

Lort Smith Pet Therapy

2026 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, enjoy **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 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 comply **vaccination and infection control requirements** at their matched facilities.
- You and your dog should 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 **online group Interview**
4. Attend a Group **Assessment** (with your dog)
5. Complete Dog Health Form, Police Check and Working with Children Check
6. Complete a **Buddy Visit** with your Pet Therapy Mentor
7. Complete **Volunteer Training** (a combination of online and in-person training)
8. *Some teams will also need to complete a short **Facility Assessment***
9. 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	Albanvale, Avondale Heights, Blackburn, Cheltenham, Coburg, Dandenong, Doveton, Footscray, Frankston, Hastings, Ivanhoe, Keilor, Macleod, Noble Park, Parkville, Port Melbourne, Ringwood, Sunshine, St Albans, Westmeadows
HOSPITAL	Box Hill, Caulfield, Cheltenham, Dandenong, Footscray, Heidelberg, Ivanhoe, Parkville, Sunshine
MENTAL HEALTH	Dandenong, Fitzroy, St Albans
YOUTH	Broadmeadows, Epping, Parkville

Key Dates

Activity	Dates / timeline
Online Information Session (must attend <u>one</u>)	Thursday 2 nd October 5:30pm OR Tuesday October 7 th 10.30am
Volunteer Applications Close	Sunday October 19th
Online Interviews	Thursday Nov 6 th OR Tuesday Nov 11 th
Group Assessments (Attend <u>one</u> session with your dog)	Mon Nov 24 th , Tues Nov 25 th OR Thurs Nov 27 th
Individual discussions. Assessment feedback and facility matching (10 min zoom call)	Week beginning December 4th
Facility assessments and trial visits (for teams visiting certain facilities)	Dec-Feb
Complete Police Check, Working with Children Check and Dog Health Form	By end of January
Complete self-paced online training	By end of January
Attend Training part 1 - In-Person Training (Full Day)	Thursday 5 th Feb or Saturday 14 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)	Youth: 19 th Feb 6pm Mental Health: 24 th Feb 6pm Hospital: 26 th Feb 6pm Aged Care: 3 rd March 6pm
Connect with mentor and complete 1-2 buddy visits	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:

- Thursday October 2nd 5.30pm. [Sign Up Here](#)
- Tuesday October 7th 10.30am. [Sign Up Here](#)

For More Information

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