



**Animal
Therapies LTD**
Animals Helping Humans



**Animal-Assisted
Services Australia**
Animals Helping Humans

Advancing the understanding, acceptance and accessibility of
animal-assisted services for those in need.

An overview of Animal Therapies Ltd

- **Animal Therapies Ltd (ATL)** is a national health promotion charity established to **improve the health and wellbeing of Australians** through the **safe and ethical integration of animals into many different occupations**. Eg:
 - **A canine-assisted social worker; or**
 - **An equine-assisted counsellor; or**
 - **A small animal-assisted psychologist; or**
 - **A canine-assisted occupational therapist;**
 - **A farm-based skills development and learning program**
 - **A visitation animal program to aged care**
- We work across sectors — health, disability, aged care, veterans, education and community services — to improve referral pathways and build **recognition, standards, and access** for animal-assisted services.

2. The Change We're Driving

- ATL is **changing how Australia understands and values animal-assisted services**, moving them from “alternative” to **mainstream, evidence-based practice**.
- We advocate for the **inclusion of animal-assisted supports** in funding frameworks like the **NDIS**, Veterans, and aged care. Over the past 12 months, ATL has increased its participation in Commonwealth public consultation processes relating to legislation, policy design, and implementation frameworks. This has been in direct response to a significant rise in enquiries from people with disability, their carers, and health and service providers.
- ATL is **bridging the gap between lived experience, clinical research, and policy**, ensuring people who benefit from these services can access them safely and



affordably. This includes improving referral pathways from frontline health staff which are currently fragmented, further limiting access to animal-assisted services for priority populations. We aim to improve clarity around law and policy, strengthening referral pathways for animal-assisted services including assistance animals, and raise awareness among key stakeholders and the broader community

3. National Impact

- ATL has Australia's largest directory of **practitioners, researchers, and service providers working in this field.**
 - Our programs reach diverse communities — including **First Nations communities, troubled youth, disengaged learners, veterans and people with disability, trauma, learning and mental health challenges.**
 - We work hard to reduce public access refusals for assistance animal handlers
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4. Partnerships & Collaboration

- ATL works **collaboratively with government**, including the **NDIS, DSS, and Department of Health**, to improve policy and guidance.
 - We also engage with **universities and clinicians** to build the research evidence base that underpins professional practice.
 - Our goal is to make Australia a **world leader in ethical, evidence-based animal-assisted services.**
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5. Programs That Make a Difference

- **“Assistance Animals Are Welcome Here”** – a national initiative helping businesses and communities become **more inclusive and accessible** for people with assistance animals.

- **Animal-Assisted Mental Health Outreach Program** – supporting **Australians** when they have walked away from traditional mental health services and have no financial means to pay for their support.
 - **National Conference on Animal-Assisted Services** – bringing together practitioners, researchers, and policymakers to **advance standards and collaboration**.
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6. The Human–Animal Interactions

- At the heart of our work is the **transformative power of human–animal interactions lead by fully insured professionals working within the scope of their practice** — improving session attendance and engagement, mental health, recovery, independence, and community connection.
 - Every day we see how **animal-assisted services change lives** — from helping a veteran reconnect after PTSD to supporting a child with autism engage in therapy or teaching programs.
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7. What's Next for ATL

- Driving national **policy recognition and funding inclusion** for animal-assisted services.
- Expanding our **outreach programs** to reach more regional communities.
- Continuing to build **public awareness and professional standards** to ensure animal welfare and safety remain central.

Finally, ATL aligns with the National Agreement on Closing the Gap by promoting equitable health participation, the National Preventive Health Strategy by supporting preventative interventions, Australia's Primary Health Care 10-Year Plan by strengthening referral pathways and workforce capability.

Key Contact:

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Founder

animaltherapies.org.au | animalassistedservices.org.au

Animal Therapies Ltd (ATL) is a registered Australian health promotion charity dedicated to improving the lives of people affected by mental illness, disability, trauma, or adversity through evidence-based animal-assisted services. Established in 2018, ATL works to advance the understanding, acceptance, and accessibility of animal-assisted therapy, learning, and activities nationwide. The organisation connects individuals with qualified providers through its national directory, sets ethical and professional standards for practitioners, delivers professional development and education, and advocates for greater inclusion of assistance animals and their handlers in the community.