



Occupational Therapy:
Living Life To Its Fullest®

December 15, 2011

Jacqueline Tiley, Executive Director
American Hippotherapy Association

Dear Ms. Tiley:

The American Occupational Therapy Association, Inc. (AOTA) recognizes the use of the movement of the horse (hippotherapy) as one of many interventions that may be used by occupational therapy practitioners, as long as it is based on an appropriate occupational therapy evaluation, and integrated into a broader occupational therapy program and plan of care with the overall goal of supporting engagement in daily activities and occupational performance. Documentation should be explicit in linking the occupational therapy intervention to the client goals and outcomes.

Selection of an appropriate intervention is dependent on the medical diagnosis (e.g. neurological, muscular, psychosocial) and the specific client's performance goals (e.g. improvement in mobility, balance, or sensory responses), for occupational therapy (OT). Therapeutic horseback riding in which the goal is to achieve the skill of riding would not be considered occupational therapy. For example, an occupational therapy goal might be to work on dynamic balance, a skill involved in the performance of various daily activities e.g. completing morning dressing, playing on playground, etc.

In addition, from both an ethical and reimbursement perspective, it is incumbent upon the occupational therapist to provide documentation which objectively supports the rationale for this choice of intervention, how and why it is appropriate to meet the specific goals and needs of the client.

As per the Code and Ethics Standards of the profession, the occupational therapy practitioner using this approach must be competent to provide this intervention, which will likely require receipt of special training to work in this area.

Sincerely,

Maureen Freda Peterson, MS, OT/L, FOTA
Chief Professional Affairs Officer

AOTA's
Centennial
Vision

4720 Montgomery Lane
Bethesda, MD 20814-1220

301-652-2682
301-652-7711 fax

800-377-8555 TDD
www.aota.org



Barbara Heine, PT, HPCS
President, American Hippotherapy Association
5001 Woodside Road
Woodside, CA 94062

Dear Ms. Heine:

The American Occupational Therapy Association, Inc. (AOTA) recognizes the use of the movement of the horse (hippotherapy) as an intervention tool as long as it is based on an appropriate occupational therapy evaluation, treatment plan, and goals and assists in achieving the appropriate functional outcome.

It is appropriate for occupational therapy services using the movement of the horse (hippotherapy) as a treatment tool to be billed as neuromuscular reeducation, therapeutic activities, therapeutic exercise, or sensory integrative activities provided that all payer requirements have been met and depending upon the treatment goals and the way hippotherapy is used during the treatment session. Therapeutic horseback riding in which the goal is to achieve the skill of riding would not be considered occupational therapy.

The occupational therapy practitioner using the movement of the horse also should be specifically trained in the use of this tool.

Sincerely,

Deborah Lieberman

Deborah Lieberman, MHSA, OTR/L, FAOTA
Practice Department

V. Judith Thomas

V. Judith Thomas, MGA
Director
Reimbursement and Regulatory Policy



AHA, INC. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCE LIST

PEERED REVIEWED HIPPOOTHERAPY RESEARCH ARTICLES

This section includes articles that use scientific research and inquiry methods that include more than one research participant. Although some articles use the term “therapeutic riding”, “riding therapy”, “horse therapy”, or “equine assisted therapy” in their title or text, the description of the actual methods is consistent with current AHA, Inc. definition of hippotherapy and are therefore included in this category. Many of these are older articles or were conducted in countries where terminology differs slightly from current AHA, Inc. definitions.

Ajzenman HF, Standeven JW, Shurtleff TL. Effects of hippotherapy on motor control, adaptive behaviors, and participation in children with autism spectrum disorder: A pilot study. *Am J Occup Ther.* 2013; 67(6): 653-63.

Benda W, McGibbon NH, Grant KL. Improvements in muscle symmetry in children with cerebral palsy after equine-assisted therapy (hippotherapy). *The Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine.* 2003; 9(6): 817-825.

Bronson C, Brewerton K, Ong J, Palanca C, Sullivan SJ. Does hippotherapy improve balance in persons with multiple sclerosis: a systematic review. *European Journal of Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine.* 2010; 46: 347-353.

Casady RL, Nichols-Larsen DS. The effect of hippotherapy on ten children with cerebral palsy. *Pediatric Physical Therapy.* 2004; 16(3):165-172.

Champagne D, Dugas C. Improving gross motor function and postural control with hippotherapy in children with Down syndrome: case reports. *Physiotherapy Theory and Practice.* 2010; 8: 564-571.

Chang HJ, Kwon JY, Lee JY, Kim YH. The effects of hippotherapy on the motor function of children with spastic bilateral cerebral palsy. *J Phys Ther Sci.* 2012; 24(12): 1277-80.

DeBuse D, Gibb C, Chandler C. Effects of hippotherapy on people with cerebral palsy from a users' perspective: a qualitative study. *Physiotherapy Theory and Practice.* 2009; 25(30): 174-192.

Dirienzo LN, Dirienzo LT, Baceski DA. Heart Rate Response to Therapeutic Riding in Children with CP: An exploration study. *Pediatric Phys Therapy.* 2007; 19: 160-165.

de Araujo TB, de Oliveira RJ, Martins WR, de Moura Pereira M, Copetti F, Safons MP. Effects of hippotherapy on mobility, strength and balance in elderly. *Arch Gerontol Geriatr.* 2013; 56(3): 478-81.

Debuse D, Chandler C, Gibb C. An exploration of German and British physiotherapists views on the effects of hippotherapy and their measurement. *Physiotherapy Theory and Practice.* 2005; 21(4): 219-242.

Dewar R, Love S, Johnston LM. Exercise interventions improve postural control in children with cerebral palsy: A systematic review. *Dev Med Child Neurol.* 2014. doi: 10.1111/dmcn.12660. [Epub ahead of print]

Dirienzo LN, Dirienzo LT, Baceski DA. Heart Rate Response to Therapeutic Riding in Children with CP: An exploration study. *Pediatric Phys Therapy.* 2007; 19: 160-165.

Encheff JL, Armstrong C, Masterson M, Fox C, Gribble P. Hippotherapy effects on trunk, pelvic, and hip motion during ambulation in children with neurological impairments. *Pediatr Phys Ther.* 2012; 24(3): 251.

Revised April 2015



Exner G, Engelmann A, Lange K, Wenck B. Basic principles and effects of hippotherapy within the comprehensive treatment of paraplegic patients *Rehabilitation (Stuttg)*. 1994; 33(1): 39-43. German.

Gottwald A, Biewald N. New aspects in the treatment of Scheuermann's disease with hippotherapy. *Z Orthop Ihre Grenzgeb*. 1981; 119(4): 351-5. German.

Frank A, McCloskey S, Dole RL. Effect of hippotherapy on perceived self-competence and participation in a child with cerebral palsy. *Pediatric Physical Therapy*. 2011; 23(3): 301-308.

Granados AC, Agis IF. Why children with special needs feel better with hippotherapy sessions: a conceptual review. *The Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine*. 2011; 17: 191-197.

Haehl, V., Giuliani, C., Lewis, C. The influence of hippotherapy on the kinematics and functional performance of two children with cerebral palsy. *Pediatric Physical Therapy*. 1999; 11: 89-101.

Hammer A, Nilsagard Y, Forsberg A, Pepa H, Skargren E, Oberg B. Evaluation of therapeutic riding (Sweden) / hippotherapy (USA). A single-subject experimental design study replicated in eleven patients with multiple sclerosis. *Physiotherapy Theory and Practice*. 2005; 21(1): 51-77.

Hamill D, Washington K, White OR. The Effect of Hippotherapy on Postural Control in Sitting for Children with Cerebral Palsy. *Physical & Occupational Therapy in Pediatrics*. 2007; 27(4): 23-42.

Ionatamishvili NI, et.al. Riding Therapy as a Method of Rehabilitation of Children with CP. *Human Physiology*. 2004; 30(5): 561-565. (Georgia, Russia)

Janura M, Peham C, Dvorakova C, Elfmark M. An assessment of pressure distribution exerted by a rider on the back of a horse during hippotherapy. *Human Movement Science*. 2009; 28: 387-393.

Kuczinsky M & Slonka K. Influence of artificial saddle riding on postural stability in children with CP. *Gait and Posture* 1999; 10:154-160. (Poland)

Kwon JY, Chang HJ, Yi SH, Lee JY, Shin HY, Kim YH. Effect of hippotherapy on gross motor function in children with cerebral palsy: A randomized controlled trial. *J Altern Complement Med*. 2015; 21(1): 15-21.

Lechner HE, Kakebeeke TH, Hegermann D, Baumberger M. The effect of hippotherapy on spasticity and on mental well-being of persons with spinal cord injury. *Archives of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation*. 2007; 88: 1241- 1248.

Lee CW, Seong GK, Yong MS. Effects of hippotherapy on recovery of gait and balance ability in patients with stroke. *J Phys Ther Sci*. 2014; 26(2): 309-11.

Lemke D, Rothwell E, Newcomb TM, Swoboda KJ. Perceptions of equine-assisted activities and therapies by parents and children with spinal muscular atrophy. *Pediatr Phys Ther*. 2014; 26(2): 237-44. doi: 10.1097/PEP.0000000000000027.

Macauley B, Gurierrez K. The effectiveness of hippotherapy for children with language-learning disabilities. *Communications Disorders Quarterly* 2004; 25(4): 205-217.

Mackow A, Malachowska-Sobieska M, Demczuk-Wlodarcyzk E, Sidorowska M, Szklarska A, Lipowicz A. Influence of neurophysiological hippotherapy on the transference of the centre of gravity among children with cerebral palsy. *Ortop Traumatol Rehabil*. 2014; 16(6): 581-93. doi: 10.5604/15093492.1135048

Revised April 2015



Manikowska F, Jozwiak M, Idzior M, Chen PJ, Tarnowski D. The effect of a hippotherapy session on spatiotemporal parameters of gait in children with cerebral palsy – pilot study. *Ortop Traumatol Rehabil.* 2013; 15(3): 253-7. doi: 10.5604/15093492.1058420.

McGee MC, Reese NM. Immediate effects of a hippotherapy session on gait parameters in children with spastic cerebral palsy. *Pediatr Phys Ther.* 2009; 21: 212-218

McGibbon NH, Benda W, Duncan BR, Silkwood-Sherer D. Immediate and long-term effects of hippotherapy on symmetry of adductor muscle activity and functional ability in children with spastic cerebral palsy. *Arch Phys Med Rehabil.* 2009; 90: 966-974.

McGibbon NH, Andrade CK, Widener G, Cintas HL. Effect of an equine movement therapy program on gait, energy expenditure, and motor function in children with spastic cerebral palsy: a pilot study. *Developmental Medicine and Child Neurology.* 1998; 40(1): 754-762.

Park ES, Rha DW, Shin JS, Kim S, Jung S. Effects of hippotherapy on gross motor function and functional performance of children with cerebral palsy. *Yonsei Med J.* 2014; 55(6): 1736-42. doi: 10.3349/ymj.2014.55.6.1736.

Park JH, Shurtleff T, Engsberg J, Rafferty S, You JY, You IY, You SH. Comparison between the robo-horse and real horse movements for hippotherapy. *Biomed Mater Eng.* 2014; 24(6): 2603-10. doi: 10.3233/BME-141076.

Pauw J. Therapeutic horseback riding studies: Problems experienced by researchers. *Physiotherapy.* 2000; 86(10): 523-527. (South Africa)

Quint C & Toomey M. Powered saddle and pelvic mobility: an investigation into the effects on pelvic mobility of children with CP of a powered saddle which imitates the movements of a walking horse. *Physiotherapy* 1998; 84(8): 376-384 (G.Britain)

Rothhaupt D, Ziegler H, Laser T. Orthopedic hippotherapy—new methods in treatment of segmental instabilities of the lumbar spine. *Wien Med Wochenschr.* 1997; 147(22): 504-8. German.

Seon GK & Lee CW. The effects of hippotherapy on elderly persons' static balance and gait. *J Phys Ther Sci.* 2014; 26(1): 25-27.

Shurtleff TL & Engsberg JR. Changes in Trunk and Head Stability after Hippotherapy, a Pilot Study. *Physical and Occupational Therapy in Pediatrics.* 2010; 30(2): 150-163.

Shurtleff TL, Standeven JW, Engsberg JR. Changes in dynamic trunk/head stability and functional reach after hippotherapy. *Arch Phys Med Rehabil.* 2009; 90: 1185-1195.

Silkwood-Sherer D & Warmbier H. Effects of Hippotherapy on Postural Stability In persons with Multiple Sclerosis. *Journal of Neurologic Physical Therapy.* 2007; 31(2):77-84.

Silkwood-Sherer D, Killian C, Long T, Martin K. Hippotherapy: habilitating balance deficits in children with movement disorders. *Physical Therapy.* 2012; 92 (5): 707-717.

Snider L, Korner-Bitensky N, Kammann C, Warner S, Saleh M. Horseback Riding as Therapy for Children with Cerebral Palsy: Is There Evidence of Its Effectiveness? *Physical & Occupational Therapy in Pediatrics.* 2007; 27(2): 5-23.

Uchiyama H, Ohtani N, Ohta M. Three dimensional analysis of horse and human gaits in therapeutic riding. *Applied Animal Behavior Science.* 2011; 135: 271-276.

Revised April 2015



Zadnikar M & Katrin A. Effects of hippotherapy and therapeutic horseback riding on postural control or balance in children with cerebral palsy: a meta-analysis. *Developmental Medicine and Child Neurology*. 2011; 53: 684-691.

1. Hyun Jung Chang; Kwon, Jeong-Yi; Lee, Ji-Young; Kim, Yun-Hee; The Effects of Hippotherapy on the Motor Function of Children with Spastic Bilateral Cerebral Palsy. *Journal of Physical Therapy Science*, 2012 Dec; 24 (12): 1277-80.
2. Novak I, McIntyre S, Morgan Catherine, Campbell L, Dark L, Morton N, Stumbles E, Wilson S, Goldsmith S. A systematic review of interventions for children with cerebral palsy: state of the evidence. *Developmental Medicine & Child Neurology* 2013, 55: 885–910.
3. Tseng, Sung-Hui; Chen, Hung-Chou; Tam, Ka-Wai. Systematic review and meta-analysis of the effect of equine assisted activities and therapies on gross motor outcome in children with cerebral palsy. *Disability & Rehabilitation*, 2013; 35 (2): 89-99.

PEER REVIEWED CASE STUDIES

This section includes articles that are single case studies (i.e. one participant). These articles are more difficult to generalize to large populations, but still provide useful information and were conducted in a scientific manner.

Aldridge R, Schweighart F, Easley M, Wagoner B. The effects of hippotherapy on motor performance and function in an individual with bilateral developmental dysplasia of the hip (DDH). *Journal of Physical Therapy*. 2001; 2: 54-63.

Frank A, McCloskey S, Dole RL. Effect of hippotherapy on perceived self-competence and participation in a child with cerebral palsy. *Pediatric Physical Therapy*. 2001; 23 (3): 301-308.

Knueven L, Collins, Jamieson J, Hakim RM, Sensbach K. Case report: Effects of hippotherapy on balance and functional performance in a child with a neurological disorder. Poster presentation at APTA Combined Sections Meeting; February 26, 2005; New Orleans, LA.

Osborne, M.B.A. Hippotherapy as an intervention modality for a patient with cerebellar dysfunction. *Physical Therapy Case Reports*. 1998; 1(1): 58-60.

Rolandelli, PS and Dunst CJ. Influences of Hippotherapy on the Motor and Social-Emotional Behavior of Young Children with Disabilities. Bridges. Practice-Based Research Syntheses. Research and Training Center on Early Childhood Development. Puckett Institute. 2003; 2(1): 1-14.

Shurtleff TL & Engsberg JR. Long-term effects of hippotherapy on one child with cerebral palsy: A research case study. *Br J Occup Ther*. 2012; 75(8): 359-66.

Revised April 2015

AMERICAN HIPPOOTHERAPY ASSOCIATION, INC. (AHA, INC.)

PO Box 2014, Fort Collins, CO 80522 • (970) 818-1322 • FAX: (877) 700-3498 • info@americanhippotherapyassociation.org • americanhippotherapyassociation.org



ARTICLES/ BOOK CHAPTERS

These studies or articles were published in non peer reviewed magazines or as chapters of a book which collected early clinical observations.

Baker E. A comparison of change in flexible kyphosis pre- and post-hippotherapy-a research approach. In: Engel B. *Therapeutic Riding II Strategies for Rehabilitation*. Durango CO: Barbara Engel Therapy Services. 1997; 283-286.

Barolin G.S., Samborski R. (1991) The horse as an aid in therapy. *Wien Med Wochenschr.* 141(20): 476-81. German.

Byam E & Simmons D. Environment and occupation in hippotherapy. *OT Practice.* 2005; 10(7):13-8.

Dismuke-Blakely R. Rehabilitative horseback riding for children with language disorders. *The Pet Connection.* 1984; 31-140.

Cantu CO. Hippotherapy: facilitating occupational performance. *Exceptional Parent.* 2005; 35(3): 51-3.

Cohen B. Therapy is the key word in equine treatment. *Adv for Phys Ther.* 1992; 8(8):48.

DeGutis DL. Hippotherapy aids children with sensory and motor issues. *Exceptional Parent.* 2003; 33(11): 55-7.

Ellis J. Texas physical therapist volunteers at Circle-T Therapeutic Riding Center: Hippotherapy provides children with physical, psychological benefits. *PT Bulletin.* 1995; 12: 6-7.

Fox J, Peterson B. Enduring effect of hippotherapy on passive hip abduction in children with spastic cerebral palsy. In: Engel, B. *Rehabilitation with the Aid of a Horse: A Collection of Studies*. Durango, CO: Engel Therapy Services. 1997: 277-296

Gewartz R. The use of sensory integration in EAT: an OT perspective. *Occup Ther Now* (Ottawa) Jan/Feb 2003; 5(1): 8-10.

Granados AC, Agis IF. Why children with special needs feel better with hippotherapy sessions: a conceptual review. *The Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine.* 2011; 17: 191-197.

Gui-Lin Chen, et.al. Biofeedback control of horseback riding simulator. Proceedings of the first international conference on machine learning and cybernetics, Beijing Nov 4-5, 2002: 1905-1908. (China)

Hansen K. A group case study: hippotherapy as a means of improving gross motor function in children with cerebral palsy. In: Engel, B. *Rehabilitation with the Aid of a Horse: A Collection of Studies*. Durango, CO: Engel Therapy Services. 1997:233-240.

Heine B. Hippotherapy: A multi-system approach to the treatment of neuromuscular disorders. *Aust J Physiother.* 1997; 43(2):145-149.

Heine B. Introduction to Hippotherapy. *Strides.* 1997; 3(2):10-13.

Heine B & Benjamin J. Introduction to Hippotherapy. *Advance for Phys Therapists.* 2000; 11(13): 11-13.

Kitagawa T, et.al. Cause of active motor function by passive movement. *Journal of Physical Therapy Science.* 2001; 13: 167-172. (Japan)

Knueven L, Collins, Jamieson J, Hakim RM, Sensbach K. Case report: Effects of hippotherapy on balance and functional performance in a child with a neurological disorder. Poster presentation at APTA Combined Sections Meeting; February 26, 2005; New Orleans, LA.

Liptak GS. Complementary and alternative therapies for cerebral palsy. *Ment Retard Dev Disabil Res Rev.* 2005; 11(2): 156-63.

Revised April 2015



Martin K, Stormont-Smith J. T.H.E. C.H.A.P.S. hippotherapy pilot project: a case study. In: Engel, B. *Rehabilitation with the Aid of a Horse: A Collection of Studies*. Durango, CO: Engel Therapy Services; *1997:227-232.

McNulty BR. Hippotherapy: exceptional treatment with multiple benefits. *Exceptional Parent*. 2003; 33(11): 58-9.

Meregillano G. Hippotherapy. *Phys Med Rehabil Clin N Am*. 2004; 15(4): 843-54, vii.

Murphy J. Hippotherapy continues progress in research and accreditation. *Advance for Phys Therapists*. 1994; 5(41): 8-9.

O'Neil ME, Fragala-Pinkham MA, Westcott SL, Martin K, Chiarello LA, Valvano J, Rose RU. Physical Therapy Clinical Management Recommendations for Children with Cerebral Palsy – Spastic Diplegia: Achieving Functional Mobility Outcomes. *Pediatric Physical Therapy*. 2006; 18(1):49-72

Ries E. Passions for the Profession. *PT Mag of Physical Therapy*. June 2001:35-42.

Ruddock L. Hippotherapy. *Advance for Phys Ther*. 1992; 5(3):12-13.

Wasserman R, Keeney A. Hippotherapy for a child with cerebral palsy. In: Engel, B. *Rehabilitation with the Aid of a Horse: A Collection of Studies*. Durango, CO: Engel Therapy Services. 1997: 241-248.

Wheeler, A. A case study of a boy diagnosed with spina bifida. In: Engel, B. *Rehabilitation with the Aid of a Horse: A Collection of Studies*. Durango, CO: Engel Therapy Services. 1997: 221-226.

Revised April 2015

AMERICAN HIPPOOTHERAPY ASSOCIATION, INC. (AHA, INC.)

PO Box 2014, Fort Collins, CO 80522 • (970) 818-1322 • FAX: (877) 700-3498 • info@americanhippotherapyassociation.org • americanhippotherapyassociation.org



1111 North Fairfax Street
Alexandria, VA 22314-1486
703 684 2782
703 684 7343 fax
www.apta.org

May 5, 2012

Debbie Silkwood-Sherer PT, DHS, HPCS
President, American Hippotherapy Association
P.O. Box 2014
Fort Collins, CO 80522-2014

Dear Dr. Silkwood-Sherer:

On behalf of the American Physical Therapy Association's (APTA) more than 80,000 member physical therapists, physical therapist assistants, and students of physical therapy, I am happy to provide a letter to the American Hippotherapy Association on the use of a hippotherapy as a treatment strategy that is an appropriate part of physical therapy practice. Physical therapists' practice in a wide variety of settings and perform evidenced-based screening and evaluation for individuals with neuromuscular, cardiovascular, integumentary, and musculoskeletal conditions and provide interventions that focus on mobility and function to enable an individual's participation and improving their quality of life.

The physical therapy plan of care is based upon an individualized examination and evaluation of the patient to address impairments and functional and participation limitations and environmental barriers. The plan of care consists of the patient's/client's goals and intended outcomes and the treatment strategies and interventions directed to achieve a functional outcome. Hippotherapy is a treatment strategy that when incorporated into the physical therapist plan of care utilizes the equine movement as part of an integrated program to achieve outcomes such as improved balance, strength and flexibility. In cases where a physical therapist treatment plan utilize hippotherapy, the services rendered by that physical therapist, in such a context, should be recognized as physical therapy interventions and not the specific treatment strategy, device, equipment or adjunct used to deliver these interventions. In contrast, therapeutic horseback riding in which the goal is to achieve the skill of riding or other equine-related activities is not considered physical therapy intervention due to it not being a component of the individuals' physical therapy plan of care.

While the 2003 *Guide to Physical Therapist Practice* does not specifically mentioned hippotherapy, it is considered a treatment strategy consistent with interventions of therapeutic exercise. The *Guide* states that therapeutic exercise may include "balance and coordination training; motor function training or retraining; neuromuscular education or re-education; neuromuscular relaxation, inhibition and facilitation; perceptual training; posture awareness training; and sensory training or retraining".



When an individual's physical therapy plan of care includes hippotherapy as a treatment strategy it is appropriate for services to be billed as neuromuscular education, therapeutic exercise, therapeutic activities or sensory integration, depending the intent of the intervention, the patient goals, and assuming all other payer requirements are met.

Thank you and if you need any further information, please feel free to contact APTA's Clinical Practice and Research Department at practice@apta.org

Sincerely,

R. Scott Ward, PT, PhD
President

RSW/jm/mfd



April 12, 2000

Barbara Heine, PT, HPCS
President, American Hippotherapy Association
5001 Woodside Road
Woodside, CA 94062

Dear Ms. Heine:

The APTA recognizes that hippotherapy is a treatment tool in which the movement of the horse and related activities are used to address impairments and functional limitations in patients primarily with neuromusculoskeletal dysfunction in order to achieve functional outcomes. Within the 1997 *Guide to Physical Therapist Practice* hippotherapy is not specifically mentioned because it is considered a treatment tool under the specific direct intervention of therapeutic exercise. In this context, therapeutic exercise uses a horse, where the horse should be regarded similar to a piece of equipment and not the treatment itself. The Guide does not mention any particular piece of equipment in its description of therapeutic exercise, but states that therapeutic exercise may include "balance and coordination training; motor function training or retraining; neuromuscular education or re-education; neuromuscular relaxation, inhibition and facilitation; perceptual training; posture awareness training; and sensory training or retraining."

It is appropriate for physical therapy services that include hippotherapy as a treatment tool to be billed as neuromuscular education, therapeutic exercise or therapeutic activities depending on the way in which the horse is used in the treatment session, assuming all other payer requirements are met.

The physical therapist is responsible for designing a plan of care that is based upon an examination and evaluation of the patient. In cases where a physical treatment plan and goals utilize a horse to assist in achieving those goals, the services rendered by that physical therapist, in such a context, should be recognized as physical therapy intervention. It is understood that the use of the horse as a treatment tool should be considered no differently than any other treatment tool applied to other interventions within the scope of physical therapist practice. In contrast, therapeutic horseback riding in which the goal is to achieve the skill of riding or other equine-related activities, is not considered physical therapy intervention.

Sincerely,

Andrew A. Guccione, PT, PhD, FAPTA
Senior Vice President
Division of Practice and Research

AHA conference, St. Louis, MO, March 2013 Overview of the Literature on Hippotherapy, Tim L. Shurtleff, OTD, OTR/L

Author(s)	Year	Type (may be abbreviated)	Study Type/Citation	Conclusion
Peer Reviewed Research Studies				
1 Araujo, Silva, Costa, Pereira, Safons	PT	2011	Effect of equine-assisted therapy on the postural balance of the elderly	Convenience w/ control
2 Benda, McGibbon, Grant	MD, PT,	2003	Improvements in Muscle Symmetry in Children w CP after EA (HPT)	pre-post w/1/2 rand. control
3 Bertotti	PT	1988	Effectiveness of THR on Posture in children with CP	Baseline-pre-post
4 Casady, Nichols-Larsen	PT	2004	The effect of hippotherapy on ten children with cerebral palsy	Baseline, pre/post, washout
5 Debusse, Gibb, Chandler	PT	2009	Eff of HPT on people w/ CP from users perspective, a qualitative Study	Interviews & Focus groups
6 Direnzo, Direnzo, Baceski	BA, MBA, MD	2007	Heart rate response to TR in Children with CP, exploratory study.	Compare two groups
7 Encheff, Armstrong, Masterson, Fox, Gribble	PT	2012	HPT eff on Trunk, Pelv, Hip Motion During Ambulation in C w/ Neuro Impairmnth	Pre-post
8 Granados, Aguis	MA, PhD	2011	Why C/w Spec Needs Feel Better w HPOT sessions, a conceptual review	Literature review
9 Haehl, Giuliani, Lewis	PT	1999	Influence of HPOT on kinematics and funct. Perf of 2 Children with CP	2 Case Studies, exp vs. novice
10 Hammer, Nilsgard, Forsberg, Pepa, +2	PT	2005	Eval of TR/HPOT, sgl subj exp design in 11 patients with MS	Sgl Subj Exp design, ABA, Conv. Sample
11 Hamil, Washington, White	Biomech & PT	2007	Eff of HPOT on Post. Crnl in sitting, for children with CP	RCT
12 Herrrig, Asensio, Garcia, Macco, +2	not stated	2010	Stud. Of Ther. Eff of Adv. HPOT simulator in C w/ CP, a RCT/-	in plan
13 Ionatamishvili, Tsvetava, Lorya, +2	Biomech, PT	2002	Riding therapy as a method of rehab of children with Cerebral Palsy	Y
14 Kuczinsky, Slonka,	MD, PhD	1999	Infl of Artificial Saddle riding on Postural Stability of Children with CP.	e=50, c=50
15 Kwon, Chang, Lee, Ha, Lee, Kim	PT	2011	Eff of HPOT on gait parameters in children with bilateral CP	c=25, c=33
16 Lechner, Tania, Kakebeeke, Hegemann, Baumberger	SLP	2007	Eff of HPOT on Spasticity, mental wellbeing of persons with SCI	Y
17 MacPhail, Gutierrez	Biomech, PT	2004	Eff of HPOT for children with Language-learning disabilities	n=12
18 MacPhail, Edwards, Golding, Miller, Mosier, Zwiers	PT	1998	Trunk Postural reactions in C/w/ and w/o CP during THR	n=3
19 McGehee, Reese	PT	2009	Immed Eff of a HPOT session on Gait parameters in C w/ Spastic CP	Speech
20 McGibbon, Benda, Duncan, Silkwood-Sherer phase I	PT	2009	Immed & Long Term eff of HPOT on symmetry & Funct in Children w/ SCP I	CP/WD
21 McGibbon, et al Phase II (2nd study in above article)	PT	1998	Eff of Equine Mymt Therapy pgm on gait, energy, motor func in C w/ SCP II	Y
22 McGibbon, Andrade, Widener, Cintas	PT	2008	The Effect of HPOT on Func Outcomes for C with Disabilities: A Pilot Study	e=6, c=7
23 Murphy, Kahn-D'Angelo, Gleason	OT, Biomech	2010	Changes in Trunk/Head stability after HPOT, a pilot Study	n=9
24 Shurtleff, Engsberg	OT, EE, Biomech	2009	Changes in dynamic trunk/head stability and functional reach after HPOT	CP
25 Shurtleff, Standeven, Engsberg	PT	2007	Effects of Hippotherapy on Postural Stability in persons with Multiple Sclerosis	n=47
26 Silkwood-Sherer, Warmbier	PT	2012	HPOT: Intervention to habilitate balance deficits in children w/ mvmt disorders	base, pre, post
27 Silkwood-Sherer, Kilian, Martin	Psych & OT	2012	Volitional thg in C/w Autism: A Sgl-Case Study of Impact of HPOT on Motivation	comp grp
28 Taylor, Kielhofner, Smith, Butler, Cahill, Ciukaj, Gehman	PT	2011	A-B (8wks)-B(8wks)	comp grp
29 Aldridge, Schweighart, Eastley, & Wagoner	PT	2011	Postural stability after HPOT in adolescent with CP	n=9
30 Champagne, Dugas	OT	2010	Eff of HPOT on motor performance and function with bilateral DDH	n=16
31 Collins, Jamieson, Kneueven, Hakim, & Sensbach	PT	2005	Improving gross mot. funct. & post. ctrl w HPOT in down syndrome: cases	MS
32 Frank, McCloskey, Dole	PT	2011	Case Report: Eff of HPOT on Bal and Func Perform in child w/ Neurological Disorder	n=2
33 Shurtleff & Engsberg	OT	2012	Eff of HPOT on self-competence&particip. in a child with cerebral palsy	down
34 Wender, Goodson, Shurtleff	OT	2013	Long-term effects of HPOT on 1 child w/ CP: A research case study	cancer
35 Zadnikar & Ruylej	PT?	2011	Equine Assisted Activities and Therapies: A Case Study of an Older Adult	CP
36 Brinson, et al.	PT	2010	Equine Assisted Activities and Therapies: A Case Study of an Older Adult	n=1
37 Whalen, Case-Smith	PT/OT	2012	Postural stability after HPOT in adolescent with CP	CP
38 Rollandelli & Dunst	Early childhood consultant	2003	Does HPOT improve balance in persons w/ MS: a systematic review	n=3 studies
39 Snider, Korner-Bitensky, Kammaran, Warner, Saleh	OT & PT	2007	Therapeutic Eff of HBRT on GMF in C/w CP: A syst. Rev.	Mixed
40 Zadnikar & Kastrin	PT?	2011	Influences of HPOT on motor and socio-emotional behav of young children w/ disabilities	n= 9 studies
41 Clayton, Kaiser, de Pue, Kaiser	Eq-biomech, OT		Horseback Riding as Therapy for Children w/ CP: evidence of effectiveness?	NA
42 Janura, Peham, Dvorakova, Elmark	Biomech	2009	Systematic Review	n=13 studies
			Systematic Review	CP
			Meta-analysis	NA
			Outcome measure Evaluation	e=4, c=4
			NA, not an intervention study	n=4, 1 equin
				NA

Effects of HPOT and THR on postural control or balance in children with CP
Center of Pressure Movements During Equine-Assisted Activities
An Assmt of pressure dist by rider on back of horse during HPOT

		Stat- Significant improvement fm HPOT?	Peer rev?	Author	Country
1	TUG improved, COPD/AP static balance.	Yes	Y	Revista Brasileira de Fisioterapia J of Alt. and Comp. Med.	Brazil
2	Improved L-R muscle symmetry	no	Y	Physical Therapy	USA
3	Improved posture, tone, balance, function	yes	Y	Pediatric Physical Therapy	US
4	Valuable TX strategy, can maximize function	yes	Y	Physiotherapy Theory and Practice	US
5	User perceptions: HPOT is effective, phys/psych	NA	Y	Pediatric Physical Therapy	UK
6	HR response to TR differs between disability levels	Unclear	Y	Pediatric Physical Therapy	USA
7	more normalized pelvic position after HPOT	p used for d, d-mid to high	Y	Pediatric Physical Therapy	USA
8	Recommend further HPOT research, min 12 wks, ↑ anticipatory Post coord., functional mobility	NA	Y	J of Alt. and Comp. Med.	Spain
9	improvement in one or more variables in 10 pts.	Yes, (PEDI norms)	Y	Pediatric Physical Therapy	USA
10	No improvement for high level of impairment	Diff. effect by person	Y	Physiotherapy Theory and Practice	Sweden
11	None, this is a research plan, not implemented	no	Y	Phys & Occ therapy in Pediatrics	USA
12	Physical and psychosocial improvements	not yet	Unk	BMC Musculoskeletal Disorders	Spain
13	Chgs in stiffness, reduction in sway > two planes	Physical p<0.001	Y?	Human Physiology	Russia
14	HPOT improved gait & Balance in C w Bilat CP	Yes	Y	Gait and Posture	Poland
15	HPOT reduces spasticity temporarily, pos mental	no (gait), yes GMFM-E 66, PBS	Y	Archives of Phys Med Rehabilitation	S. Korea
16	HPOT more successful in improving speech	Yes on spasticity and mental	Y	Archives of Phys Med Rehabilitation Quarterly	Switzerland
17	CP move diff on horse vs WD. Kine works as meas	NA, CP & WD signif. different.	Y	Pediatric Physical Therapy	USA
18	No diff in tilt parameters after 1 HPOT Tx	No sig diff.	Y	Archives of Phys Med Rehabilitation Communications	Canada
19	10 min HPOT improves walking adductor symmetry	ES (d) on one variable	Y	Archives of Phys Med Rehabilitation	USA
20	improved GMFM & Adductor symmetry	ES (d) & p reported as sig	Y	Devmtl Medicine & Child Neurology	USA
21	HPOT improves walking energy, gait & GM function	Yes	Y	Pediatric Physical Therapy	USA
22	mixed outcomes between 4 participants	1&3 sig ↑ on GAS, 2-no, 4 sig decrease	Y	Physical and occ therapy in Pediatrics	USA
23	Significant improvement in trunk/head stability	Yes	Y	Archives of Phys Med Rehabilitation	USA
24	Sig improvement, no loss after washout	Yes, no sig change after 12wk washout,	Y	Journal of Neurologic Physical Therapy	USA
25	Balance improved on BBS and POMA	Yes	Y	Physical Therapy	USA
26	improvements in balance	Y, p=sig, w high d	Y	Occupational Therapy in Mental Health	USA
27	Motivation Improved after 8 & 16 weeks	not possible with 3, non-par outcomes	Y		
28					
29	HPOT improved funct. motor performance	Standing and ball throwing assessment	Y	Journal of Physical Therapy	USA
30	HPOT improved funct. motor performance	GMFM-Y, Acc-no	Y	Physiotherapy Theory and Practice	Canada
31	HPOT improved perceived bal and funct measures ↑walking, participation, peer acceptance, etc.	NA	N	Ped PT: Combined Sections Meeting	USA
32	Improved long-term improvement	NA-sgl case, SD chg reptd	Y	Pediatric Physical Therapy	USA
33	Mounted Balance/Stability trng using HPOT tools	RM amplitude decreased	Y	British Journal of Occupational Therapy	USA
34	Positive effect on postural control	NA - Sgl case showed changes, no stats.	Y	Phys & Occ therapy in Geriatrics	USA
35		NA		Journal of Novel Physiotherapies	Slovenia
36	small samples, non-random, HPOT eff is Positive	some yes, some no mixed	Y	Eur J Phys Rehabil Med	NZ
37	Varied between studies, mostly showed improvement.		Y	Physical and occ therapy in Pediatrics	USA
38	small samples, non-random, HPOT is generally posit.	same yes, some no	N	Consulting company summary	
39	Short Term Pos Eff on muscle symm & activities	Mostly yes, some outcomes no	Y	Physical and occ therapy in Pediatrics	USA
40	HPOT and TR have positive effects on postural/balance control.	Some yes, some no	Y	Developmental Medicine & Child Neurology	Slovenia
41	children with CP had greater movement MI&AP than ND	NA	Y	AJOT	USA
42	Pressure increased with skill after 5 HPOT sessions	Y	Y	Human Movement Science	Czech, Austria

		Type of Intervention	Type of Test	Outcome Measures
Peer Reviewed Research Studies				
1	OA - 60-84		EAT	TUG, Kinetic EMG(lumbar)
2	4-12 Yrs, Spastic CP	30 min bi-wkly, 8wks	EAT/HPOT	"THR" (HPOT)
3	28-114 mos. Spastic CP	8 min on horse or barrel 10 wk baseline, 10 wk "THR"	HPOT	Clinical Scale
4	Spastic CP	45 min wkly, 10 wks	HPOT	GMFM, PEDI
5	CP, 4-6yrs, GMFCS I-5	6 wks to several years	HPOT, UK, Germ.	Qual. Codes/themes
6	CP, GMFCS II, III(4), IV(4)	20 min wkly, 10 wks	TR	HR during TR
7	Brain injury (7/11 CP)	45 min wkly, 10 wks	HPOT	Kinematic Gait anal.
8	Broad app of HPOT	NA	HPOT	Many
9	CP, 9 & 4 yrs,	20-40 min, wkly, 12 wks	HPOT	Video 2D Kinematic, PEDI
10	MS, 35-61 (47.9) yrs	30 min, wkly, 10-11 wks	TR/HPOT mix	VAS(pain), ADL, HRQOL, SLRMT
11	CP, GMFCS V, 2.25-4.5 yr	50 min, wkly, 10 wks	HPOT, hi support	GMFM88, Sitting Assmt Scale
12	"infantile CP"	15 min, wkly, 10 wks	Horse Simulator	sit bal, hip abd, EMG, mot dymt
13	"ICP", mixed types	90-120- min, 4-6 times	"RT/TR", gpts 4-6	multiple Clinical Scales
14	CP, 3-10 yrs, 9 M &16 F	20-120 min, 4-6 times	Artificial HPOT	forceceplastic/kinetic Gait, PBS
15	CP	30min, 2X wkly, 8 wks	HPOT	GMFM, Kinematic/kinetic Gait, PBS
16	SCI (ASIA AorB)	25 min, 2X wkly, 4 wks	HPOT vs 2 ctrl	Ashworth, Spas VAS, wellbeing
17	Speech dis, (1 w ADHD)	1hr, 2X wkly, 6 weeks	HPOT	21 item Satisfaction questionnaire
18	CP=6.7yr, WD=8.1yr	1 ride, 3 trials each	No intervention	M/L kinematic (video), 4 markers
19	6F, 3M, 7-18yrs	1.30-45m session	HPOT	GAITRite Gold Walkway System
20	SCP	10m HPOT vs 10m barrel	HPOT	EMG(Gadd), GMFM66, self percep.
21	SCP	30 min 2Xwkly, 6wks	HPOT	EMG(Gadd), GMFM66, self percep.
22	SCP, 9-11yrs,	30 min, 2X wkly, 8 wks	HPOT	Gait (strd, veloc, cadnc), GMFM
23	2CP, 1 seizure, DD, 5-8yr	60 m weekly, 6 mos	HPOT	GAS X4, visual analysis, binomial test T score
24	6CP, 6-17yrs	45min wkly, 12 wks	HPOT	Video 3D kinematic, motorized barrel test
25	11, CP 5-11yrs	45min wkly, 12wk tx, 12wk Wsh	HPOT	Video 3D kinematic, motorized barrel test, reach test
26	e=9, c=6 with MS	30m, wkly, 14wks	HPOT	BBS, POMA
27	16 w balance deficits, 5-16yrs	45m, 2Xwk, 6wks	HPOT	PBS, ASKp
28	3 w/ autism, 4-6 Yrs	45min wkly, 16 weeks	HPOT	Pediatric Volitional Questionnaire (PVQ)
29	DDH, ADD	60 min wkly, 7wks/ sess	Tx BiPT+HPOT	
30	Down Syndrome	30 min wkly, 11 wks	HPOT	BOTMP
31	Cerebellar ganglioglioma	30 min wkly/12 wks	HPOT	GMFM
32	6yrs, ataxic CP, GMFCS I	45 min 2X wkly, 8 wks	HPOT	Biodex Dynamic limits of Stability test, COPM
33	spastic diplegia CP	45 min wkly, 6 mo follow-up	HPOT	GMFM66, PSPCSAYC, PDCI
34	Older Adult, 76yr Female	45min wkly, 10 weeks	EAT(HPOT activities)	mechanical barrel,
35	spastic diplegia CP, epilepsy	30 min 3x wkly, 5 wks	HPOT	Kinematic/Kinetic static balance, BBS, ABC
36	MS	mean = 11.2 weeks, 7.75 hrs	HPOT	Stabilometry, modified sensory organization test
37	CP, N varied 3-72 children mixed CP, language delay, ADD, multiple disabilities	8-26wks	Mixed 6 HPOT & 3 THR	BBS, POMA
38	CP	Varied	HPOT & THR	Varied between studies
39		btwn 4-30 hrs over 12 wks		Multiple outcome measures in 13 studies PEDRO scale
40	mixed CP	10-26 weeks, 1& 2Xwkly	HPOT & THR	Functional reach test, barrel test, gait and balance assessments, GMGM, PDMS, BOTMP, VABS, SPPC, CBCL, Berottti test
41	4 w CP, 4 w no disabilities	sgle ride, test of press matt	none	test utility of pressure matt as outcome measure
42	healthy fem. Avg 23yr	20 min 2X wkly, tot of 5	HPOT	Computerized pressure pad