Canine Assisted Intervention Placement
Policy & Procedure Considerations
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Introduction

A Professional CAI Program

This document is intended to assist a host organization with the start-up of a professional Canine Assisted Intervention (CAI) Program. Herein a number of policy and procedural recommendations are set out. These recommendations are designed to assist agencies in establishing a professional program that takes into consideration the needs and concerns of the clients being served, the host agency and PADS.

It is important that individuals not seek to initiate a program of this type for their own personal benefit. While the idea of obtaining an exceptionally trained dog is enticing, one must remember that CAI dogs have a specific purpose and have had considerable money invested in their training. These dogs are Intervention Animals first and family/personal pets second. Additionally, a CAI Program is not a short-term initiative. The employee should take into account that PADS has invested approximately 2 years and many thousands of dollars in the training of the dog. It is our intention to see the dog properly deployed for a long and fulfilling career.

Definitions

ADI or Assistance Dogs International is the governing body for professional assistance dog schools throughout the world, including PADS. ADI sets the accreditation standards that schools are expected to follow. These stringent guidelines help ensure that PADS dogs have the most professional training possible.

Client is anyone who is receiving assistance from the CAI dog.

Handler the person who takes responsibility for the dog, who cares for the dog and who deploys the dog. There could be more than one person within the work environment designated to handle the dog and all would be required to undergo training, however one person is the primary designate for responsibility and home care.

Host Agency is the organization or agency where the handler works and who supports the dog being placed in their work environment.

Role/Purpose of a Canine Assisted Intervention Program

PADS has CAI dogs working in a variety of settings including: seniors facilities, hospitals, home care environments, hospice programs, police victim services programs, outreach programs and schools. The dog may play a different role depending on who is being served and/or assisted.

These dogs may assist clients with life transitions, trauma, reading or learning challenges, grief/pain/loss, health challenges, etc. Their roles vary and are endless. CAI dogs may spend their time sitting quietly alongside a child as they read, providing cathartic touch to a client who must remain in bed or may visit a domestic violence victim in their home. These are but a few roles and ways the dogs can assist.
Here are some of the possible ways CAI dogs may assist clients:

CAI Dogs can assist in following ways:

a. Reducing the blood pressure of a client.

b. Acting as an effective ice breaker.

c. Assisting in life transitions.

d. Providing a healthy and positive distraction to upsetting matters.

e. Acting as a tool with individuals who struggle to communicate, particularly children or persons with disabilities.

f. Helping to normalize traumatic situations.

g. Being a calming influence and “ground” anyone or specifically those who may be agitated or highly emotional.

h. Providing a source for cathartic touch. When it is not appropriate for humans to provide healing touch to clients, dogs can provide the physical comfort that the client may need.

i. Being a good will ambassador for the host agency who supports the CAI program.

j. Assist physiotherapists to improve their client’s physical health in a rehabilitation setting.
Policy & Procedure Considerations

Dog Selection

a. CAI dogs must be of good temperament, highly trained and from an accredited dog training school, like PADS.

b. We encourage host agencies to only utilize dogs from Assistance Dogs International (ADI) accredited schools. It is NOT recommended that employees be permitted to use “good family pets” for this purpose. Nor are family pets that have undergone St. John Ambulance Therapy dog training typically considered appropriate. Programs of this nature do not provide the extensive training and screening required for a dog utilized for CAI purposes.

c. The type of dog utilized in this work will typically fall under the “Canine Assisted Intervention” category with ADI, otherwise known as “Intervention Dogs”. These dogs may also be referenced as Therapy Dogs, Trauma K-9’s, Educational Assistance Dogs, etc.

d. Intervention dogs from ADI schools, like PADS, have the ideal training for these roles. PADS dogs have been genetically selected and bred specifically for assistance dog work. They have been exposed to a wide variety of circumstances and stressors and have their temperaments tested thoroughly.

Handler Selection

a. It is recommended that handler be prepared to commit to the host agency for several years. Intervention dogs typically work until 9-10 years of age. Given that PADS, and all ADI accredited dog schools, typically retain ownership of their dogs until the time of the dog’s retirement, we prefer our dogs remain in a stable placement. PADS can remove the dog if we feel it is being misused or abused. We have the final decision on the deployment location/service for the dog’s placement. While it is not impossible for the handler to change jobs, it is crucial to remember that PADS requires that the dog be working while it can. PADS is not entirely adverse to the dog being moved from one organization to another, as long as it is working. Alternatively, the host agency may have other opinions. Please keep in mind that the host agency has also committed to the CAI placement and would like to see it remain in their organization for as long as possible.

b. It is generally recommended that the host agency have one main handler for the dog and up to two “alternate” handlers. The main handler will provide the primary home for the dog, provide for all of the dogs basic care and needs. Through the course of his/her duties, the main handler will be in a position to deploy the dog, and most importantly, he/she can get the dog to and from work each day and be available to do so whenever the dog is required to work. The alternate handlers may care for the dog when the main handler can not (i.e. vacation). The alternate handlers also work in a role where they can deploy the dog. Ideally, these handlers are collectively able to deploy the dog as frequently as possible.
c. The main handler typically gets first option to formally adopt the dog when it officially retires. This decision is, however, made by PADS and in conjunction with the main handler.

d. The main handler is usually most familiar with the dog and his/her needs. As such, primary decisions relating to the dogs care, deployment, etc, should rest with the main handler. It is important the host agency and the other handlers know and understand that the main handler is responsible for the majority of decision making relating to the dog. We recommend that this be discussed amongst all team members and supervisors.

CAI Deployment & Contraindications

a. All handlers must obtain training from PADS regarding proper deployment of the dog. This training includes (but is not limited to): canine psychology, canine health and grooming, public etiquette, dog command structure and corrections. Persons without proper training from PADS are not permitted to handle the dog publicly or in the course of their duties. Please bear in mind that Assistance Dogs are not handled the same way as family pets, there are very strict requirements related to their deployment and handling.

b. Before deploying the dog, the handler should ensure that the following contraindications are NOT present in relation to those being served and the location of the deployment:

1. Allergies
2. Phobias & Fears
3. Client is not under the influence of drugs or alcohol or whose mental or physical state could put the dog at risk.
4. Unsafe Locations (glass, bodily fluids, etc)
5. Other animals (even “good” animals) must be secured elsewhere. CAI dogs are not permitted to cavort with other animals while working. While we can usually predict the behaviour of our dog, we can not predict the behaviour of other animals or their owners.
6. Any other location or situation which puts the dog, the handler or the client at risk for harm or liability.
Application Considerations/Processes

a. When making an application to PADS provide all of the particulars about the anticipated role for the dog. Be sure to inform PADS of the nature of your work, the environment/clients the dog will be exposed to, etc.

b. PADS will conduct a work site visit. A visit of this nature assists us in selecting the right dog for the individuals involved, the work, the environment, etc. During this site visit we may wish to expose the prospective dog(s) to as much as possible including (but not limited to): crowds of people, smells, different rooms and places where the dog may work.

c. PADS will conduct a visit to the home of the primary handler. This visit allows us to point out hazards in the home, ways to address concerns the handler(s) may have and ensure it is a proper environment for the dog.

d. PADS will be largely responsible for choosing a dog that best suits the work, the work environment and the main handler. That said, it is important that the handler(s) inform the agency of any selection criteria that is important to them. Some selection criteria that you may wish to consider are:

   - The colour of the dog.
   - The breed of dog.

   It has always been PADS policy to have the final decision on the dog being placed with any applicant. The applicant is asked on the application form as to breed and size preferences as they relate to the clients they serve, however, without a legitimate reason for requesting a particular breed/dog, it will simply be treated as a request.

PADS/Handler Commitment to CAI Placements

At PADS we are very invested in the health, well-being and successful placement of all of our dogs. It is both a requirement of ours and of ADI that we maintain regular contact with the handlers of our CAI dogs.

We will check in with you on a regular basis throughout the first year of your CAI placement. After the first year you can expect to hear from PADS at least once every year thereafter. This may involve site visits to ensure the health, well-being and good behaviour of our dog.

While we may not be in contact with you all of the time, we have very clear expectations of all dog handlers. You are required to provide PADS with all documentation relating to veterinary care (shortly after all vet visits). You are also required to call PADS immediately if your dog should become critically ill. Serious medical decisions may rest with PADS and it is imperative that you consult us.

Handlers and/or host agencies are required to provide for all of the costs associated to the care and well being of the dog. Although PADS retains ownership of the dog and the right to make final decisions relating to the dog, you or your organization assumes responsibility for the costs associated to care of our dog. The minimum care standards PADS requires will be outlined in team training.
Finally, the main handler (and secondary handlers) is responsible for maintaining the training of the CAI dog. Handlers are required to ensure that the dog’s behaviour meets PADS/ADI standards. When troubles arise the handler is encouraged and welcomed to call PADS training staff for consultation and assistance.

Public Etiquette

Proper public etiquette with your dog is a crucial part to deploying a working dog. While Intervention Dogs (in British Columbia) do not have legislated public access, your dog may be granted courtesy access to many public places.

Public Access for service dogs is a RIGHT for people with disabilities. Your dog will not have legal public access unless you speak to PADS about getting public access for certain work related purposes. Regardless of whether you get public access or not the courtesy you are given in public should not be abused, doing so could risk ruining the access that others with disabilities rightfully need.

Liability

Any organization embarking on a CAI program should visit the issue of liability. Many large organizations may have existing liability insurance that is deemed appropriate to cover a program of this nature. That said, some may feel the need to add to their existing insurance. Most large insurance companies are likely to feel that dogs trained from ADI accredited schools (like PADS) pose very little liability risk. Additionally, as a handler, you and your colleagues will be trained by PADS, this is an asset from a liability perspective.
Budget Considerations

CAI programs involve relatively small financial investments and reap large rewards for clients, organizations and communities. That said, any organization must concern itself with the financial costs and obligations of any new and ongoing initiative. Agencies may wish to consider corporate or public sponsorship of their program but should consult PADS before doing so.

The costs outlined below are general and may be different based upon where you obtain the dog, the nature of the handler/employer financial agreement, etc. Also included here is a list of equipment and supplies that could be considered.

Veterinary Insurance

While PADS retains ownership of their dogs, health related costs will remain the responsibility of the handler or their employer. For this reason you may wish to consider veterinary insurance options for your assistance dog.

Insurance providers like Petsecure (http://www.petsecure.com/plans/dog-health-insurance) provide excellent discounted plans for working dogs. Although there is an ongoing cost to veterinary insurance plans of this nature, they have the capacity to save hundreds, if not thousands, of dollars in the long term.

Equipment & Supplies

- Dog Crates - some may wish to have a dog crate in their home, their office and/or their vehicle, some may not wish to have one at all.

- Dog Beds – at a minimum you will need a dog bed in your office and in your home. You may wish to have an additional bed in your home and in your vehicle.

- Dog Food – some veterinarians will supply dog food at a discounted rate to assistance dogs.

- Dog Toys – at a minimum you will need a few toys in both your home and office.

- Dog Medication - flea/tick and worm medications are recommended for working dogs. These medications may or may not be covered by veterinary insurance plans.

- Dog Grooming/Care Supplies (nail trimmers, shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrushes, dog grooming brushes, ear cleaner, etc) – most of these supplies are inexpensive but some need to be replenished regularly.

- Dog Gear (working vest, water bottles, dog bowls, towels, rain jacket, etc) – PADS will provide you with one initial working vest for your dog but you will be required to buy new ones in the future and you may wish to have two on hand all of the time. Depending on your climate you may need rain jackets, dog booties, etc.
## Typical Budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Initial Cost</th>
<th>Annual Expense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dog Equipment &amp; Supplies</td>
<td>$1500</td>
<td>$1500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterinary Insurance</td>
<td>$1000 (approx)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liability Insurance</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application to PADS</td>
<td>$50 (initial approx)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PADS Training</td>
<td>$400/handler</td>
<td>New Handlers as Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Relations Items</td>
<td>$1000 – 4000*</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* some organizations may wish to purchase items to promote their CAI programs. Items of interest may include business cards for the dog or small stuffed dogs that resemble their CAI dog. These are excellent items to be able to give to clients who have interacted with the dog.
Resource Links

Assistance Dogs International Accredited Members
http://www.assistancedogsinternational.org/assistancedogproviders.php

BC Guide Animal Act
http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/00_96177_01

Alberta Service Dog Act

Pacific Assistance Dog Society
http://www.pads.ca/
CAI Placement Vignettes

Caber – Delta Police Victim Services

Caber works with his handler, Kim Gramlich at the Delta Police Victim Services program where he is referred to as a ‘Trauma K9’. Caber joined Delta Police Victim Services in August of 2010 as the first Victim Services Trauma K9 in Canada. Since he started his job Caber has supported victims of crime and trauma in the following types of incidents: homicide, sudden death, arson, house/apartment fire, domestic violence, child sexual assault, adult sexual assault, aggravated assault, fatal motor vehicle crashes, industrial accidents and in response to family problems.

Caber is unfazed by extreme emotion and possesses a very calm and unwavering demeanor. These were major factors in him being selected for his current role. He is also not startled by police sirens, loud sounds and agitated people. Caber’s calm demeanor has a near instant effect on those who meet him. It is clear that his presence has the capacity to reduce a person’s blood pressure, make it easier for them to talk about their feelings, feel more comfortable with the intervention of police services and benefit from the cathartic touch of a loving and nonjudgmental animal.

Caber is not introduced to all clients. His handler screens for fears, phobias and allergies. She also ensures that Caber is not subjected to people who behave erratically or who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol. If a client already has a pet of their own the pet is typically placed in another space so that the client and Caber can meet one on one. Caber wouldn’t focus on his client if dog or cat were present! Caber’s handler is always present with him when he meets a client so she can be assured of his safety.

Caber is a highly empathetic dog and has been known to seek out a person when they become emotional. It is not uncommon for him to approach a crying victim and place his head in their lap. An outcome is that he tends to draw out appropriate emotions in a very healing and helpful way.

Caber’s handler has to be careful he is not stressed by the circumstances he is exposed to. When a response is highly emotional or prolonged in nature his handler must ensure he is removed from the situation and given ample time away from the trauma he’s being exposed to. This involves removing his work vest and giving him time to play and rest.

Caber and Kim are now venturing further into the Criminal Justice System. In January 2013 Caber became the first Courthouse Dog in Canada. Caber and Kim are currently working with Crown Counsel at the Surrey Courthouse where Caber sits with victims of crime when they meet Crown Counsel and review their testimony for trial. The goal of this project is to eventually get Caber into the courtroom. This would involve him sitting with a witness, when they testify, so that they may benefit from the calming comfort he provides.

Caber and Kim Gramlich can be contacted at the Delta Police Victim Services Program – 604-940-5019,

kgramlich@deltapolicе.ca

www.pads.ca
Rowan – INSPIRE Animal Assisted Therapy

My name is Lisa Markin and I have been a Registered Nurse for nearly 25 years. I have a private practice nursing company called INSPIRE Animal Assisted Therapy in Victoria BC. (www.inspireaat.com) My partner is “Rowan” a PADS Canine Assisted Intervention (CAI) Dog.

Before applying to PADS for a CAI Dog, I had adopted two lovely young dogs (separately, about a year apart), that I thought would be suitable to assist me for the work I wanted to do in Animal Assisted Therapy. Both are wonderful “pet” dogs, but it soon became obvious they just didn’t have the right temperament, or aptitude, to do the work I wanted to do with them, even with the help of a professional trainer. One dog was very hyper and had a strong prey drive, the other, sweet, but very timid. I needed a dog “in the middle!” I needed a dog that was comfortable meeting new people, able to work with many people at one time, work with people in medical settings and sometimes with medical equipment. I needed a dog that was very bright, intuitive, calm and a little silly, obedient and most importantly, truly enjoys working with a variety of people with me.

Rowan is turned out to be just the perfect Animal Assisted Therapy dog for me…and I feel very fortunate to have been partnered up with her. Together, Rowan and I work as a team to help motivate our clients to work harder in their therapy sessions to meet their therapy goals faster. We work in various healthcare settings, including active rehabilitation and chronic care facilities, camps for children with disabilities, senior’s assisted living homes, and community-based group homes for individuals with developmental or psychological conditions.

Sometimes, we work independently with a client, but most time, we also work with other therapists such as physical therapists and occupational therapists, or family members and caregivers.

Before any sessions are started, specific goals are determined so that I can plan which interactions the client will do with Rowan. Using Rowan’s service dog skills, I design interactions between Rowan and the client. These interactions are documented and often evaluated, just like a nursing care plan. Sometimes the therapy goals have a physical focus, such as when a client has a stroke or spinal cord injury, and need to learn to walk again or more their hands. Sometimes it has more to do with providing emotional support, such with a client with an anxiety issue in community settings. Rowan is there to help them feel more confident. All of the goals are chosen to improve a client’s quality of life. Most focus is on improving their “activities of daily living”. And as a bonus, the clients get to have “fun” while they work hard, achieving their therapy goals.

Rowan loves her work. She is able to adapt her energy level to meet the client she is working with. We usually work with each client once or twice a week, usually for several weeks or even months.

Families, friends and medical team members of our clients tell us over and over again how much Rowan motivates the people she works with! Therapists will say, “I could never get our client to ‘that’! But Rowan did!”
Newton – Dr Peter Aids Centre

Newton is a CAI dog and works with Recreation Therapist Melissa Clave Brule, at the Dr Peter Aids Foundation in Vancouver. Newton assists the Foundation with their mission to provide holistic healthcare for people dealing with HIV/AIDS and related health issues. The Dr Peter Centre offers a unique model of care that includes nutritious meals, specialized nursing care, Counseling, Art Therapy, Music Therapy and Recreation Therapy to help rebuild lives broken by HIV/AIDS, addictions, mental illness, poverty and discrimination because of gender and sexual orientation.

Newton is an integral part of the Therapy Team. He provides unconditional love to upwards of 100 people a day that attends the Day Health Program. It is in his nature to anticipate what people need from him; he can give a wag of the tail, or will snuggle up on the couch and join someone for a nap. Sometimes people like to give him a belly rub, a hug and a kiss and he will lay at people’s feet when they are in the nursing station receiving care or checking their emails in the library. When he is with people he likes to make physical contact. He puts his head in someone’s lap, will lie on the floor near someone and will put his paw on their foot or rest his head on their shoe. He loves to be brushed by clients, go for a walk and will play ball in the hall making everyone laugh with his silliness and willingness to please.

Newton works with an amazing variety of people from every walk of life, with every imaginable life story. He gives love and care to people regardless of their issues, illness, and life situation. He has comforted people when they have lost a loved one, celebrated good news, are making deep connections with counseling staff and has been at the bedside, and on the bed when people have been in their last hours.

When Melissa takes groups out of the centre for a trip, Newton loves to go along. The trips have been to the beach where clients throw a stick into the ocean and he swims out to it, he has gone to Bowen Island to explore the shops and share an ice-cream cone, to Grouse Mountain to play in the snow and to Lynn Valley Suspension Bridge to walk in the woods.

When the Dr Peter Centre clients are asked what it is like to have Newton be part of the team they say “he is part of our family”, “he doesn’t judge us”, “he helps people heal their spirit”, “he loves me, even on my bad days”, “he helps lift my depression, he is comforting”, “having someone love you as much as he loves me is amazing”, and “seeing him every day is therapy”.

When working with Melissa during individual wellness counseling sessions with clients, Newton provides calm energy, he is a great way to break the ice with someone who is having a difficult time or who otherwise might not want to chat or be involved in Recreation or Centre activities. He can enable people to have a focus while talking about stressful life situations. During these times, the clients will often be stroking his fur, or resting their hand on him while they share their issues. He encourages conversations about past and present pets and fond memories are frequently shared as he has an amazing ability to sense when he needs to just sit and be close.

When Newton is not working, he lives with Melissa and her husband in their active home with another dog, a cat and three kids. When his vest is off, he is a goofy Lab that loves to hog the bed, sleep on the leather couch, swim in the nearby river and play soccer with the kids.