

European Equine Assisted Therapy Network - Physiotherapy sub-group

Therapist's knowledge, skills and competences in EAPT* PRACTICE

1. Assessment in EAPT* - in order to plan and provide an effective therapy program, the following is necessary:		
Knowledge	Skills	Competence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To understand how to assess the client (regardless of age and diagnosis) on the ground and when mounted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To be able to carry out an appropriate and accurate assessment of a client (regardless of the age or diagnosis) on the ground and when mounted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To apply clinical reasoning, experience, and professional knowledge when carrying out an assessment relevant to the equine environment, on the ground and when mounted. - To identify the client's strengths and weaknesses.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To have knowledge of suitable outcome measures in order to select appropriate measures for the client. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To be able to use and interpret appropriate outcome measures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To demonstrate competence in selecting, administering, and interpreting appropriate outcome measures.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To have knowledge of how to carry out risk assessments for the EAPT session. - To have knowledge of indications, precautions, risks and contraindications for EAPT. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To be able to identify any precautions, risks and contraindications for EAPT to minimise all health and safety factors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To interpret and apply risk assessment to enable safe EAPT treatment. - The ability to modify or terminate the session when clinical risk, equine welfare concerns, or environmental safety factors when it is required.
2. Evaluation of functional impairment and intervention planning in EAPT - in order to provide an effective therapy program, the following is necessary:		
Knowledge	Skills	Competence in evaluation and planning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To understand functional impairment associated with diagnosis and clinical presentation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To be able to identify the client's restrictions that could benefit from EAPT intervention. - To be able to target the EAPT treatment to address the client's impairments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To use the initial assessment to prioritise the areas that can be addressed by EAPT transferable to everyday living, combining clinical knowledge and equine science based on current research in this specialised field.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To have knowledge of a holistic approach to all clients. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To be able to set treatment goals specific to the area of identified impairments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To plan a goal-specific EAPT intervention to meet the client's needs and to adjust if required.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To have knowledge of how to use assessment in the planning and execution of the EAPT program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To be able to plan the EAPT program based on the initial assessment of the client. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To use clinical experience and equine characteristics to plan an EAPT program following the initial and ongoing assessments of the client. - To identify when EAPT is an appropriate and beneficial treatment choice.
3. Intervention in EAPT in order to provide an effective therapy program, the following is necessary:		
Knowledge	Skills	Competence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To understand how to search and carry out Evidence-Based Practice in the EAPT program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To be able to read and interpret Evidence-Based Practice to carry out the EAPT program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To apply evidence-based practice by integrating current research evidence, clinical expertise, and the client's goals and context.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To have knowledge of human biomechanics and psychomotor development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To be able to use clinical reasoning to plan an effective therapy program and reassess the client throughout the intervention. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To apply the knowledge of both human and equine biomechanics to provide effective EAPT treatment - To understand normal human development to provide effective EAPT treatment - To combine individual goals to achieve the outcomes.

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- To have knowledge of human and equine body language and their interaction	- To be able to observe and interpret the human and equine body language and their interaction	- To facilitate a safe and effective EAPT treatment based on observation of, and reaction to, human-equine interaction
- To have knowledge of the impact of EAPT on the clients' physical, emotional, psychological, cognitive and social functioning.	- To be able to understand and recognise the impact of the EAPT on the clients' physical, emotional, psychological, cognitive and social functioning.	- To apply the understanding of the physical, emotional, psychological, cognitive and social functioning to EAPT.
- To have knowledge of the physiotherapy handling techniques and the therapy positions used in EAPT to facilitate the desired response of the client.	- To be able to select the physiotherapy handling techniques and therapy positions to meet the specific treatment goals.	- To apply the knowledge of the physiotherapy handling techniques and the therapy positions to meet the specific treatment goals.
- To have knowledge of equine movement and biomechanics, and how to regulate movement parameters during the session (e.g., speed, rhythm, line of travel, transitions).	- To be able to apply the knowledge of equine movement and biomechanics, to be able to observe the client's reaction and adjust the equine movement accordingly.	- To evaluate any client's reaction to different equine movements and to provide an EAPT intervention.
- To have knowledge of the methods for mounting and dismounting, and the equipment available - To have knowledge of equine anatomy and weight-carrying capacity for correct mounting.	- To be able to carry out a variety of methods for mounting and dismounting, and use the equipment available - To be able to recognise equine distress during mounting and dismounting.	- To select the method of mounting and dismounting with the equipment available in accordance with the treatment goals, without compromising the equine's welfare. - To ensure safe manual handling and safe use of mounting equipment for all staff involved.
- To have knowledge of how to select the most suitable equine for the client as far as conformation, character, temperament and movement are concerned.	- To be able to select the most suitable equine for the client as far as conformation, character, temperament and movement are concerned.	- To select the most suitable equine for the client based on knowledge of conformation, character, temperament and movement.
- To have knowledge of special tack and equipment, and which will be the most appropriate for the equine, client and the treatment goals.	- To be able to select and adjust EAPT tack and equipment according to the needs of the client, equine and the treatment goals	- To select special tack and equipment based on the needs of the client, equine and the treatment goals.
- To have knowledge of the effect of the environment on the treatment session.	- To be able to use the benefits of the environment in the treatment session.	- To observe and react to the equine, client and environment to facilitate a safe and effective treatment session for all involved.
- To have knowledge of methods of documentation and record-keeping in EAPT.	- To be able to keep documentation and treatment notes according to professional and legal requirements.	- The ability to document precisely and consistently to support clinical reasoning, continuity of care, and legal accountability (e.g., SOAP** notes).

4. Communication in EAPT - to provide an effective therapy program, the following is necessary:

Knowledge	Skills	Competence
- To have knowledge of methods of communication with the client, family members, and carers. - To have knowledge of alternative methods of communication when needed.	- To be able to communicate effectively with the client, family members, and carers. - To have the skill to be able to use basic alternative methods of communication when needed.	- To be sensitive to the communication needs of the client and respond accordingly. - To establish a rapport with the client, family members and carers.
- To have knowledge of the importance of effective communication with other professionals involved with the client.	- To be able to communicate effectively with other professionals involved with the client.	- To communicate and collaborate with the other professionals involved in order to ensure the best outcome for the client.

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- To have knowledge of the methods of communication with the EAPT team involved.	- To be able to communicate effectively with the EAPT team involved.	- To communicate with and within the EAPT team in order to achieve best practice.
- To have knowledge of data protection and the need for confidentiality regarding client information.	- To be able to handle sensitive data and maintain clients' confidentiality. - To ensure the whole EAPT team works within the professional code of conduct.	- To demonstrate confident clinical leadership and clear decision-making within the EAPT team, ensuring privacy and professional conduct at all times.

*EAPT – Equine Assisted Physiotherapy

**SOAP – A recognised, structured format for clinical documentation: Subjective, Objective, Assessment and Plan

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