



Navigating Interest in Horses in Human Services (EAS): Guidelines and Logistics for Rescues and Sanctuaries

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The Institute for Human-Animal Connection advances knowledge and practice in human-animal interactions through innovative and ethical **research** and **education**.

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1. What is “Horses in Human Services”?
2. Facility and Horse Considerations
3. What to Ask/How to Assess
4. Resources

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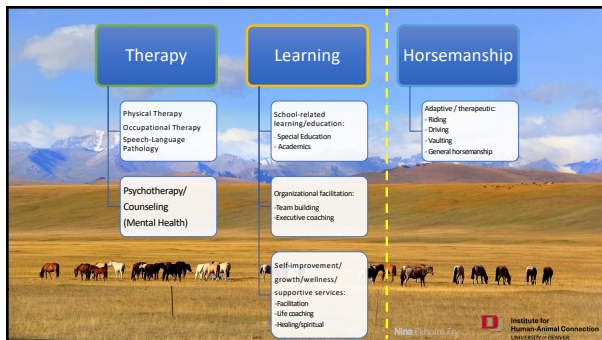
1. What is "Horses in Human Services"?



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Therapy	Learning	Horsemanship
- Physical Therapy - Occupational Therapy - Speech-Language Pathology	- School-related learning/education: - Special Education - Academics	- Adaptive / therapeutic: - Riding - Driving - Vauling - General horsemanship
Psychotherapy/Counseling (Mental Health)	- Organizational facilitation: - Team building - Executive coaching	
	- Self-improvement/growth/wellness/supportive services: - Facilitation - Life coaching - Healing/spiritual	

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Physical Therapy Occupational Therapy Speech-Language Therapy



Use of equine movement as a treatment tool within OT, PT, SLP ("hippotherapy" or equine movement is not a standalone therapy or treatment).
American Hippotherapy Association (AHA).
Statements of best practice exist.
Independent credentialing board.
Equine work role: carrying patients on their back, may also interact on the ground.

https://www.humananimalconnection.org/

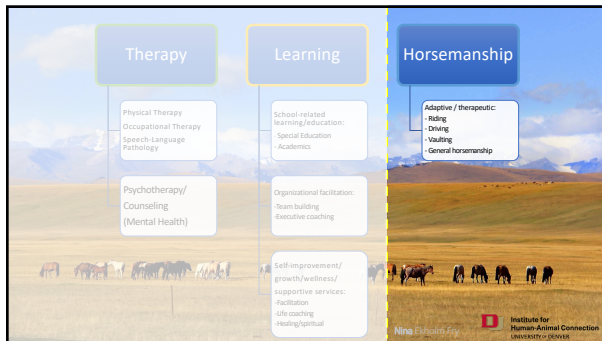
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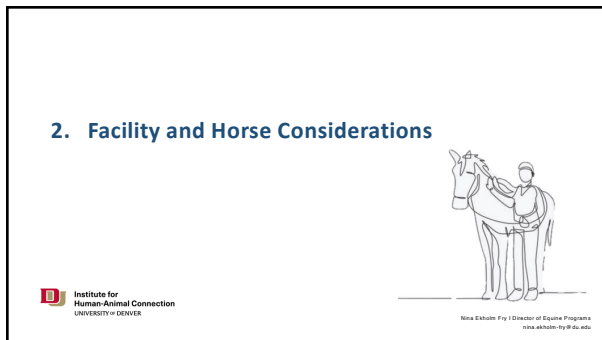
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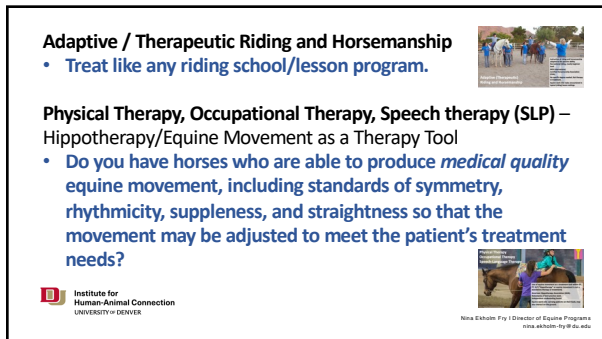
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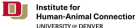


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Learning Services Incorporating Horses

- Likely your most typical inquiry
- Often done in a group format, can be individual
- Human role often largely unregulated (“facilitator” “coach”)
- Will need a “human area” with chairs, shelter
- Will need access to a restroom
- Often involves horse interactions in an arena (*but not always*)
- Low impact on horses (*but not always!*)
- Can involve one or more facilitators
- Facilitators should be knowledgeable about horse behavior, etc.





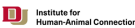
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Psychotherapy / Clinical MH Counseling Incorporating Horses

- Psychotherapy providers are regulated via state license
- Must be competent in what they provide to clients/patients, otherwise they are violating their practice standards (and license)
- Cannot “defer” horse knowledge to another person
- Will need a *private* “human area”
- Will need access to a restroom
- Will need confidential, --quiet-- working space
- Can interact with horses in a number of ways (observing, touching, leading) and may or may not need an arena.
- *Impact on horses should be low* in competent inclusion of horses in psychotherapy
- Healthcare “culture” vs. horse industry...





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Psychotherapy Incorporating Equine (Horse) Interactions in the U.S.

1. Professional Identity
E.g., Licensed Clinical Psychologist
2. Service
Psychotherapy
3. Therapeutic Approach/Modality
E.g. Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
4. Therapy Technique(s)



Equine Interactions
= Elements that arise from *interactions with horses*, skillfully provided by a licensed and trained clinician

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Who Provides Psychotherapy in the United States

1. Psychiatrist	medical degree
2. Psychologist (Clinical or Counseling)	doctoral degree (typically*)
3. Clinical Mental Health Counselor	master's degree
4. Clinical Social Worker	master's degree
5. Marriage and Family Therapist	master's degree
6. Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner	master's degree

- Psychotherapy is primarily coded by time (e.g., 30 mins, 45 mins, 60 mins), and per client(s) present (individual, family, group) using Current Procedural Terminology (CPT-4) – AMA (within Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS) – CMS).
- Ability (license) to independently provide psychotherapy follows 1-3 years of supervised practice after qualifying education.

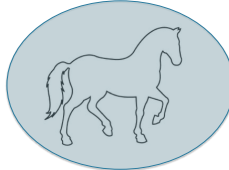
* There are some exceptions (state-dependent)



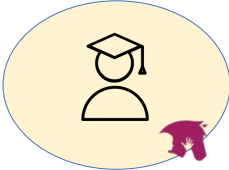
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Conceptualization is important!



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3. What to Ask + "Red Flags"





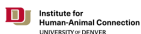
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What do you need to know?

- *First*, learn about the person's human credentials. This determines what they can do (and whether they are regulated in their profession/whether they have a profession).
- *Second*, learn about their equine experience. They cannot "outsource" equine knowledge and experience to another.
- *Third*, learn about the training they have in equine interactions within their specific area of work (for instance, a specific learning service, or relative to healthcare). Ask about the details of their training ("brand names" of training groups do not matter).



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What do you need to know?

- Ask about what the range of equine interactions will look like. Horses should not be made to trot/run, be touched for long periods of time, be chased around a round pen or arena, be teased with food they cannot access, etc., in the name of "client benefit."
- Establish whether your facility can accommodate the service (or activity) needs.
 - For learning services and psychotherapy/healthcare, it is not reasonable to ask for a facility representative to be present in the session.
 - It is reasonable to ask that handling involves minimal pressure, hay provided if horses are asked to stand for long periods, etc.



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Potential Red Flags

- Saying they provide "equine therapy" (this is not a professional term)
- Use of the word "therapy" without any healthcare licensure
- at a master or doctoral level
- Saying they want to "do hippotherapy"
- Having limited horse experience and appearing uncertain about horse selection and assessment
- No training in equine interaction beyond an online course/program
- An OT, PT, SLP who does not have AHCB or HPCS board certification
- Wanting to do things with horses that the horse does not encounter in their daily lives at the facility



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4. Resources



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IAHAIO International Association of Human-Animal Interaction Organizations

IAHAIO international guidelines on care, training and welfare requirements for equines in equine-assisted services

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iahaio.org



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www.americanhippotherapyassociation.org

TERMINOLOGY FOR HEALTHCARE

As the professional organizations representing therapists who incorporate equine-assisted and equine interaction in treatment, the American Hippotherapy Association, Inc. recommends the use of a standardized terminology when discussing human-animal interaction in clinical and professional contexts. The universal use of consistent, accurate terminology is essential to promote clarity, transparency, an equitable career, clinical documentation, professional advancement, marketing efforts, education, and research. Adoption of this terminology supports improved interdisciplinary communication, enhances evidence-based understanding and practice, and the continued advancement and credibility of services. Consistent to this guidance is the use of therapy horse language, which clearly identifies the healthcare professionals who incorporate equine-assisted practice in their work and the role of the horse in the intervention.

Recommended Terminology for Therapy Incorporating:

1. Terms recommended for human services that incorporate horses within the United States healthcare system.
2. Terms recommended for non-therapy services that incorporate horses.
3. Equine or equine-related terms.
4. Terms related to healthcare.
5. Terms recommended for documentation.

In most cases, terms are listed alphabetically within the sections.

RECOMMENDED TERMINOLOGY FOR THERAPY INCORPORATING EQUINES

AMERICAN HIPPO THERAPY CERTIFICATION BOARD (AHCBC): The AHCBC is an independent board made up of Hippotherapy Clinical Specialists who oversee the certification, accreditation and monitoring of the Certification. AHCBC-certified professionals in Hippotherapy Clinical Specialists.

AHCBC CERTIFIED: A licensed therapy professional (OT, COTA, PT, PTA, SLP or MD) who demonstrates an entry level of competency when incorporating hippotherapy into treatment. Certification requires attendance at the AHCBC, Inc. Hippotherapy Treatment Principles course (both 1 and 2) and successful completion of the national board review exam and is required by the American Hippotherapy Certification Board (AHCBC). Recertification is required every five years.

Approved by Board of Directors February 10, 2016

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Equine Welfare Network Member, Guardian and Mentor Requirements

Outlined below is a comparison of the requirements for organizations designated by the Internal Revenue Service as 501(c)(3) tax-exempt public charities to participate on the Equine Welfare Network. There are three categories of participants, one of which is an accreditation.

1. Business Practices

Member	Guardian	Mentor	Requirement

EQUUS
FOUNDATION

Guidelines for Organizations Conducting Equine Assisted Services (EAS)

The EQUUS Foundation has one of the most comprehensive and sophisticated processes to recognize equine charities for their transparency and accountability to the public and to ensure those confidence in the charities selected to receive grants each year.

The EQUUS Foundation recognizes equine charities and awards financial support on the basis of the organization's equine welfare and business practices and the manner by which that activity that incorporates equine interactions and the equine environment, mounted or ground-based, including any Equine Assisted Service (EAS) under Community Outreach program, is actually beneficial to both the individual equine and the organization is committed to safeguarding the comfort and dignity of America's horses and making the quality of life of our equine partners precious. Review our eligibility requirements [here](#).

equusfoundation.org

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15 Weeks
CEUs

Online Course in
EQUINE BEHAVIOR

Learn about Equine Behavior and how it relates to human-horse interactions and equine health through an online course with short, weekly assignments. Internationally accessible.

The course is focused on understanding the behavior and cognition (mental capacities and learning) of horses within the context of how to care for, handle, and train using best available scientific information.

Instructor-led, weekly asynchronous assignments:
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