Understanding Service Animals
Shania Atherton, Jacie Buller, Ben Cai, Amanda Krug, Mercedes Ost, Shayna Young
NURS 441, Advisor: Anne Devney

Abstract
It is not uncommon today to see those with disabilities with a service animal. Unfortunately, the public have a poor understanding of the care and benefits those animals can provide. In this presentation we will discuss the legal definition of service animals, their training and behavior, handler’s responsibilities and rights, and the differences between other supportive or therapy animals.

Overview & History
- Americans with Disabilities act (ADA) define service animals as “animal that are individually trained to work or perform tasks for a person with a disability.
- Service animals can be either a dog, or a miniature horse.
- Can assist with physical, psychiatric, sensory, and neurological disabilities
- Early as the 1750s
- The Seeing Eye training school of 1929
- Bonnie Bergin
- Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

History & Interaction
- International Assistance Dog Week 2009
- Combat Veterans with PTSD eligible for service dogs in 2012
- Horses as Service Animals
- Approach the handler, not the dog
  Ask to interact
  NEVER touch without permission
- A sleeping dog is still working
- If a service dog is seen unattended
- Other behaviors and distractions

Legal
- Under the ADA Service animals are viewed as assistive devices
- Generally must allow service animals to accompany people with disabilities where the public can go.
- Service animal must be under control through devices and/or verbal means.
- Two limited inquiries:
  1. Is the dog a service animal required because of a disability?
  2. What work or task has the dog been trained to perform?
- Can be asked to remove service animal if:
  Out of control and handler does not take effective action.
  Is not housebroken.

Supportive Animals
- Emotional support animals (ESA)
  Provide emotional support and comfort to individuals on a regular basis
- Therapy dogs
  Provide psychological or physiological support to individuals who are not their owners
- Differences with Service Animals
  Limited access to establishments
  Limited or different training standards