

Lort Smith Pet Therapy

2025 VOLUNTEER INTAKE

Lort Smith Pet Therapy involves volunteers taking their own, specially assessed dogs to hospitals, residential aged care, youth facilities and other settings to bring comfort and relief to people experiencing illness, adversity, loneliness and the long-term impacts of trauma.

Team Requirements

- Dogs must be at least **18 months old**, in **good health** and up-to-date with all vaccinations, flea and worm treatments.
- Dogs must have great manners, genuinely enjoy socialising and **receiving affection from people they don't know**, and must be **calm and approachable** in new environments, and around new people and other dogs.
- We **do not accept** restricted-breed dogs, working assistance/service dogs, dogs trained in guard or protection work, dogs that drool excessively, or dogs with any history of aggression.
- Dogs whose **diet includes raw food** (including muscle or organ meat, bones or raw food treats) **are not permitted to visit facilities where clients are at higher risk of infection**. This includes hospitals, aged care facilities and services that support young children.
- Volunteers must have great **communication skills, empathy, self-awareness** and **resilience**.
- Volunteers must be willing to comply with **COVID-safety requirements**, including vaccinations, at the partner facilities they visit.
- You and your dog need to be **a great team**. Your dog needs to have lived with you for at least six months and your relationship must be positive and trusting. Your dog must be responsive to you and you need to show that you understand and respond to your dog's body language.
- You must be willing to commit to the role for a **minimum of two years**, making 1–2-hour visits either **weekly or fortnightly**. Note visits are usually Mon-Fri during **business hours**.
- Dogs must be washed before each visit; and an annual veterinary check is required.

The Application Process

1. Attend a **Volunteer Information Session** (mandatory)
2. Complete online Volunteer Application
3. Attend a **Group Assessment and Interview** (with your dog)
4. Complete Dog Health Form, Police Check, Stat Dec and Working with Children Check
5. Complete a **Buddy Visit** with your Pet Therapy Mentor
6. Complete **Volunteer Training** (a combination of online and in-person training)
7. *Some teams will also need to complete a short **Facility Assessment***
8. Attend a facility induction and complete other steps required by your facility (e.g., training, vaccinations, etc.)

Where are we recruiting for?

Please note this list is subject to change.

Facility Type	Locations
AGED CARE	Brighton, Brunswick, Doveton, Ivanhoe, Macleod, Melton, Parkville, Ringwood, St Helena, Werribee, Westmeadows
MENTAL HEALTH	Dandenong, Heidelberg, Parkville
HOSPITAL	Dandenong, East Melbourne, Parkville, Heidelberg, Sunshine
YOUTH	Ascot Vale, Parkville, Maribyrnong

Key Dates

Activity	Dates / timeline
Online Information Session (must attend <u>one</u>)	Friday Oct 18 th 10:30am OR Thurs Oct 31 st 5.30pm
Volunteer Applications Close	Sunday November 10 th
Group Assessments and Interviews (Attend <u>one</u> session with your dog)	Tues Nov 26 th – north-west suburbs (AM) Thur Nov 28 th – inner suburbs (AM, PM) Mon Dec 2 nd – south-east suburbs (AM) Tue Dec 3 rd – eastern suburbs (AM)
Individual discussions. Assessment feedback and facility matching (10 min zoom call)	Week beginning December 9 th
Complete Police Check, Working with Children Check, Stat Dec and Dog Health Form	By end of January
Complete self-paced online training	By early February
Attend Training part 1 - In-Person Training	Saturday 22 nd Feb or Thursday 27 th Feb
Attend Training part 2 – Online Training (Attend <u>one</u> session only – depending on which facility you and your dog will be visiting (<i>note some pre-training homework may be required</i>))	Aged Care: Tues March 11 th 6pm Mental Health: Thurs March 13 th 6pm Hospital: Tuesday March 18 th 6pm Youth: Thurs March 20 th 6pm
Connect with mentor and complete 1-2 buddy visits	Feb-March
Facility assessments and trial visits (for teams visiting certain facilities)	Feb-March
Connect with your facility, complete orientation (and possibly a few extras) and get started!	March-May

Next Step

If you haven't already, please sign up for one of the following information sessions:

- Friday October 18th 10.30am. [Sign up here](#)
- Thursday October 31st 5.30pm. [Sign up here](#)

For More Information

Please contact the Pet Therapy team via pettherapy@lortsmith.com