

Therapy Dogs



I work in a pediatric intensive care unit taking care of all different types of sick children. We have a therapy dog that comes once a week to visit the patients (and staff). He is a ten-year-old German Shepard with a heart of gold named Smokey. He truly is able to sense who needs a high five or a hug. We had a teenage boy from France who became critically ill while traveling in the U.S. He was scared and homesick. Smokey walked right into the room, put his head into the boys lap, and just stayed there while this kid (and his mom) had a good cry. His presence just makes people feel better. The kids get so excited to see him. They

can ask him to do some of his tricks and he loves posing for pictures. Time with the therapy dog is time not focusing on being sick. He also always takes a few minutes to visit the staff. He understands that sometimes we need him as much as the patients do. I love when he comes to see me and sits on my feet while I pet him. I can be having a hectic day but a few minutes with Smokey makes everything better. Just seeing him walk down the hall brings a smile to patients, their families and staff!