

American Cancer Society Announces New Funding for Hospital Therapy Dogs to Support Children with Cancer and their Families

ATLANTA, September 21, 2023 – Today, the American Cancer Society (ACS) expanded its impact on pediatric patients with cancer through the launch of ACS PAWS (Pups Assisting with Support), a pilot grant program that aims to improve the quality of life for hospitalized children with cancer through support from specially trained therapy dogs. The program awarded the following six children's hospitals \$8,000 to support existing therapy dog programs:

- Children's Hospital Orange County (CHOC) - Orange, CA
 - Lois, a 4-year old golden retriever/yellow lab mix
- Children's National Hospital - Washington, DC
 - Company, a 3-year old golden retriever
- Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital - St. Petersburg, FL
 - Brea, a 5-year old yellow lab
- Norton Children's Hospital - Louisville, KY
 - Luna, a 2-year old black lab
- Texas Children's Hospital - Houston, TX
 - Bailey, a 7-year old golden retriever
 - Pinto, a 7-year old golden retriever
 - Pluto, a 5-year old golden retriever
 - Cohen, a 5-year old golden retriever
 - Angus, a 4-year old golden mix
- UW Health Hospitals and Clinics - American Family Childrens Hospital - Madison, WI
 - Cola, a 3-year old golden doodle mix
 - Kiko, a 4-year old golden doodle

Funding during the 12-month grant period will supplement veterinary costs, adoption, training for the handler or staff members, food, grooming, beds, toys and improving or maintaining dog facilities. Collectively, the projects are estimated to impact more than 10,000 children and families impacted by cancer. From birth, therapy dogs who work full-time in children's hospitals receive extensive, specialized training to provide goal-orientated, therapeutic interventions and emotional support. The ACS PAWS grant program fills a critical gap for institutions as animal-assisted therapy programs are primarily supported by philanthropy efforts.


"We're excited that this new initiative allows us to focus on the unique needs of children with cancer and their families," said [Dr. Arif Kamal](#), chief patient officer of the American Cancer Society. "By supporting children during a challenging time, therapy dogs and their handlers play a supportive role in improving the hospital environment during cancer treatment and reducing suffering. It's another way we're working to connect with families that need additional support during their cancer journey."

Widely considered a safe and desirable intervention for children with cancer, animal-assisted therapy for hospitalized children has been shown to decrease symptoms like anxiety, stress, depression, and pain, and increase quality of life indicators like feelings of joy and calmness, positive memories from hospitalization, and improved sense of well-being. To learn more about supporting children through cancer treatment, click [here](#).

About the American Cancer Society

The American Cancer Society is a leading cancer-fighting organization with a vision to end cancer as we know it, for everyone. For more than 100 years, we have been improving the lives of people with cancer and their families as the only organization combating cancer through advocacy, research, and patient support. We are committed to ensuring everyone has an opportunity to prevent, detect, treat, and survive cancer. To learn more, visit cancer.org or call our 24/7 helpline at 1-800-227-2345. Connect with us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

For further information: Darrya Lipscomb, Darrya.Lipscomb@cancer.org

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