



YUMA REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

Caring for the growing needs of our communities

Category:	Infection Prevention & Control	Number of Pages:	3
Distribution:	Infection Control Manual Administration Manual Intranet	Origination Date:	12/82
Title:	Pet Visitation – Personal and Service Animals	Reviewed Date:	1/2011, 8/2014
Approval:	Infection Prevention and Control Committee Chair	Revised Date:	02/2016
Approval Signature:		Due to be Reviewed:	1/2013, 02/2019

POLICY

YRMC supports the visitation admittance of service animals, and family pets in accordance with the following policy.

PURPOSE/OUTCOMES:

The Pet Visitation-Personal and Service Animals policy is created to support the Patient Family Centered Care healing environment. It also establishes criteria for a safe environment that minimizes patients and staff to micro organism exposure from these on-site visits.

Definitions:

Service Animal: Animals individually trained to perform tasks for people with disabilities, e.g., guiding people who are vision impaired, alerting people with a hearing deficit, pulling wheelchairs, alerting and protecting a person who is having a seizure, or performing other special tasks. Service animals are working animals.

Personal Family Pets: Animals owned by the patient or immediate family.

SUPPORTIVE DATA:

Arizona Revised Statutes, Title 11, 11-1024. Service animals; rights of individuals with disabilities; classifications; definitions. Retrieved 12/11/04 from [http:// www.azleg.state.az.us/ ars/11 01024](http://www.azleg.state.az.us/ars/11_01024)

INTERVENTIONS:

Permits the use of a service animal by a person with a disability, unless doing so would create a fundamental alteration or a direct threat to the safety of others or to the facility.

1. Service animals provide their handler with disabilities with enhanced function ability and quality of life allowing the person to remain integrated in their community in a dignified way. All of the healthcare workers and ancillary staff must understand and respect the rights of the person with disabilities accompanied by the service animal.
 - A. The owner or person who facilitates the on-site visit of a service or personal pet is responsible for that animal's behaviors and outcomes. The person bringing the animal to YRMC for the visit must have control of it at all times.
 - B. The organization will accept the verbal reassurance of the person that he or she has a disability (and is protected by the ADA) and that the animal is a service animal.
 - i. The ADA does not consider dogs whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support to be service animals. Service animals are not pets.
 - C. There are some areas where a service animal could not reasonably be permitted. Other areas are permissible but may be subject to a case-by-case determination, based on the circumstances and the individual service animal.
 - D. If patient condition prohibits control, or if a service animal has a condition or behavior that presents a direct threat to the health and safety of others, then the animal may be removed, restricted, crated/kenneled, or denied access to the area.
 - E. Additional information may be requested to protect the health and safety of others.
2. Yuma Regional Medical Center may use pet visitation to decrease patient and family stress associated with hospitalization and/or illness, facilitate the expression of feeling through animal companionship, facilitate comfort through touch, and promote emotional well being.
3. Personal Pets: Personal pets are a source of comfort to patients. A personal pet visit may be the best treatment intervention for the health and well being of a patient in special situations. Personal pet visits follow the same guidelines as other animals, and are allowed to interact only with their owners. These animals may not have undergone an evaluation of their temperament and obedience, so their behavior with others may be unpredictable. No rodents, insects, fish, reptiles, birds or non-human primates are eligible for personal pet visits.

Preferred procedures: The following guidelines are recommended:

- A. Pet must be clean and odor free
- B. Record of current vaccination may be requested
- C. Pet must be under the control of the person facilitating the on-site visit

- D. Pet is limited to the patient
 - E. Visits are limited and must be coordinated with the care team
 - F. Animal may need to leave at any time.
 - G. Pets are not permitted to enter isolation rooms of any kind.
 - H. Cleaning of any elimination or biological event the animal may have while on organization property (inside or outside) is the responsibility of the person who brings the pet on-site, however the pet owner may contact a staff person for assistance. Staff will assist the owner in contacting Environmental Services to obtain an organization approved disinfectant and disposable material for use in the clean-up. All contaminated items will be disposed of properly.
4. Patient and staff handling of any animal will perform hand hygiene at the end of the visit.
 5. If one patient in a semi-private room does not consent to the animal visit, the visit will take place in another private area if available.

DOCUMENTATION:

1. Documentation of pet, service animal or therapy dog behavior should be explicit in the electronic medical record when found to be uncontrolled or an immediate threat to the health and safety of others. Please note that allergies and phobia are not an adequate reason to exclude service animals from access to facility.