

***ESTABLISHING A ST. JOHN AMBULANCE
THERAPY DOG PROGRAM LOCALLY***

1. Initial requests to form a Therapy Dog Unit should be forwarded to the Provincial/Territorial/Area Therapy Dog Coordinator who in consultation with the local Branch or Council will review and assess local needs and resources.
2. Once the assessment is completed and the need is identified, the following steps are implemented by the Provincial/Territorial/Area Therapy Dog Coordinator in cooperation with the local Branch or Council and the Chief Evaluator:
 - a. a Unit Therapy Dog Coordinator is identified, recruited and trained;
 - b. a membership recruitment campaign is initiated in cooperation with the local Branch or Council by the Provincial/Territorial/Area Therapy Dog Coordinator (eg. newspapers, local dog obedience clubs and veterinary clinics);
 - c. an information/registration seminar is arranged;
 - d. an evaluation workshop for interested candidates and their dogs is arranged (St. John Ambulance Therapy Dog testing). At this time visiting rules will be reviewed and handlers will provide St. John Ambulance with veterinarian-signed verification of current immunization and health status.
 - e. hospitals and nursing homes are informed about the program being started in their area by direct contact from the Provincial/Territorial/Area/Unit Therapy Dog Coordinators;
 - f. initial visit schedules are developed and implemented;
 - g. initial visits are assessed and evaluated;
 - h. visitation schedules are developed and implemented and member/dog dress items are provided;
 - i. Provincial/Area/Unit Therapy Dog Coordinators visit each area quarterly to assess the visitation program.