For more information:

To learn more about becoming part of Paws With A Purpose, please call (515) 557-3287.

UnityPoint Hospice
11333 Aurora Avenue
Urbandale, IA 50322

Paws With A Purpose
UnityPoint Hospice Animal Assisted Therapy Program

We’re looking for a few good dogs...

We are recruiting well-trained, well-mannered dogs – and their humans – for our animal assisted therapy program, Paws With A Purpose.

If you and your dog are looking for a meaningful way to volunteer together in the community, please consider how you might want to make a difference in the lives of our patients and families.

The point of unity is you.

unitypointhospice.org
HOW THE VISIT WORKS:
Paws With A Purpose volunteers visit patients in their homes or at Taylor House, our inpatient hospice facility. When a patient requests a visit, the hospice volunteer coordinator will schedule a time and date. A volunteer dog/handler team will come to the patient’s place of residence. Visits typically last 15-20 minutes and allow the patient to interact with the dog. All dogs are bathed within 24 hours of going to a visit, are registered therapy dogs and are insured for liability purposes.

WHAT IS REQUIRED FOR THE DOGS:
While we love having people who are interested in our Paws With A Purpose program, we do have very rigorous guidelines for our canine candidates. Dogs must:

• Be at least one year old
• Have an outstanding temperament
• Love children and adults
• Get along with other dogs
• Have good basic obedience skills and training
• Understand and respond to basic commands without the use of treats
• Not be vocal (whining or barking)
• Dogs must be up to date on all vaccinations
• Have proof of current rabies vaccination at testing
• Be free of all skin problems
• Not be on prong collars and gentle leaders and retractable leashes

WHAT IS REQUIRED FOR THE HUMANS:
As a volunteer with Paws With A Purpose, you will be visiting patients in their homes and at Taylor House, our inpatient hospice facility in Des Moines. Handlers must be 18 years or older and will undergo the same training program that all potential hospice volunteers take. Training will include learning about the philosophy of hospice care, end-of-life issues, and patient confidentiality. Additionally, background checks and screenings will be done.

NEXT STEPS...
If you are interested in becoming part of Paws With A Purpose, here are the next steps:

Step One: Application and Interview.
Call (515) 557-3287 to receive an application. All applicants will be interviewed over the phone. Qualified candidates will be scheduled for temperament testing.

Step Two: Temperament Testing.
All dogs must pass temperament testing to advance to the training and registration course.

Step Three: Training and Registration.
Dogs will complete an intensive training program, graduating as registered therapy dogs. Owners receive special hospice volunteer training.

Meet Chance!
Paws With A Purpose Registered Therapy Dog

BREED: German Shepherd
DOB: 2/26/09
WEIGHT: 72 lbs.
OWNER: Anna

CHARACTERISTICS: The German Shepherd is a noble, highly intelligent dog. Obedience, police work, tracking or simply guarding his property; to do his job he needs a partner. Not as his equal, but as his “pack leader”. His favorite thing to do is snuggle with people. Chance is a true companion dog.