Peace of Mind
Including Animals in Extended Family

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Presented by Kris Kington-Barker
Learning Objectives

• Identify the role animal companions play in U.S. households.
• Identify how including family pets in hospice & palliative services benefits both patients and the organization.
• Discuss the psychological benefits of including structured pet services.
• Discuss the financial considerations of establishing a program.
• Describe a successful planning and implementation process for establishing a program

Pet Ownership 2011

• 380 million Pets in the U.S. - 300 million humans
• 63% of all U.S. households have a pet
• 40% of U.S. households - have more than 1 pet
• Pet industry - 7th largest retail industry in the U.S.
The Human Animal Bond

Pet Companions Offer:

- A significant source of love and acceptance for owners.
- Stability, routine and a sense of normalcy during life transitions.
- A sense of responsibility and purpose outside of self.
- Physical motivation.
- Relief from loneliness
- Enhanced sense of self-worth

Role of Animal Companions

"Many researchers are finding that the most serious disease for older persons is not cancer or heart disease - it's loneliness...Love is the most important health tonic we have and pets are one of nature's best sources of love..."

"The Healing Power of Pets," Pet Corner, nbci.com

“They are always happy to see me”
How It Started

- Polar opposite experiences of including pet companions as family at end of life.
- Video Banfield Charitable Trust - Pet Peace of Mind video
- Grant Request $5,000 to Banfield
- Grant awarded
- “Pet Peace of Mind” affiliation

Motivating Concerns

- Volunteers caring for client’s animal companions without structure
- Meals on wheels reporting deliveries to homes and pet owners feeding animals instead of themselves
- Clients avoiding case management and care facilities out of fear of separation from pet companion.
- Avoidance of healthcare intervention due to fear leaving animal unattended
- Reports by local vets for requests to euthanize healthy pets by owners
Program Benefits

Client/Family
- Includes pet companions in care plan.
- Provides support to clients and caregivers who may resist help for themselves but will accept assistance for their animals.
- Lessens incidence of animals ending up in shelters or euthanized.
- Increases client’s ability to remain with or have contact with pet companion through the end of life.
- Improved quality of life.

Organization
- Formalizes & legitimizes pet services likely already being provided.
- Establishes policies & procedures, training and standardization.
- Relieves care providing staff from caring for animals.
- Fosters a deeper relationship with agency.

Getting Started
- Establish a budget
- Assess internal support for a program
- Develop timeline w/target dates & assignments
- Determine services to be offered
Administrative Elements

✓ Identify program coordinator - can be volunteer
✓ Establish consulting veterinarian(s)
✓ Develop policies and procedures, protocols
✓ Identify & design training modules

Administrative, continued

✓ Contact insurance carrier. Establish liability waiver specific to animals.
✓ Develop MOU with local animal shelter for collaboration in training, volunteer recruitment and foster housing
✓ P&Ps reviewed and approved.
✓ Identify equipment/supplies needed.
Policy Manual

- Job Descriptions
- Volunteer Agreement
- Training and Supervision
- Volunteer Personnel File
- Documentation
- Dismissal of Volunteer
- Referral to other Agencies
- Staff and Volunteer Support
- Injury Reporting
- Supervision Process
- Admission Criteria
- Informed Consent
- Scope of Services
- Criteria for in-home support
- Criteria for foster/adoptive care
- Provision of Services
- Discharge from Program
- Documentation of Services
- Evaluation of Services

What About Liability?

✓ Clearly identify what you are responsible for when an animal is in the program’s care

✓ Carriers want to see that Policy Manual addresses the “what ifs”. Documentation process is important.

✓ Plan to add $500 to budget for increase in premium coverage

✓ Organization should have waivers that describe hold harmless language if the animal is hurt or lost while in care of program
Marketing/Promotion

- Create or customize program brochure, collateral.
- Add to website, and supply links to animal related sites.
- Press releases, service announcements with follow up & feature article pitches to selected media.
- Pitch to local print medial pet section journalists.

Funding

- Seek local grant funding and/or underwriting:
  - Local Grants
  - Pet related businesses
  - Major donor and animal advocate
  - In-kind donations

- Plan fund raiser for program to increase awareness and community involvement
- National organizations
Banfield Charitable Trust

*Pet Peace of Mind* allows hospice clients to complete their end-of-life journey with the comfort and companionship of their pet, without worrying about their pet's current or future needs.

Case Presentation
Pepper

Bella
Lebron

Sarge & Jackson
Questions?