

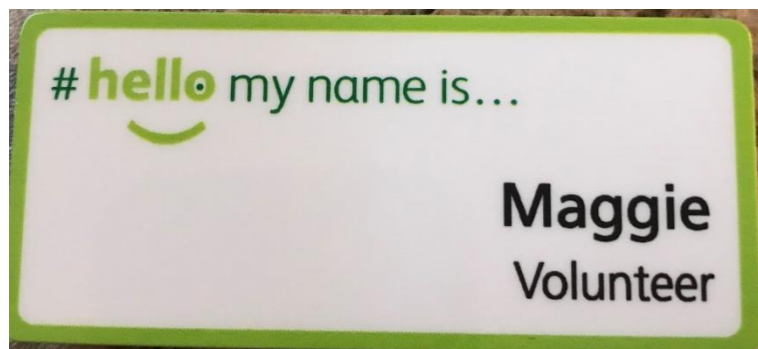
Animal Assisted Intervention in Critical Care

PETS AS THERAPY

W&SY Critical Care Rehabilitation Conference
7 February 2023

[#ICUPetTherapy](#)

- Pets As Therapy is a humanitarian charity at the forefront of community-based Animal Assisted Therapy (AAT) across the length and breadth of the UK.
- Pets As Therapy is currently the largest organisation of its kind in Europe.



Our roles

Sarah

- Active volunteer
- PAT volunteer coordinator
 - 330 volunteers
 - c.10 NHS Trusts
- Co-author ICS national guidance for Animal Assisted Intervention in critical care
- Advise Trusts and CC units on setting up therapy dog schemes
- Intensive Care Society Trustee
- Partner at BDO - Charity specialist auditor (the day job)



Maggie

- 6yr old Cockapoo
- Calm and sociable
- Well trained
- Leeds Hosp Trust ICU
- YAS 999 call handlers
- One-off visits
- Winner Leeds Improving patient experience award

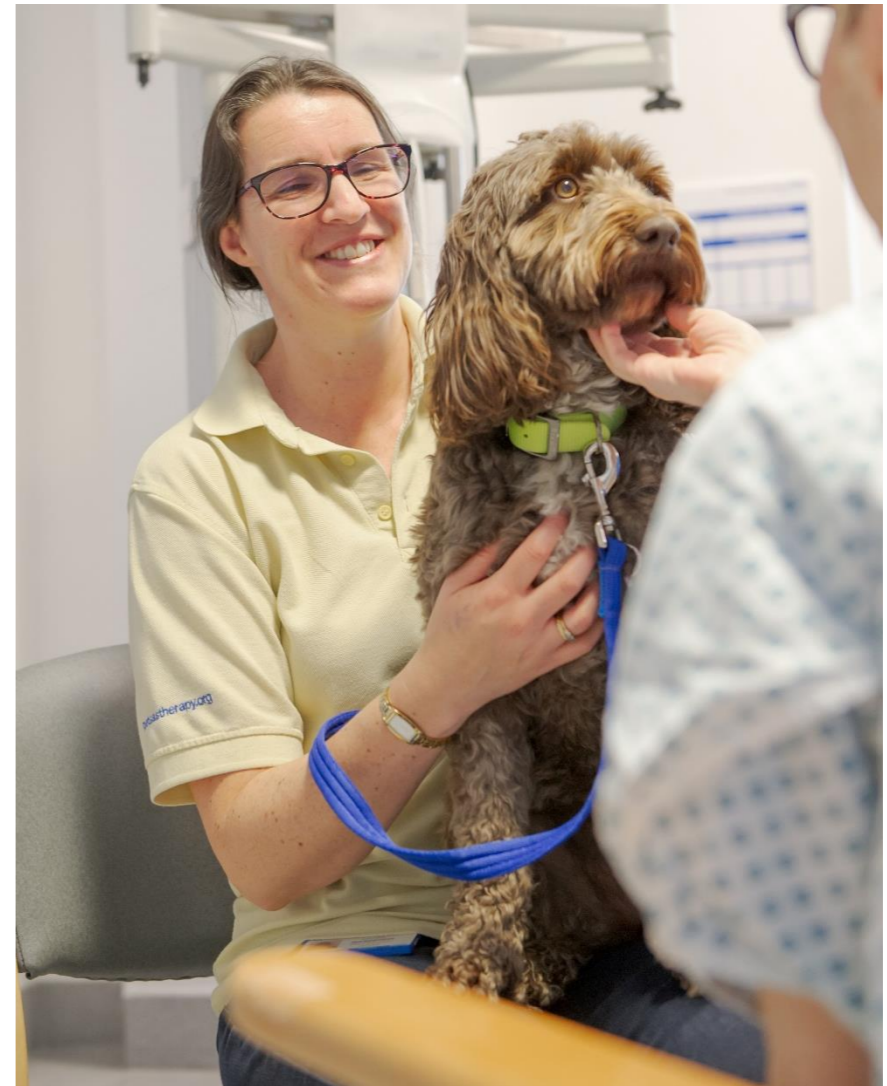
How Pets as Therapy works

- We are all volunteers and family pets.
- Well mannered, friendly and reliable nature and above all, enjoy meeting people.
- Rigorous temperament test.
- Prevent infection by being clean, groomed, vaccinated, wormed & flea-treated.
- Enrol as formal volunteers.
- Pets as Therapy provides 3rd party liability insurance.



Visiting Critical Care units

- Meet and greet ward round – patients, relatives, staff
- Targeted rehab work with small number of patients + physio
- goal focused walking, stretching, gym, garden
- Follow-up ward visits on request



Patient experience

she was made-up
to see Maggie

He smiled for the
first time and
walked further
round the unit

absolute
highlight
of ICU

Maggie, you just
made life worth
living again

- A bit of “normal”
- Anxiety, pain
- Distraction
- Engagement
- Inspiration
- Attitude to rehab
- Mobility
- Positive memories
- Delirium

NHS
The Leeds
Teaching Hospitals
NHS Trust

This is Maggie

This is Maggie, our pet as therapy (PAT) dog in critical care.

Maggie comes to see us every Wednesday and interacts with patients, visitors and staff at the LGI and St James's Hospital.

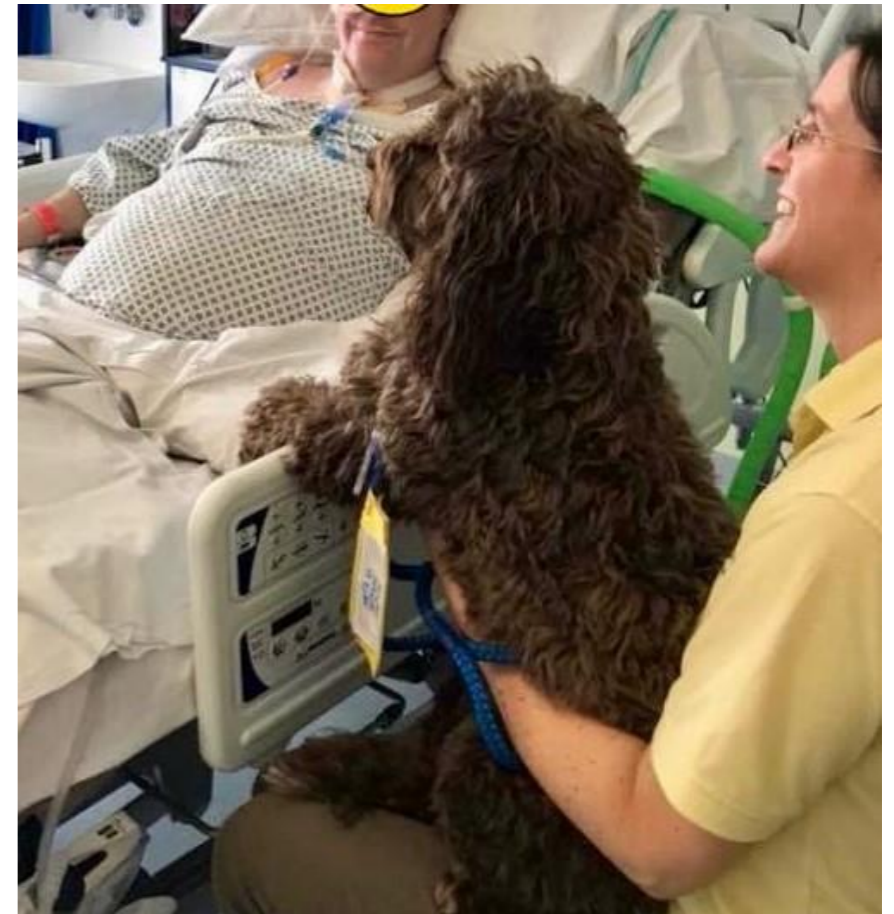
If you think your friend or relative would like to see Maggie or you would like to say hello, please let the Nurse in Charge know and we will come and see you.



**PETS AS
THERAPY**

If you have any questions about Maggie or the pets as therapy service please contact James Evans, Matron for Adult Critical Care on telephone number: 0113 392 7403

Adult
Critical Care



Relatives' experience

Can we just spend a few minutes with Maggie

- Someone “normal” to talk to
- Distraction
- Talking point
- Anxiety
- Bereavement
- Positive memories
- Long stay patients
- Younger relatives

Maggie was able to give them something to lift them up



Staff well-being

I didn't want to get up but realised it was Maggie-day

Better than a can of Redbull!

- Mental health
- De-stress
- Talking point
- Happy staff = happy patients
- Productivity

I was sceptical – I just didn't realise how much staff would love seeing Maggie



Practical pointers

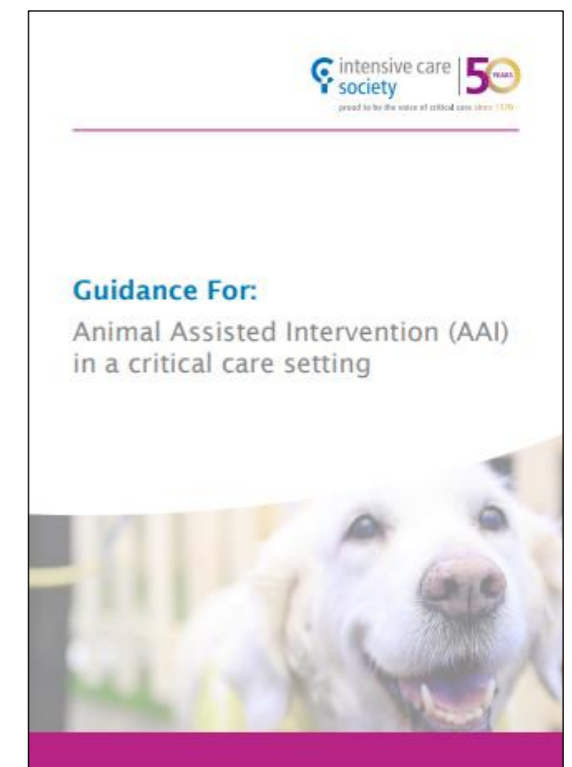
- All volunteers must enrol with Voluntary Services dept
- Policy and risk assessment signed off by Infection Control
- ICS Guidance and RCN protocol
- Volunteers also follow PAT Hospital Factsheet
- Consider type of dog, suitability of volunteer
- Screen for suitable patients per Trust policy
- Checklist before entering the ward (see appendix)
- Dedicated staff accompanies visit
(intro, hand hygiene, safeguard lines, clean-up, records)
- Separate collar/lead for ICU
- Max 1-1.5 hour visit due to intensity

ICS Guidance

(Oct2020)

Standards

1. Therapy animal handler responsibilities
 - registered, assessed
 - vaccinated, clean, healthy
2. Critical care staff responsibilities
 - simulation, induction, information, well-being
 - patient assessment, hand hygiene, supervision
3. Documentation
 - patient record, evaluation
4. Infection control
 - policy approval
 - ineligible patients
 - decontamination



Facilitating patient access

- Limited movement due to lines, etc
- Options:
 - on floor alongside bed/chair
 - on handler's lap
 - front paws on inco-pad on bed
 - on trolley beside bed
 - in handler's arms



Dogs on beds debate

- ICS Guidance
- 2-way transfer
- Dog control
- Trust's risk

Volunteer welfare

- Exposed to intense situations
- Induction and trial period
- Deal with relatives' stress and grief
- Lose long-term patients
- Access to same support services - debrief etc
- Encouraged to reach out on PAT network

Patient stories



“Meeting Maggie on ICU really cheered me up, making me **feel hopeful for the future** in what was a very dark period of my life. Having spent the previous 10 days in a coma, I was missing my own puppy Ted. I knew I would be in hospital for some time recovering from my illness and all I kept getting was bad news, so meeting Maggie was extra special.

Maggie **relieved my anxiety**, motivated and **inspired me** and made me **more determined** to get better as quickly as possible so I could get home to my Ted.

My son was with me when Maggie visited and we were so impressed by how calm and relaxed she was because she was only 3 months older than Ted who would have been racing around. Maggie took our minds off my illness and the fact that I was in ICU. It gave us **something different to talk about** and share the experience with my other visitors, both at that time and weeks and months later when I would **recount my experience**.

I definitely think that allowing PAT dogs onto ICU is an important part of recovery as many patients will have dogs at home whom they will miss and may not see for quite some time. Therefore allowing dogs such as Maggie who are well behaved, calm and relaxed, relieves boredom and **distracts minds away from the intensity** of the environment.

I never felt any concern regarding hygiene or risk of infection from Maggie as she was so clean and well-presented and stayed close to Sarah at all times.

A memento card from Maggie to have as a keepsake and to keep alongside a diary would be a good idea, however **I would never forget Maggie’s visit** anyway. I am still telling everyone, even complete strangers, about my encounter with Maggie.”

Interview with an ex-ICU patient one year after discharge, July 2019



Therapy Dogs

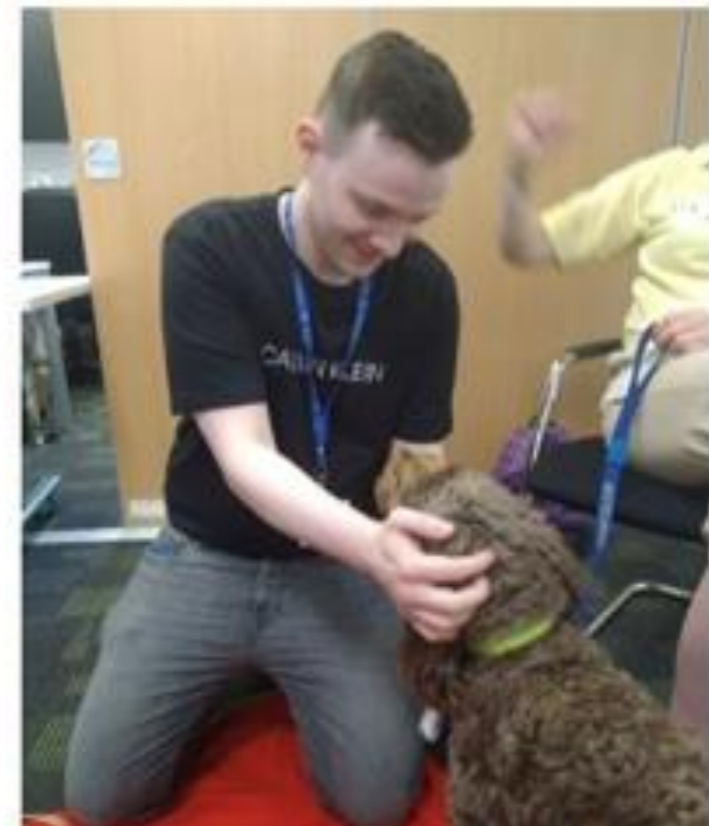
Special moment alert!

One of our Health Advisors Steven was admitted to the ICU ward at LGI during 2019. He has since fully recovered and is thriving. However, during his time there he found himself bedbound for a full 10 days.

Maggie the Therapy dog visited the unit and in Steven's words:

"Maggie coming into the unit gave me the will power to really try and get out of bed that day"

Steven ended his 10 days of being bed bound and found the strength to get himself to stand. During Maggie's visit to our Wakefield call centre on 18th May, Steven and Maggie were reunited again for the first time.



Contact details

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07899 065060



Sarah & Maggie

References

ICS Guidance

[Intensive Care Society | Animal assisted intervention \(ics.ac.uk\)](https://www.ics.ac.uk)

RCN protocol

<https://www.rcn.org.uk/library/subject-guides/animal-assisted-interventions>

PAT Hospital Factsheet

<https://petsastherapy.org/pat-factsheets/>



Volunteer visit checklist

	Completed
Dog is fit and well and free from diarrhoea or vomiting in the last 48 hours	
Volunteer is fit and well and free from diarrhoea or vomiting in the last 48 hours (or in line with the Trust's infection control policy)	
Dog has been washed and groomed in the last 24 hours, and is free from dirt and loose fur	
Dog's claws are neatly trimmed	
Dog's flea/worm treatment and Immunisations are up-to-date	
Dog is wearing up-to-date ID	
Harness/collar/lead is clean	
Dog's PAT clothing is washed	
Volunteer's uniform is clean	
Volunteer is wearing up-to-date ID	
Dog is not fed on a raw diet	
Volunteer understands the hand hygiene policy	