



Purpose – Gold Care Homes recognises the social and therapeutic benefits of having pets in a home and have adopted a positive approach in this home. This policy is to ensure that service users and their supporters are aware of, and understand, the issues surrounding pets in the home.

Pets Owned By Residents

- 1 The home welcomes applications from service users who have pets and sees them as part of an holistic approach to the care of a service user.
- 2 The manager is required to make all necessary decisions as to whether a pet is suitable for the home and whether the home is able to accommodate it. It is important that the manager clarifies any issues of suitability as soon as possible in order that the service user's hopes are not unfairly raised.
- 3 The manager has the right to refuse any pet being brought into the home. The reason for such a refusal does not have to be any more complicated than "the inclusion of this pet would not be in the best interests of the home".
- 4 Any application to move into the home should include establishing if the service user has any pets they wish to bring. This should be recorded on the Pre Admission Assessment.
- 5 In cases where the manager feels that it would be unsuitable or inappropriate for the pet to be brought into the home, the service user should be informed without delay.

The date and time of notification should be entered onto the Pre Admission Assessment.

- 6 Where a service user has been informed that their pet has been declined, for whatever reason, the service user should be able to make a formal appeal against the decision by completing a Complaints Form.
- 7 Each service user should be aware that they are responsible, as far as they are able, for the upkeep of their pet and that staff would not normally be expected to take an active role in this regard. It may, however, be appropriate for staff to be involved in the upkeep and welfare of a pet where ownership and care of the pet forms a constituent part of the Service Users Plan.
- 8 Pet owners are responsible for ensuring that any fouling from faeces or urine is cleaned promptly and effectively. If a service user is unable to clean up after their pet, the manager should review the situation and examine compromise solutions. Changes should be entered into the Service Users Plan.

- 9 The cost of insurance and veterinary care is the responsibility of the owner of the pet, not the home.
- 19 In some cases pets require medication either in the short term or for longer periods. Medication for pets should normally be kept in a safe place within the owner's room unless there are significant concerns that the medication may be inappropriately taken or administered. In such cases, the manager should look at a suitable alternative location and record this in the Service Users Plan.
- 11 **Under no circumstances should animal medication be stored in the same place as medication intended for human consumption.**
- 12 Any damage or injury caused by the pet is the responsibility of the owner and is required to be rectified at their expense. Other service users, or staff, who are injured by a pet, may have a right to take legal action for damage and / or injury caused. For this reason, the manager should make service users aware of insurance cover available and encourage them to purchase suitable third party liability cover.
- 13 In general terms, pets would normally be expected to live in the service user's room. Pets may be allowed in other parts of the home with the permission of the manager and where the risk to other service users is seen as relatively slight. **Guide dogs are excepted from this requirement.**
- 14 Where a service user's care needs have resulted in higher levels of dependency, the manager should include the ongoing needs of the pet as part of any reviews that are held. There may need to be a balanced decision between the additional amount of time required to care for the pet against the potential trauma and deterioration caused if the pet has to be re-homed.
- 15 In cases, following a review, where the manager and staff feel that it is no longer appropriate or possible to meet the ongoing care needs of the service user's pet, a decision to re-home the pet may be necessary. This should be carried out in a professional and sympathetic manner so as to be as supportive as possible to the service user. It may be appropriate to contact one of the animal welfare organisations who have experience in such matters.
- 16 Where the service user voluntarily makes a decision to re-home their pet, the manager should ensure that appropriate levels of support are offered. This decision and the support provided should be recorded in the Service Users Plan.
- 17 In the event of a service users pet dying, staff on duty should be informed as soon as it is appropriate to do so. Other staff should be informed at subsequent staff handovers and a record made in the Communication Book.

Pets Owned By The Home

- 1 The manager is responsible for the ongoing health, safety and welfare of all pets which are owned by the home.
- 2 The manager is responsible for ensuring that suitable insurance cover has been effected which will cover accidents, injury and losses caused either directly or indirectly by the pet or its equipment.
- 3 The manager should ensure that staff and service users are aware of any limitations or restrictions in the insurance cover which might affect the home.
- 4 Pets should be excluded from kitchens, store rooms, medical areas or any other part of the home which the manager deems to be "High Risk".
- 5 Pets owned by the home should be under control at all times. Caged birds should not be allowed to "fly free", except as part of an exercise programme to promote their health, and then only under close supervision of a competent member(s) of staff.
- 6 Service users should be encouraged to be involved in the care of pets in the home. This should include care such as feeding, grooming and exercise. Service users, however, should be advised not to feed cats and dogs with scraps of food and biscuits etc. due to the dangers to the animal's health through obesity.
- 7 Pets owned by the home should have the cost of their care and upkeep met by the home. Pets owned by a group of service users should be the responsibility of the service user group, although the home may use a "Community Chest" or comforts fund to meet upkeep costs.
- 8 Pets owned by the home will probably have a designated "rest area", favourite chair or basket located in the home. Such sleeping arrangements are the responsibility of the manager, although service users should be encouraged to take an active part in these decisions.
- 9 Food for pets should be kept in a separate place to food for human consumption at all times.
- 10 Under no circumstances should animal medication be stored in the same place as medication intended for human consumption.
- 11 When a pet dies the manager should take appropriate steps to inform service users and staff. The manager should ensure that arrangements for disposal of the body are sensitive to people in the home.

Pets Who Visit The Home

- 1 Anyone who brings a pet into the home should ensure that it remains under their personal control at all times.
- 2 The Manager should inform the person bringing a pet onto the premises that the home is not responsible for any damage and / or injury, howsoever caused by the pet.
- 3 Where a pet is part of an animal "petting" or "therapy" scheme, the organisers of the service should ensure that appropriate insurances are in place for public liability and third party damages.

Equality Impact Assessment

All relevant persons are required to comply with this policy and must demonstrate sensitivity and competence in relation to diversity in race, faith, age, gender, disability and sexual orientation. If you, or any other groups, believe you are disadvantaged by this policy please contact the Regional Manager for the Care/Nursing Home. Gold Care Homes will then actively respond to the enquiry.