

A Positive Response Graduate: Wolfie

Wolfie, having completed a number of courses with Dee, (puppy class I and II, and Clicker Training) has now become an accredited Delta Therapy Pet! He and Wendy, his owner regularly visit the Royal Children's Hospital.

Wolfie makes good use of the tricks he has learnt. The children especially love when he does a high five: shakes a paw, says please, gives them a kiss, jumps through a hoop, or "puts away his toys". Knowing how to give him commands via hand signals means that Wendy can ensure that he will respond to even the shyest child when they ask him to 'sit'.

Wendy says that what has surprised her most is how much the parents appreciate a visit. The more stressed the parent is, the more pleased they are to see the dog. He is a cheerful reminder of their 'normal' lives outside of the hospital.

Delta Pet Partner teams - trained volunteers and their accredited dogs – will visit any facility where re-establishing contact with a companion animal enhances the quality of patients' and residents' lives or assists in patients' treatments, working with health professionals to achieve specific goals. (Children's and adult hospitals, rehabilitation units, mental health facilities, children with special needs and nursing homes).

Dogs are rigorously assessed for temperament and personality by Delta assessors prior to accreditation for the program and their volunteer owners are given professional training. Delta dogs come from all breeds and in many sizes and their owners come from many backgrounds. But they all share a common purpose in bringing some joy and happiness into the lives of sick children and adults, frail aged residents and those who are challenged physically or emotionally. This joy and happiness has to be seen to be truly believed.

To find out more about Delta Society Australia, please visit their website at www.deltasocietyaustralia.com.au