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Patient information:

Animal access and assistance dogs at our clinic

We understand that pets are an important part of many people's lives. In a healthcare setting, however, we must balance compassion with patient safety, legal obligations and fairness to everyone who attends our clinic.

Assistance Dogs in Australia

Under Australian law, only certified Assistance Dogs are permitted to enter medical clinics.

An Assistance Dog:

- Is trained to assist a person with disability
- Meets public access standards for behaviour, hygiene and control
- Is accredited by a recognised organisation or has passed a Public Access Test

Assistance Dogs are usually identifiable by an official harness, vest, or coat, and photo identification or certification from a recognised training organisation. Our reception team may ask to see this identification. They are not permitted to ask about your medical condition.

Well-trained pets, therapy dogs and emotional support animals are not legally recognised as Assistance Dogs in Australia.

When entry to an Assistance Dog may be refused

Under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth), entry to an Assistance Dog may be refused only in limited circumstances. This includes situations where the dog is not under control, does not meet public behaviour standards or where there is a reasonable concern that the dog has an infectious disease and refusal is reasonably necessary to protect public health or the health of other animals.

Why other pets cannot be allowed

Allowing non-assistance animals into a busy medical clinic creates real risks, including:

- Dogs becoming excited and jumping on children or elderly patients
- Anxiety or distress for patients with phobias, trauma histories or cultural sensitivities
- Hygiene and infection control concerns in a healthcare environment

For these reasons:

- Pets cannot enter the clinic at any time
- Pets cannot be led through the clinic
- Pets cannot be left unattended in common areas, including the outdoor balcony or the back area of the clinic
- Pets cannot be supervised or cared for by clinic staff

Other health providers on site

Our clinic is co-located with independent health providers who operate their own separate practices upstairs. Some of these providers may work with therapy dogs within their own rooms only, accessed via the back entrance, with no interaction with our clinic areas downstairs. This does not change or override our clinic's policy.

Appointment reminders and patient responsibility

This policy will be referenced in appointment SMS reminders and on our website. Patients are responsible for reading and adhering to clinic communications and policies. If a patient arrives with a pet that is not a certified Assistance Dog, the appointment may not be able to proceed and a DNA (Did Not Attend) fee may apply.

Our commitment

This policy exists to ensure patient safety, legal compliance, and a calm and respectful environment for everyone. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

An **Assistance Dog** is specially trained to help a person manage their disability/ies.

Assistance Dogs can accompany their handler into public places such as shopping centres, movie theatres, onto transport, and to medical facilities.

They typically only work with one person.

Assistance Dogs are sometimes also called **Service Dogs**.

Assistance Dogs vs Therapy Dogs



Comparison	Assistance Dog	Therapy Dog
Legal right to access public places with their disabled handler	✔	✘
Task trained specifically to assist an individual	✔	✘
Provides comfort and support to multiple people	✘	✔
Trained to tolerate a diversity of environments, experiences and people	✔	✔
May live with disabled handler regardless of pet policy	✔	✘



Emotional Support Animals
ESAs are not recognised in Australia



Companion Animals
Is a term that refers to pets in Australia

RAD Revolutionary Assistance Dogs Inc.

A **Therapy Dog** provides comfort and support to many people.

They often work in places such as hospitals, nursing homes, and have even started to appear in court rooms and airports.

Therapy Dogs can access public places only with permission.