Assistance Dogs Guidance for CHP buildings

CHP have been asked by a few tenants if we allow assistance dogs within our buildings and what they should do regards other tenants and visits within their premises.

To make it clear, YES CHP do allow Assistance Dogs (AD) within our building's. However, these dogs must have the proper accreditation and signage i.e. AD tag or coat. Assistance Dogs are specially trained dogs working with an individual person to support them in a number of ways e.g. Hearing difficulties, epilepsy, Diabetes, physical mobility problems and much more. These include:

- Guide Dogs
- Hearing Dogs
- Assistance Dogs
- Medical Alert Dogs
- Autism Assistance Dogs
- Dogs supporting people who have mental health issues

I have attached some guidance documents for you to read and understand a little better as to why these dogs are so important and to appreciate why they are allowed.

Some tenants want to have a pop-up stand when an Assistance Dog visits to inform people of the great job they do and raise not just awareness but funds for charities. Other tenants may have a staff member who has an Assistance Dog and wants to bring them in to work to help assist them.

To manage the Health & Safety risks of assistance dogs visiting sites:

Particular care should be taken to reduce any risk of harm to the dog and its owner/handler, residents, patients and visitors, as well as staff.

To ensure this, the following should be observed for all dogs at all times:

- the dog should be on a lead and under control at all times
- the dog should be wearing its ID tag, a recognised jacket, or other identification, to show that it is working as an assistance dog
- people other than those the dog is visiting must be actively discouraged from talking to the dog without the express permission of the owner/handler. The owner/handler and staff must be able to stop any interaction immediately if they think there are any risks to anyone, including the dog
- time spent in the health care setting and the number of people the dog interacts with should be limited, in line with the tenant's operational guidelines.
- consideration should also be given to cultural and religious beliefs and people who are frightened of dogs or do not wish to interact with a dog. These situations must be ascertained before a dog is permitted to visit an area and any unplanned interactions prevented
- Some Assistance Dogs do not wear harnesses or jackets, but most owners will have an ID book about the Assistance Dog, the training organisation and other useful information.

Some information regards Assistance Dog's, which might help you with some questions that are raised:
They are highly trained animals which means:

- They will not wander freely around the premises.
- They will sit or lie quietly on the floor next to their owner.
- They are unlikely to foul in a public place.
- Assistance Dogs are not pets they are an auxiliary aid.

If you have any other questions that cannot be answered in the attached guidance document's, please feel free to ask your ORM and they will try and advise you. However, the guidance documents have some very useful links for you to use which should answer any questions you may have.

I hope this has been helpful and that it allows you to be more confident and knowledgeable with regards to Assistance Dogs.

Further information:
Assistance Dogs – A Guide for all Businesses

Royal College of Nursing - Working with Dogs in Health Care Settings

Another link to get some more information you can go to is the Assistance Dogs UK site:
General Information - ADUK (assistancedogs.org.uk)