



Zorgbeest

3. Competences of the involved actors

- Handler
 - Each handler is expected to have participated in a recognised training programme that includes the following subjects:
 - zoonoses (Lefebvre et al., 2008);
 - visual inspection for ectoparasites (Lefebvre et al., 2008);
 - recognising dog body language, in particular in the case of discomfort, fear or stress (both acute and chronic) and responding correctly (Mariti, 2012; Fureix, Menguy, & Hausberger, 2010, Delta Society Evaluation Procedure);
 - dogs' needs and how to provide a stress-free environment for dogs;
 - patient privacy (Lefebvre et al., 2008);
 - learning principles, in particular the use of positive reinforcement as a training method to facilitate a positive relationship with the dog and to prevent chronic stress in dogs (Ng et al., 2014).
 - The handler must communicate with the dog in a clear manner.
 - The handler should always have access to support from a dog behaviour specialist (Mariti, 2012) and a veterinarian.

- Therapist:
 - The therapist should also have a basic knowledge of dog behaviour, welfare and training (Van Fleet, 2006, 2014b).

- Caregivers:
 - Ideally the caregivers should also have a basic knowledge of dog behaviour, welfare and training (Van Fleet, 2006, 2014b).