



AAAIP

Association of Animal-Assisted
Intervention Professionals

Preparing for Therapy Animal Handling: Documentation and Partnering with Volunteer Teams

APA HAI Section Webinar



Welcome!



Cathy Bennet

- Therapy Dog Program Coordinator, Medical University of South Carolina Creator
- Owner of Groovy Goldendoodles
- AAAIP Board Member



Taylor Chastain Griffin, PhD

- Executive Director, AAAIP
- National Director of AAI Advancement, Pet Partners
- Background in dog training and mental health counseling

AAAIP is an organization affiliated with Pet Partners, one of the world's largest and most esteemed therapy animal organizations.

While Pet Partners focuses on serving volunteer therapy animal teams, we noticed an increasing demand among the field of AAI professionals for services specifically designed for those who partner with animals in vocational practice.



Agenda

Best Practice Documentation

- How did we identify these documents?
- Why are they important?
- Examples

Diamond vs. Triangle Models in AAI

- When to use each model
- Best practices in recruiting, training, and maintaining volunteer teams

Next Steps

- Invitation to Join AAAIP
- Discount code to corresponding online course

Discussion

- Questions/Answers



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Why Consider Documentation?



1. Responding to the call to professionalize & standardize the industry



2. Provides framework for professionals to follow



3. Protects well-being of therapy animals, clients, and handlers

Process for Generating Documentation Suggestions



- 1 Partnered with Certification Expert Consultant
- 2 Created team of subject matter experts to draft essential knowledge/skills
- 3 Draft refined over series of facilitated virtual meetings
- 4 Validation surveys sent out to the field at large
- 5 Finalization of AAAIP Competencies and Resources



Setting the Stage with Proper Documentation

Documents like informed consent or client participation contracts:

- Educate clients about the intervention
- Provide information specific to your therapy animals
- Establish participants as stakeholders in protecting animal welfare (expected behavior clearly outlined)
- Liability protection





Informed Consent Documentation for the Inclusion of Therapy Animals in Professionalized Settings

If you're a professional who aims to unleash the power of the human-animal bond within your vocational offerings, you'll need to have an informed consent document that is specifically inclusive of your animal-assisted intervention (AAI) offerings. As you create that document for your practice, consider including these important components.

1. Description of Services:

Briefly describe the kind of AAI you incorporate into your work. Is it AAT, AAE, ARE? Provide your client with details about the services you offer.

2. Therapy Animal Registration:

Provide information about the therapy animal organization with whom you are registered. Briefly outline the corresponding standards of practice of the organization.

3. Therapy Animal Background:

Provide information about your therapy animal. Details you might include in this section are: species, breed, age, size, training background, and personality traits.

4. Expectations and Risks:

What steps have you taken to minimize the risks associated with AAI? How will you respond to risks in session? List the risks associated with your type of AAI offerings. Inform clients that they are to closely follow all directives when working with therapy animals.

5. Release of Liability:

You may wish to include a release of liability for your client to sign as a portion of your informed consent documentation.

6. Signature:

Once you have reviewed the information with your client, obtain signatures and provide clients with a copy of the consent document. If your client is unable to provide consent for the intervention, be sure to obtain a signature from their caregiver.



Participation Contract Examples

When greeting the therapy animals, I'll ask permission from the handler before trying to touch the animal.

I will do my best to remain calm when in the animal's presence.

I will never give the animal something to eat without the permission from the handler.

I understand that I will not be able to interact with the therapy animal if I am not following the rules that keep the animal safe.



Screening Clients for Inclusion in AAI

Proactive considerations related to therapeutic process, risk assessment, and personal background related to animals.

- Rationale for offering intervention
- Client allergies, fears, phobias, and past animal experiences



Full Program Manual
Templates and
Rationale Available
through AAAIP's
"Getting Started"
Online Course



First Aid Supplies List

Incident Reports

Informed Consent

Participation Contacts

Permission Slips

Client Screening Forms

Therapy Animal Health Records

Therapy Animal Training Record

Therapy Animal Working Log

Treatment Planning Templates

Scenario Worksheets



Diamond vs. Triangle Model in AAI



- Allows for higher confidentiality and a strong working relationship with the animal partner



- Allows for more diversity in animal selection
- Provides focused attention on both animal and client
- Practitioner not required to have animal



Professional Example: Cathy's Programming



- The Medical University of SC utilizes Canine Therapists in both AAA and AAT capacities
- Eighty-six teams
- Teams can be found in multiple hospitals and ambulatory clinics seven days a week



How to Recruit Volunteer Teams



- Local Media
- Facility PR and Marketing
- Volunteers
- Special Events
- Community Engagement



Preparing Volunteers for Success

- Tailored training
- Mentors (Pack Leaders)
- Communication
- Tools
- Creative assignments





The Importance of Volunteer Appreciation



- Empower
- Include
- Involve
- Respect
- Acknowledge



Keep Learning with Us!

AAAIP's "Getting Started" course walks through scenarios commonly encountered when partnering with volunteer teams and can be printed and used for your orientation materials.

DISCOUNT CODE:

apahaiweb2

50% off course valid through
6/18/24



SCAN ME



Join AAAIP Today!

- Free events monthly
- Discounted online coursework
- \$100 off AAIS Certification exam
- Online community
- Resource library/
template documents
- Liability insurance



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AAAIP's Animal-Assisted Intervention Specialist Certification (C-AAIS) will distinguish you as a professional who is qualified to integrate therapy animals into your practice.

C-AAIS will position you as a qualified advocate for the welfare of both the humans and the animals involved in AAI.



Questions or Discussions?



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Connect with us!

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