors">http://animalaid.org.au/index.php/seniors-for-seniors</a>
QLD	Animal Care for Seniors at Home (ACSAH) Cairns – relationship with St John's Community Care <a href="http://www.acsahcairns.com/">http://www.acsahcairns.com/</a> <a href="http://stjohnscommunitycare.org/services/">http://stjohnscommunitycare.org/services/</a>
QLD	Pets for Life Run out of Caloundra Community Centre. <a href="http://www.petsforlife.org.au/">http://www.petsforlife.org.au/</a>
QLD	Logan City Council – Senior Pets for Senior People Adoption Program <a href="http://www.logan.qld.gov.au/facilities-and-recreation/animals/senior-pets-for-senior-people">http://www.logan.qld.gov.au/facilities-and-recreation/animals/senior-pets-for-senior-people</a>
TAS	Knightsborough Council <a href="http://www.kingborough.tas.gov.au/page.aspx?u=709">http://www.kingborough.tas.gov.au/page.aspx?u=709</a>
SA	The City of Charles Sturt Companion Animal Program piloted 2015 <a href="http://www.charlessturt.sa.gov.au/CompanionAnimalProject">http://www.charlessturt.sa.gov.au/CompanionAnimalProject</a>
WA	POOPs WA Inc – President Richard Wheeler <a href="http://www.poopswa.org.au/">http://www.poopswa.org.au/</a>
ACT	Northside Community Services – PAWS Pet Assistance and Wellbeing Service <a href="http://northside.asn.au/?service=paws-pet-assistance-and-wellbeing-service">http://northside.asn.au/?service=paws-pet-assistance-and-wellbeing-service</a>



# WALKING A DOG IN PUBLIC PLACES

October 2016

Prepared by Balancing Act Adelaide





Prepared by **Balancing Act Adelaide** | People + Pets + Cities

Fiona De Rosa, *Urban Planner + Dog Behaviour Trainer*

[www.balancingactadelaide.com.au](http://www.balancingactadelaide.com.au)



For the RSPCA **Pets and Older People Project**

# WALKING A DOG IN PUBLIC PLACES

## The Basics

### Safety & Care

- Attention to safety and care of the dog at all times
- [Force-free](#) dog methods at all times

### On-leash

- Dogs must be on a leash no more than 2 metres long (a requirement under the Dog and Cat Management Act, 1995)
- Dogs must be on-leash in the public realm including all roads, footpaths, car parking areas (a requirement under the Dog and Cat Management Act, 1995)
- On-leash areas may apply to some parks in your local council area. This is commonly indicated by a sign at the park

### Off-leash

- Dogs that are off-leash must be under effective control at all times. Effective control means a dog must be under voice control, within sight of the guardian/handler, and near the guardian/ handler.
- If you are talking a dog off-leash make sure the area is safe and you have a [reliable](#) recall.

### Waste Management

- Always take a poo bag with you, pick up after your dog and dispose appropriately.

### Dog Language

- Learn some [basic dog body language](#) so you can understand when your dog is having a good time and a bad time.

## Walking a Dog

The walk is divided into 3 phases:

- Before the walk
- During the walk
- After the walk.

### Before the walk

- Check out the walking route without the dog
- Ask the owner/guardian about the dog including how he/she is with other people, with other dogs and walking on a leash in a public place
- Check the collar, lead and harness if relevant
  - Is the collar too loose or tight?
  - Is the lead and clip secure?
- Do you have a contact number in case of emergency (i.e. vet & back up person)
- Be prepared and take poo bags

### During the walk

Dog walking sounds simple but there are many things you need to consider:

- How far (depends on fitness of dog, age etc., what the dog is used to)
- Should I let him/her sniff
- What happens if the dog pulls
- What happens if the dog reacts to a situation?

### After the walk

- Take leash/harness off when inside a secure area
- Take the dog to the water bowl

### Other things to consider

- Weather – if too hot don't go or go early in morning when its cooler
- Whether to visit a dog park or not
- Good public etiquette – [how to meet & greet other dogs](#)

### Things not to do:

- Don't tether or tie up your dog and leave him/her unsupervised such as a shop or café (don't leave the dog alone at any time)
- Don't go up to other dogs without an invitation from the owner/guardian

### For more information

**Fiona De Rosa**

**Balancing Act Adelaide**

m. 0431 863 357

e. [fiona@balancingactadelaide.com.au](mailto:fiona@balancingactadelaide.com.au)

[www.balancingactadelaide.com.au](http://www.balancingactadelaide.com.au)

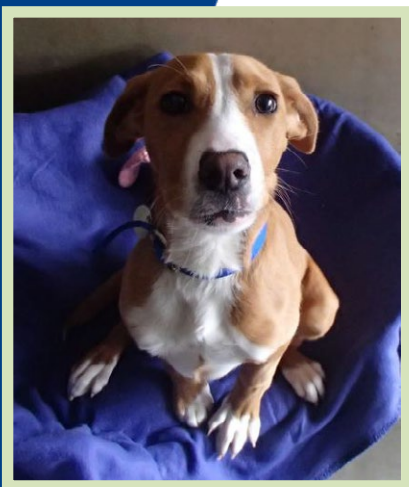


By your side

## Community Dog Walking Workshop

A program to improve safety and skills for volunteers walking dogs in the community

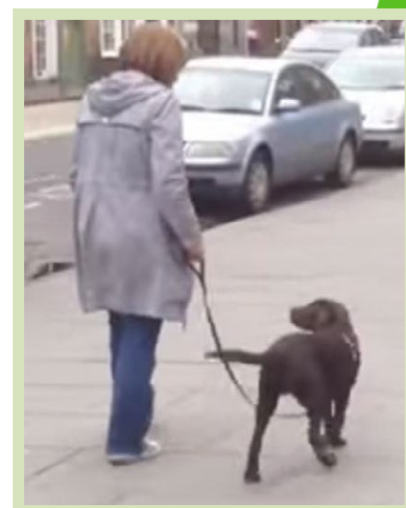
### Learn about



- Read animal behaviour when entering a person's home
- Approaching dogs in the home
- Developing trust and relationships
- Identify if a pet is potentially unwell, when to advise a veterinarian visit.
- Maintain hygiene around pets.
- Respond to if other dogs are in the area or multiple dogs in the home

### Learn how to

- Walking techniques and equipment
- What to use? Harness or collar
- Safety tips when walking dogs
- Choosing appropriate walk for the dog



**This 2 hour workshop can be run at an AWLSA facility or in your own area.  
Cost from \$300 depending on numbers  
Contact Elaine Kennedy  
Animal Services Trainer  
T 8348 1331 E [elaine.kennedy@awlsa.com.au](mailto:elaine.kennedy@awlsa.com.au)**

## A Case Study from the City of Yarra & North Richmond Community Health Centre's Companion Animal Support Program

### Nonagenarian Female has lived around Richmond most of her life

- Husband bought her a dog, Sweetie (a small but active breed), to keep her company
- A decade later husband passed away and wife left with dog for company
- Adores Sweetie, doesn't have any friends left, family interstate
- Not many visitors, talks to Sweetie all the time, "her best friend"
- Sleeps with the dog, it's her constant companion
- Says caring for Sweetie keeps her well and interested in life
- Client is now using a 4 prong walker to help with her mobility, she can't walk Sweetie any more as the dog runs around the walker and get tangled up
- Client hired a dog walker to walk Sweetie twice a week at a cost of \$20 for each half an hour
- Client is on aged pension and was finding it difficult to pay for the walks, but felt very guilty that she couldn't take her dog out herself, so continued to pay the dog walker
- Client was linked with a young volunteer who now walks Sweetie twice a week for 30-45 min
- Client is very happy that her "best friend" is being looked after and that she doesn't have to budget so the dog can have a walk
- Volunteer is also able to wash Suzie and cut her nails
- Volunteer and client are enjoying each other's company and the shared time with Sweetie

65 year age difference between client and volunteer

(Shared with permission. Names changed to protect anonymity).