


<p>Name of Policy: <u>Animals in Health Care Facilities</u></p> <p>Policy Number: 3364-109-GEN-105</p> <p>Department: Infection Control University Health Services Hospital Administration</p> <p>Approving Officer: Chair, Infection Control Committee Chief Medical Officer Chief of Staff</p> <p>Responsible Agent: Infection Preventionist</p> <p>Scope: The University of Toledo Medical Center and its Medical Staff</p>	 <p>Effective Date: 12/01/2018 Initial Effective Date: 10/20/2003</p>
<p> <input type="checkbox"/> New policy proposal <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minor/technical revision of existing policy <input type="checkbox"/> Major revision of existing policy <input type="checkbox"/> Reaffirmation of existing policy </p>	

(A) Policy Statement

Animal access to all University of Toledo Medical Center health care facilities will be restricted in accordance with local, state and federal law, CDC (Center of Disease Control) guidelines and the Joint Commission guidelines.

(B) Purpose of Policy

In order to provide a healthy environment for all patients, employees, students and visitors, animal activities in the University of Toledo Medical Center patient care areas will be restricted.

(C) Procedure

(1) Service Animals

Only dogs and miniature horses are recognized as Service Animals per Federal Law. Per Hospital Administrative Policy #[3364-100-85-2](#) (Visitors Accompanied by an Assistance Animal), animals which provide direct human services will be permitted in all facilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (1990) unless:

- (a) The animal creates a direct threat to others.
- (b) The presence of the animal requires a fundamental alteration in services.
- (c) A significant risk of harm exists due to the presence of the animal and no reasonable modifications or alterations in policies or procedures will mitigate this risk.

(2) Animal-Assisted Activities and Resident Animal Programs (Therapy Programs)

- (a) Rights of all patients and staff will be recognized and steps taken to accommodate those who desire to avoid pets.
- (b) Only dogs are to be used for Animal-Assisted Activities.
- (c) Only animals that are fully vaccinated for zoonotic diseases and that are healthy, clean, well-groomed, and negative for enteric parasites or otherwise have completed recent

anti-helminthic treatment under the regular care of a veterinarian will be allowed on site. The therapy program Handler will provide proof of veterinary clearance for the animal, as well as certification, immunization records, and credentialing. These documents will be provided and are to remain with the department sponsoring the animal. These areas are responsible for maintaining their own paperwork for the therapy animal and the handler.

- (d) The handler of the therapy animal must also go through the same immunization and illness screening as hospital volunteers and provide proof of clearance to Volunteer Services before visiting the hospital. Animal Assisted Activities and Therapy Program Handlers will be processed through Volunteer Services. An exception to this is the Behavioral Health Service areas (i.e. Kobacker) and the Dana Cancer Center.
- (e) The handler must be educated on the Hospital Hand Hygiene Policy. ([3364-109-GEN-102](#))
- (f) For Therapy Programs, only animals that are trained and are under the direction of persons who are experienced in this field will be allowed.
- (g) Ensure that animals are controlled by persons trained in providing activities or therapies safely.
- (h) Animals must wear a form of identification while in the Health System Facilities. This may be in the form of a vest, collar, or badge.
- (i) Once the handler arrives on site they are to advise Hospital Security of their presence by dialing 419.383.2601.
- (j) Take prompt action when an incident of biting or scratching by an animal occurs during an animal-assisted activity or therapy which includes the following:
 - (i) Enter a patient safety report and report the incident to Risk Management and the Legal Department
 - (ii) Remove the animal permanently from these programs
 - (iii) Report the incident promptly to appropriate authorities (e.g., infection prevention staff, animal program coordinator or local animal control personnel)
 - (iv) Promptly clean and treat scratches, bites, or other breaks in the skin
- (k) Any injury that occurs to the therapy animal would be reported to Risk Management and the Legal Department.
- (l) All therapy animals will be restricted from the following areas:
 - (i) Intensive Care Units
 - (ii) Operating Rooms and Procedure Areas

- (iii) Isolation rooms
 - (iv) Rooms with solid organ transplant patients or protective isolation patients (see Infection Control Precautions policy [3364-109-ISO-404](#))
 - (v) Rooms during times of procedures
 - (vi) Clean and dirty utility rooms
 - (vii) Medication rooms
 - (viii) Food prep and storage area
- (m) Take precautions to mitigate allergic responses to animals.
- (i) Minimize shedding of animal dander by assuring the animal is cleaned and groomed before visiting
 - (ii) Use routine cleaning protocols for housekeeping surfaces after therapy sessions
 - (iii) Any staff that has contact with the animal must perform hand hygiene

(3) Personal Patient Pet Visitation

Patients who wish to have their personal pets (limited to one pet) visit must adhere to the following guidelines:

- (a) In general, only dogs will be permitted to visit (no birds, primates, or reptiles will be allowed)
- (b) Visitations with a pet will only be considered for the following circumstances:
 - (i) When the patient is terminally ill
 - (ii) If a patient has been hospitalized for an extended period of time (greater than one month) and the healthcare team suspects that the pet visitation will improve the patient's physical or mental health
- (c) Visiting pets must provide proof of license and immunizations and a copy of this documentation must be placed into the patient's medical record.
- (d) Approval must be obtained from Infection Prevention, as well as the unit director, chief nursing officer, and the patient's attending physician. The Approval must be documented in the patient's medical record by the medical team.
- (e) Pets must be freshly bathed, leashed and/or under the control of the handler bringing in the pet. They must have a recent letter from their veterinarian certifying good health and absence of disease.
- (f) Once the pet arrives on the site, the area is to notify Hospital Security of their presence by dialing 419-383-2601.
- (g) Any toileting must be managed by the handler and disposed of properly.

- (h) A private visiting room will be made available when possible. If private visitation is not possible, and there is another patient in the room, the roommate must give consent for the visit.
- (i) At no time will the pet be allowed to touch any other patient or staff without their permission.
- (j) Animals will not be allowed in other patient rooms, food preparation or medication rooms.
- (k) The visit will be confined to the department where the patient is admitted and the animal may not remain in the hospital overnight.
- (l) The visit will be limited to 1 hour or less.

(4) Non-Research Animals as Patients in the Health-Care Facilities

If all veterinary facilities and interventional avenues have been exhausted, non-research animals (i.e., zoological animals) may be treated with the following restrictions:

- (a) No animal care will be provided in patient care areas where invasive procedures are performed.
- (b) Care must be supervised at all times by a licensed veterinarian.
- (c) Only disposable medical and surgical instruments can be used.
- (d) A care plan for each use of human health care facilities on a non-research animal must be submitted in writing and approved by an appropriate member of the Infection Control Committee, Safety, DLAM (Division of Laboratory Animal Medicine) and the planned treatment department (i.e., Radiology for an MRI) and must include the following:
 - (i) Medical treatment requested
 - (ii) Why no other options are available in the veterinary community
 - (iii) Date services needed.
- (e) It is the responsibility of the appropriate department manager or designee to ensure that the following criteria are met:
 - (i) Schedule around treatment for the last procedure of the day at a time when human patients are not expected in the area
 - (ii) Clean and disinfect all environmental surfaces and equipment thoroughly in the room using EPA-registered products after removal of the animal
 - (iii) Allow sufficient ACH (air exchanges/hour) to remove airborne dander, microorganisms, and allergens at efficiency of 99.9%

(f) Approval will be given on a case-by-case basis only.

(5) Research Animals as Patients at the University of Toledo Medical Center

(a) Restriction of access according to species:

- (i) Rodents - Only domestic rodents, bred for research and originating from colonies routinely surveyed for and free of zoonotic agents may be taken to patient care areas.
- (ii) Rabbits - Only domestic rabbits, bred for research and originating from colonies routinely surveyed for and free of zoonotic agents may be taken to patient care areas. Fur mites and dermatophytes may not be specifically surveyed for or there may not be a recognized surveillance method. A physical exam completed by DLAM must be used to mitigate this potential disease source at the researchers' expense. A quarantine period (remain in DLAM without exposure to new arrivals of same species) for at least 3 weeks prior to entry into Hospital is required.
- (iii) Dogs and Cats - Only dogs and cats originating from colonies which breed research dogs and cats and that routinely survey for and are free of zoonotic agents may be taken to patient care areas. A quarantine period (remain in DLAM without exposure to new arrivals of same species) for at least 3 weeks prior to entry into Hospital is required.
- (iv) Pigs - Only pigs originating from a herd that breeds research swine and that routinely surveys for and is free of zoonotic agents may be taken to patient care areas. A quarantine period (remain in DLAM without exposure to new arrivals of same species) for at least 3 weeks prior to entry into Hospital is required.
- (v) Primates - New World primates bred for research should be individually tested prior to entry into University of Toledo Medical Center space. Testing should be determined on a case-by-case basis depending on species, history and intended use and generally should include: fecal floatation, fecal direct smear, fecal culture, physical exam, tuberculosis antigen test. A quarantine period (remain in DLAM without exposure to new arrivals of same species) for at least 12 weeks prior to entry into Hospital is required.

(b) Invasive Procedures

- (i) No animal care will be provided in patient care areas where invasive procedures are performed.
- (ii) Only disposable medical and surgical instruments can be used.
- (iii) A care plan for the use of human health care facilities or a non-research animal must be submitted in writing and approved by an appropriate member of the Infection Control committee, Safety, DLAM and the planned treatment department (ie: Radiology for an MRI) and must include the following:

(a) Medical treatment is being requested.

- (b) Why no other treatment options are available in the veterinary community.
- (c) Date services needed
- (c) It is the responsibility of the appropriate department manager or designee to ensure that the following criteria are met:
 - (i) Schedule around treatment for the last procedure of the day at a time when human patients are not expected in the area.
 - (ii) Clean and disinfect all environmental surfaces and equipment thoroughly in the room using EPA-registered products after removal of the animal.
 - (iii) Allow sufficient ACH (air exchanges/hour) to remove airborne dander, microorganisms, and allergens at efficiency of 99.9%.
- (d) Approval will be given on a case-by-case basis only.
- (e) Use of other species not previously mentioned will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

References:

- Grota P, Allen V, Boston K, Darling, K, et al. (2014) APIC Text of Infection Control and Epidemiology, 4th ed. *Animals Visiting in Healthcare Facilities*.
- Guidelines for Environmental Infection Control in Health Care Facilities: Recommendations of the CDC and the Healthcare Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee (HICPAC): MMWR June 6, 2003/Vol. 52/NoRR-10. Retrieved on 11/16/18 from: <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5210a1.htm>
- Siegel JD, Rhinehart E, Jackson M, Chiarello L, and the Healthcare Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee, 2007 Guideline for Isolation Precautions: Preventing Transmission of Infectious Agents in Healthcare Settings retrieved on 11/16/18 from: <https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/pdf/guidelines/isolation-guidelines-H.pdf>
- The Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America (2015, Mar 2, p.1-22). Expert Guidance: Animals in Healthcare Facilities: Recommendations to Minimize Potential Risks. Retrieved on 11/16/18 from: <https://www.shea-online.org/index.php/practice-resources/41-current-guidelines/421-expert-guidance-animals-in-healthcare-facilities-recommendations-to-minimize-potential-risks>

<p>Approved by:</p> <p>/s/ _____ Date _____ Geehan Suleyman, MD Chair, Infection Control Committee</p> <p>/s/ _____ Date _____ Samer Khouri, MD Chief of Staff</p> <p>/s/ _____ Date _____ Michael Ellis, MD Chief Medical Officer</p> <p><i>Review/Revision Completed By: Infection Control Committee</i></p>	<p>Review/Revision Date: 10/16/2006 12/21/2009 07/16/2014 09/17/2015 12/01/2015 11/16/2018</p>
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