

Pet Therapist Position

St. Mary's is dedicated to providing nurturing, compassionate, personalized care to patients and families. One component of our patient-centered care experience is pet therapy, which allows certified pet therapy dogs to visit our patients in approved areas.

In order to participate in the Pet Therapy program at St. Mary's, the pet must be at least one year of age and the owner must provide proof of vaccinations. At this point, only dogs that have been through the Canine Good Citizen Certification class will be able to make visits to the patients in the hospital.

The dogs must be able to:

- Accept a friendly stranger. This test demonstrates that the dog will allow a friendly stranger to approach it and speak to the handler in a natural, everyday situation.
- Sit politely for petting. This test demonstrates that the dog will allow a friendly stranger to touch it while it is out with its handler.
- Appearance and grooming. This test demonstrates that the dog will welcome being groomed and examined and will permit a stranger to do so.
- Out for a walk (walking on a loose leash). This test demonstrates that the handler is in control of the dog.
- Walk through a crowd. This test demonstrates that the dog can move about politely in pedestrian traffic and is under control in public places.
- Sit and down on command/staying in place. This test demonstrates that the dog has training, will respond to the handler's command to sit and down and will remain in the place commanded by the handler.
- Come when called. This test demonstrates that the dog will come when called by the handler.
- Reaction to another dog. This test demonstrates that the dog can behave politely around other dogs.
- Reactions to distractions. This test demonstrates that the dog is not distracted when faced with common situations, such as the dropping of a large book or a jogger running in front of the dog.
- Supervised separation. This test demonstrates that a dog can be left with a trusted person, if necessary and maintain its training and good manners.