

For some patients, shaking a furry paw or stroking a floppy ear often can be the best medicine. Pets with Purpose, a pet-assisted therapy program at Providence Holy Cross Medical Center, brings pets and patients together.

Pets with Purpose is an animal-assisted therapy program in which calm, friendly, loving and well behaved dogs visit patients, families and visitors to aid in the healing process. The program is composed of teams of volunteers and their pets. Dogs participating in the Pets with Purpose program have undergone frequent and careful veterinary screenings and have been specially trained as “therapists.”

Pets with Purpose was established in 1994 and is part of the comprehensive Rehabilitation Services Department at Providence Holy Cross Medical Center. Teams of specially trained volunteers and their dogs are available to visit patients throughout the Medical Center.

## The Providence Commitment

### Mission

As people of Providence, we reveal God’s love for all, especially the poor and vulnerable, through our compassionate service.

### Our Core Values

To fulfill our Mission we are committed to caring for the whole person through

- Compassion
- Excellence
- Justice
- Respect
- Stewardship

For more information about the Providence Holy Cross Medical Center Pets with Purpose program, please call the Rehabilitation Services Program Coordinator at (818) 496-4524 or visit us on the web at [www.providence.org/holycross](http://www.providence.org/holycross).

Providence Holy Cross  
Medical Center  
15031 Rinaldi Street  
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## Pets with Purpose Program





# Program Goal

The goal of the Pets with Purpose program is to improve the quality of life of patients during hospitalization.

The Pets with Purpose program provides opportunities for motivational, educational, recreational, and therapeutic interactions among volunteers, pets and patients in an effort to enhance healing and rehabilitation.

## Benefits of Animal-Assisted Activity Programs

**Physical Benefits:** Exercise; pleasurable input; sensory stimulation; decreased blood pressure; comfort of touch; distraction from pain and distress.

**Emotional Benefits:** Unconditional love and attention from the pet; spontaneous expression of emotion from the patient; reduced loneliness; decreased anxiety; increased relaxation.

**Social Benefits:** Recreation; diversion and relief from boredom, monotony or isolation; the opportunity to communicate with the pet regardless of speech or hearing problems.

**Cognitive Benefits:** Exercise of long and short-term memory with recollection and comparison of past experiences with program pets and the patient's personal pets.

## How to Arrange a Visit

Patients need only request a visit from a program volunteer and pet. The visits can take place with individuals or in a group setting.

## How to Volunteer

### Requirements for People

1. Submit a completed application to the Rehabilitation Services Department.
2. With your dog, meet with the Pets with Purpose coordinator for an interview.
3. Upon acceptance to the program the following is required:
  - Participate in three and a half hours of training and orientation.
  - Demonstrate proficiency working as a team with your dog and in interacting with patients, visitors and staff.
  - Commit to a minimum visitation schedule of eight hours a month.
  - Complete TB skin test screening.

### Requirements for Dogs

1. Breeds not acceptable in the program: Doberman, Chow Chow, Pit Bull and Rottweiler. Mixed breeds of the above are screened upon the discretion of the program coordinators.
2. Dogs must pass the behavioral and health screening conducted by the Pets with Purpose Animal Behavior Specialist and Veterinarian.
3. Dogs must be at least one year old.
4. Dogs must demonstrate proficiency in basic obedience.



5. Dogs must be current in all required vaccinations.
6. Dogs must be cleared for health screening, stool sample, cultures and tests.
7. Dogs must wear volunteer uniform (scarf and ID badge).
8. Dogs must be bathed and groomed within 24 hours of each visit.