



## Tackling isolation during corona virus

*New online dog therapy for people with dementia and their carers*

In response to existing lockdown restrictions, the Dementia Dog team are developing new fun online support services while our face to face therapy sessions are on hold.

This leaflet is designed for dementia support staff to tell you more about these new services - how they help and can complement and enhance other online activities you are undertaking.

**We would love to hear from you, wherever you're based in Scotland, mainland or islands!** If you'd like to find out more or have a taster session of any of the services below, please get in touch!

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### Group sessions - Virtual dog bingo!

This group session is fun, easy and engaging!

- 20-minute sessions suitable for people with a diagnosis and/or their carers
- Successfully trialled on NHS Attend Anywhere and GoTo Meeting secure platforms
- Bingo sheet resources supplied by Dementia Dog team, sent out to clients via yourself
- Ideal for group size of 5-6 people
- Member of Dementia Dog team and their trained dog handler host the session. The dog is trained to select a numbered ball which their handler then calls out

*"Everyone really enjoyed the first group - it went really well. Someone on my group today was recommending it to another couple and saying they should attend next week."*

Rosemary Moncur, Communities Activities Organiser, Alzheimer Scotland



## Group sessions - Scavenger hunt!

Fun 'hunt the object' game people can do in safety of their own home

We can tailor this group activity as appropriate for each group. The dog will pick a different coloured item from a box, and the dog handler asks people to find an item in the room of that colour.

- 20-minute sessions suitable for able bodied people with a diagnosis and their carers
- No resources required
- Ideal for max group size of 5-6 people
- Member of Dementia Dog team can host the session



Example of a virtual scavenger hunt

## One to one Sessions – Virtual Dog Walks

Our virtual dog walks connect with families either in their own home, or while on a walk in their local neighbourhood. Through interactive video link with our community dog and handler, couples can share the wonderful experience of taking a dog out and all the motivation and fun this brings!



This is ideal for:

- people with dementia who live with full time carers
- people you support who may be struggling with routine or motivation to get up/go outdoors
- dog-lovers who don't have one of their own
- You can watch our **explainer video** available on Dementia Dog Project Facebook page (posted 1.6.20) or look out for it soon on Yammer and ALIS News section!

## VIRTUAL DOG WALK - CASE STUDY

We have successfully trialled this with a family where the carer was struggling to encourage her husband to get up or step out into the garden.

Motivated by a virtual walk with Billy, he got out of bed, got dressed and they enjoyed their first walk together in weeks, venturing into their neighbourhood. We are now building on this success with weekly sessions to encourage a more structured daily routine.

Asked if they would like the sessions to continue, the carer said, ***“Yes definitely up for a walk! I haven't been able to get George out for a walk at all since last Wednesday. In fact, it's hard to get him out of the house at all. I've no doubt that Billy helps. See you soon!”***

## Tailored one to one Sessions

We can also work with you to develop bespoke and meaningful online interactions with people you support who may be feeling especially isolated. If you know someone, and a dog may brighten their day, please get in touch with us!



### Want to find out more?



Just get in touch with our Dementia Specialist, Nadia Sutherland  
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