European Equine Assisted Therapy Network - Physiotherapy Sub-group
Therapist knowledge, skills and competences ON EQUINE IN EAPT*

1. Equine movement and conformation and its impact on the client's movement in EAPT*

Knowledge	Skills to observe and analyse	Competence
- To have knowledge of understanding biomechanics, the therapist needs to understand equine anatomy, conformation and movement, and the effect it has on the client.	- To be able to analyse the movement produced by the equine and its impact on the client. - To be able to assess equine conformation (including symmetry, back shape, gait quality, etc.) **Skills to alter equine movement according to the client's needs** - To be able to influence and regulate the equine movement within the therapy team, using clinical reasoning and safe handling/riding strategies appropriate to the setting.	- To select an appropriate equine with the required movement and conformation according to the client's needs and the required therapy outcome. - To influence the equine movement in order to meet the desired response in the client.

2. Equine behaviour in EAPT

Knowledge	Skills	Competence
- To have knowledge of standard equine behaviour patterns and reactions to different stimuli. - To have knowledge of the signs of equine body language and the appreciation of equine temperament.	- To be able to assess equine behaviour and body language. - To be able to stop, modify, or terminate the session if equine behaviour indicates stress, pain, fear, or risk.	- To observe and evaluate equine body language and behaviour during the therapy session and, if necessary, to manage the team to ensure safe practice. - To manage sessions to stop, modify, or terminate the session if equine behaviour indicates stress, pain, fear, or risk.

3. Training the equine in EAPT

Knowledge	Skills	Competence
- To be aware of training methods to ensure the equine will accept clients with different special needs. - *To have knowledge of work in hand (leading, lunging and long-reining) and mounted (with saddle and bridle) in all situations in EAPT.*	- To be able to recognise the need for correct training and the ability to communicate with the person responsible for the training.	- To recognise a well-trained equine for different therapy purposes. - To communicate and demonstrate to the equine trainer any further training that might be needed for an effective and safe therapy session.

4. Equine welfare and fitness to work in EAPT

Knowledge	Skills	Competence
- To have knowledge of the Five Domains model of equine welfare domains to ensure equine well-being, to maintain engagement and cooperation.	- To be able to observe the signs of good health and fitness of the equine, and be able to communicate with the person responsible for the care of the equine.	- To recognise signs of good physical health, comfort, and positive engagement in the therapy equine. - To recommend adjustments to stable management and the equine's workload, and to escalate concerns through the responsible person

5. Health and Safety in the equine environment in EAPT

Knowledge	Skills to provide a safe therapy session	Competence

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- To have knowledge of the risks in EAPT and how to assess the equine and its environment.	- To be able to carry out a risk assessment of the equine and the environment and then manage and minimise the risks. - To be able to direct the team members in the safe handling of the equine and the client.	- To carry out and record a comprehensive risk assessment for a safe therapy session. - To minimise any risk identified and to manage the team to work safely. - To carry out and demonstrate safe practice throughout the therapy session. - To document incidents, near misses, and safety-related decisions according to local procedures.
6. Tack and equipment for the equine and client in EAPT		
Knowledge - To have knowledge of tack and equipment that are appropriate for both the equine and the client, and know how to fit correctly.	Skills to select the proper equipment - To be able to choose what tack and equipment is appropriate for both the equine and the client, and to be able to fit it correctly and safely. - To be able to select the appropriate mounting facility and other equipment.	Competence - To use clinical reasoning to select appropriate tack and equipment for the client and equine, and to fit correctly. - To recognise the discomfort, pain signals, or behavioural indicators in the equine or client due to poorly fitting tack or inappropriate equipment.

EAPT – Equine Assisted Physiotherapy

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