

**(No) Dogs Allowed?:**  
**Towards a Model of Canine Residency in Long-term Care**  
Northwood Group of Companies  
and  
Ardra Cole, Mount Saint Vincent University

Bella, an 8-year old Rough Collie, is set to begin her work in September as a “resident” canine in Northwood’s long-term care facility. For several hours each day, at various times of the day, Bella and a researcher-handler will take up residence in the long-term care facility participating in the everyday life and routines of the facility, and engaging with residents, staff, and visitors as invited and appropriate. They will, in essence, become a natural part of the Northwood community. The purpose of the project is to define and describe the multiple meanings, possibilities, and challenges of a dog-in-residence program for people who live in long-term care, their formal and informal caregivers, and participating dog(s). It also will provide a solid foundation for the development of a model for a canine residency program

Currently, nursing homes, including Northwood, have pet therapy programs, resident cats, or invite friends and family to visit with cherished pets. No facility in NS co-admits senior residents together with their beloved dogs to long-term care. For many seniors, an animal is their principle source of comfort, safety, and companionship. The impact on resident wellness and quality of life can be devastating if a beloved animal must be relinquished due to a transition to care. This project will inform future research and development of a canine residency model for long-term care, contribute to the knowledge base on socially innovative person-centred care and the human-animal bond, and also will inform public policy in this period when planning for an ageing demographic is vital.