



Sandy Nicholson and Lord Oberon, otherwise known as Bo. Picture: Will Russell

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Bo takes final bow

BETHESDA Hospital in Claremont has had a changing of the guard. Therapy dog Bo stepped down from his post as a weekly visitor to patients.

Bo's owner Sandy Nicholson started volunteering for the Animal Companions WA program about six years ago with her dog Tolly, who retired from service about a year ago because of an injury.

For Mrs Nicholson to continue her weekly trips to the hospital, she enlisted the help of

another trusty companion named Lord Oberon, later shortened to Bo.

"He was found wandering in Churchlands and as no one came forward, we claimed him and we thought he needed a swanky name to go with that nose," she said.

The purebred Scottish Rough Collie has just finished his work at the hospital because his family is moving to the Goldfields with work commitments, but he is set to bring his brand of joy to new friends at a nursing home in Kalgoorlie.

"He brings plenty of comfort, companion-ship and cuddles to people, and it takes their

mind off things for a little while," Mrs Nicholson said. One particular visit that has stuck with Mrs Nicholson was when an elderly man who was unable to speak clearly started talking to her dog without problem as there was no pressure involved in the exchange.

Fellow Animal Companions WA volunteer Beth Croxon started taking her dog Buster to Bethesda Hospital in November and Mrs Nicholson says she is more than happy to hand over the leash to her.

People with a friendly pooch who are interested in taking part in the program can visit www.aciwa.org.au for more details.