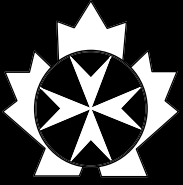


# NATIONAL THERAPY DOG PROGRAM

Σεπτέμβριος 2000

Σελ. 5 Νο. 1



ΔΙΑΦΟΡΟΚΝΩΣΗ

AN INFORMATION SHEET FOR ST JOHN AMBULANCE MEMBERS

**DID YOU KNOW** that the Therapy Dog Program is now a national program? A National Therapy Dog Coordinator has been appointed to oversee the program on a national scale. Work has taken place to update materials and to ensure consistency of the program from coast to coast. A revised *Therapy Dog Evaluation* is complete, a new *Therapy Dog Manual* will be available by the end of the year, and a brand new Therapy Dog Program logo has been adopted.

St. John Ambulance Therapy Dogs have always undergone stringent evaluations to ensure their suitability for the program. A strong system of Coordinators and Evaluators exists to make certain the evaluations are carried out in a professional, consistent manner. This is important to maintain the high standards expected of St. John Ambulance, and to ensure the safety of our clients and of the program. A subtle change has taken place to enhance the program. Now, instead of evaluating the dog for suitable temperament, the handler/dog team will be evaluated together. Any handler whose dog is evaluated successfully, and who wants to have a separate handler involved with the same dog, must arrange for the second handler to participate in a separate evaluation with the dog. The success of the second team will not affect that of the first team.

All evaluations of handler/dog teams for admittance to the Therapy Dog Program must be conducted using the national *Therapy Dog Evaluation*. To ensure the preservation of national standards, deviation from this evaluation may not occur.

The *Pre-evaluation Seminar* is another addition. It provides an orientation session for dog handlers who wish to join the Therapy Dog Program: it introduces the new member to St. John Ambulance, the Therapy Dog Program itself, and what is expected of members. All new members are required to attend the Pre-evaluation Seminar before their handler/dog team is evaluated for suitability in the program.

A complete *Therapy Dog Manual* is being developed for use by all Therapy Dog Units. It will be available by 31 December 2000, and will cover:

- 🐕 Introduction – history, guiding principles, membership
- 🐕 Standards – operational standards, structure, roles and responsibilities
- 🐕 Running a Therapy Dog Program – establishing a Therapy Dog Unit, Pre-evaluation Seminar, evaluations, contact with clients, visiting rules, uniforms, recognition, fundraising, insurance coverage, program evaluation
- 🐕 Visitations – general tips, conversation starters, listening skills, appropriate and inappropriate responses, cognitively impaired patients, patients with memory loss, wheelchair awareness
- 🐕 Extension of the Basic Program – visiting children, visiting in private homes, emergency response, funerals
- 🐕 Keeping a “Healthy” Program – human allergies, infectious diseases, canine vaccination, zoonoses
- 🐕 Pre-evaluation Seminar – purpose, recruitment, arranging the Seminar, agenda, sample materials, collection of forms
- 🐕 Samples and Forms

