



Sweet Charity
Medical Assistance Dogs

Diabetes Alert Dogs



His Diabetes Alert Dog is not only his lifeline; but also his best friend.

WHAT IS A DIABETES ALERT DOG?

A Diabetes Alert Dog (DAD) uses scent detection to recognize changes in the blood sugar levels of their *Friend for Life* (paired human with Type 1 diabetes) and alert to impending changes. DADs are trained as service dogs by professionals over a period of 18-22 months prior to becoming a member of a family dealing with Type 1 diabetes.

HOW ARE DIABETES ALERT DOGS TRAINED?

DADs are assessed and trained from 8 weeks old. **Classical conditioning is used to train the DAD to the scent of low blood sugar breath** which is collected in special filters. When the DAD sniffs the odour (s)he gets a reward. The DAD is then trained to respond to the odour. The DAD learns to connect the recognition of the odour to an action - the alert. Each DAD also undergoes basic obedience and public access training before (s)he is paired with a *Friend for Life*. **A trained service dog is legally entitled to be present at school or work.**

HOW DO DIABETES ALERT DOGS HELP?

A DAD alerts to falling blood sugar levels, usually beginning with a nudge. The dog will escalate the alert by pawing and/or licking until the communication is acknowledged. **With a DAD by their side those with Type 1 diabetes are better able to manage their blood sugar level instability, which reduces the number of urgent interventions and potentially life-threatening consequences of unnoticed low blood sugar levels.**

WHO QUALIFIES FOR A DIABETES ALERT DOG?

Adults and youth aged 8 years old and up with Type 1 diabetes are eligible to apply.

CONTACT

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Find more information and apply for a Diabetes Alert Dog online at:

sweetcharity.ca