



The need of international quality standards for EMT (equine mediated therapy) and EAA (Equine assisted activities)

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International congress Poland




Agnes de Groot and Ulrike Thiel have been invited to report their experience with the LDV project and to talk with the Polish organization for therapeutic riding about further cooperation

In her lecture Ulrike Thiel emphasized the need of a good international qualification system and the problems of reaching this target were discussed



- ✗ Why it is important to have standards and an ethical code
- ✗ What is good/bad practice in therapeutic horseriding?
- ✗ What are the regional conditions and individual quality criteria of organisations promoting EMT in the EU at the moment?
 - + Hope and disappointment: the Da Vinci project on AMAT
 - + State of the art: Results of a survey
 - + Safety aspects
 - + Training of the horse
 - + Training of the Therapist
 - + Definition of Quality
 - + Ethical code
 - + Conclusions after interpreting the data and the way of working together
- ✗ What do we need, what can we do?




Leonardo Da Vinci partnership project

- ✗ A European qualification framework For practice and training in Animal Mediated Assistance and Therapy (AMAT)
 - ✗ Partners
 - ✗ Fitram France
 - ✗ Handhippo Belgium
 - ✗ Stowarzyszenie Strapate Ranczo Poland
 - ✗ Slovenska hipoterapeutická spoločnosť Slovakia
 - ✗ Förderkreis Therapeutisches Reiten e.V. Germany
 - ✗ SHP-E(NL) Nederlandse Stichting Helpen met Paardenb – Equitherapie
 - ✗ Silent partner
 - ✗ Fundacja Hippoterapeutica Poland



May I introduce myself: Ulrike Thiel





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SHP-E (NL)

- ✗ The Dutch Foundation:
- ✗ Helpen met Paarden—Equithérapie
- ✗ A non profit organization promoting science-based equithérapie (equine assisted therapy) and therapeutic riding,

Equithérapie



Objectives

- ✗ Make therapeutic riding (equithérapie) better known in the Netherlands and Benelux

Equithérapie



Objectives

- ✗ Offer comprehensive training and advanced training for equithérapeuts SHP-E(NL)

Equithérapie



Objectives

- ✗ Assure the quality of equithérapie provided by equithérapeuts SHP-E(NL) trained at the Foundation

Equithérapie



Objectives

- ✗ Use public relations to inform about the characteristics of quality equithérapie and properly trained equithérapeuts to help clients choose the right therapist

Equithérapie



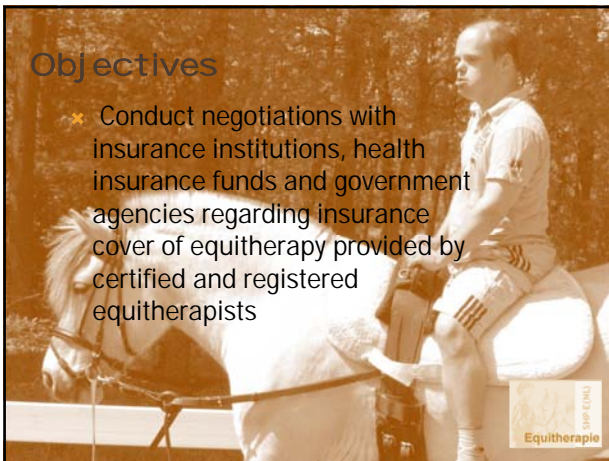
Objectives

- ✗ Raise funds to support socially and financially weak clients in need of equithérapie

Equithérapie

Objectives

- ✦ Conduct negotiations with insurance institutions, health insurance funds and government agencies regarding insurance cover of equitherapy provided by certified and registered equitherapists



Objectives

- ✦ Participate in international cooperation projects for assuring and enhancing the quality of equitherapy training



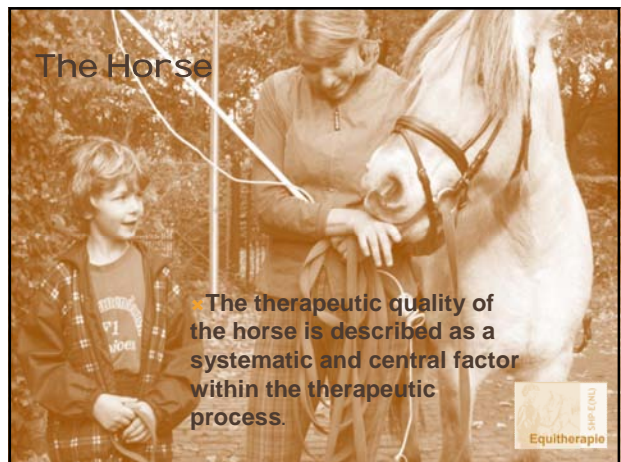
Equitherapy

- ✦ "equine-assisted measures of educational and/or psychosocial rehabilitation and developmental enhancement".



The Horse

- ✦ The therapeutic quality of the horse is described as a systematic and central factor within the therapeutic process.



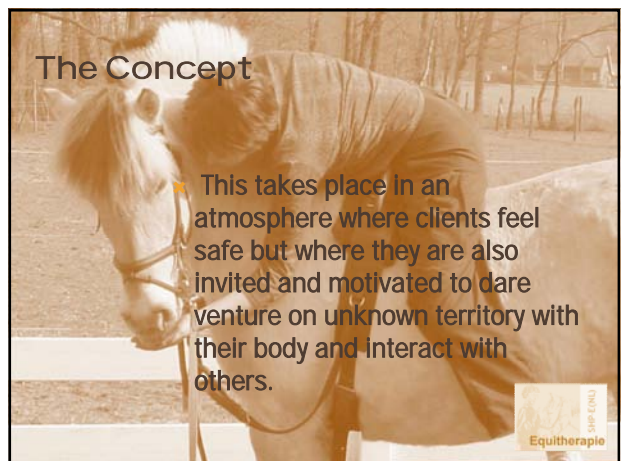
The Concept

- ✦ Therapist, Client and Horse start a relationship with each other and within this triangular relationship a well structured dialogue in movement between client and horse is conducted by the therapist.



The Concept

- ✦ This takes place in an atmosphere where clients feel safe but where they are also invited and motivated to dare venture on unknown territory with their body and interact with others.



The Concept

- ✦ A possibility sphere is created – a state wherein they can discover possibilities.



The Process

The relationship clients establish with the horse, with the therapist and perhaps also with other participants will enable them to gather experiences, good and painful, and to integrate them into the picture they have of themselves and their world.



The Process

- ✦ This will lead to a redefinition of one's self in interaction with the world. How this world and one's own personality is now experienced will direct towards new avenues for action.



A holistic Approach

- ✦ We do not see our work as problem-oriented but rather as a holistic approach which is not meant to repair any deficits but to use the clients' strengths and possibilities to help them see more than what they already know of themselves, to help them assess and appreciate their possibilities and limits.



The Model

- ✦ We presume that clients have needs which could not and cannot be (adequately) met in their previous and current life context, and which are now assigned a place in the therapeutic triangle formed by horse, client and therapist.



Pedagogical and psychotherapeutic measures

- ✦ The concept of SHP-E(NL) involves both pedagogical processes and psychotherapeutic processes with the horse as a central factor



Training Equitherapists

SHP-E(NL) offers a two-year post graduate-training in Equitherapy for mental health specialists with basic psychotherapeutic, psychosocial or educational and/or remedial background and working experience.



Training program

- ✦ This course takes place at the HippoCampus Training Centre
- ✦ It involves process-based work with clients and horses, practical work, theory and self-experience within a group process, supervision and supervision-techniques



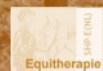
Equitherapist SHP-E(NL)

- ✦ Therapists finish with certificate "Equitherapist SHP-E(NL) specialised in
 - remedial work
 - psychosocial work
 - revalidation and reintegration
 - developmental enhancement
 - equine-facilitated psychotherapy
 - rehabilitation and reintegration



Certification System

- ✦ The organisation has developed a training and certification system for Equitherapist SHP-E(NL)
- ✦ conforming to a system of training, supervision and quality standards and to the ethical code of SHP-E(NL).

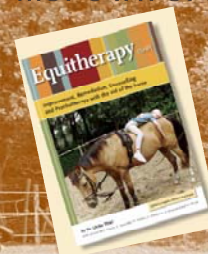


SHP ORGANIZES

- ✦ further training courses, programs, seminars, supervision for Equitherapists in the Netherlands and is ready to share its knowledge and expertise with other countries within the framework of international contacts



For more Information



This book illustrates, how Equitherapists (SHP) work in a responsible way with the horse as co-therapist

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Why it is important to have standards and an ethical code



Statement:

The revival of the horse in its function as "man's helper" unfortunately also leads to the horse being used in a manner ranging from inappropriate or dangerous to ethically unjustifiable.



The horse itself is not a Therapist

In the Netherlands an article with the headline "Doctor Horse" appeared in a daily newspaper just a few months ago. It compared various "equine therapists" and their qualifications and methods. Among them were so-called "empirical experts", who have neither therapeutic nor equestrian qualifications, but who have more or less trained themselves with much enthusiasm (for example via the internet).



A confusion of tongues



✗ a multitude of descriptions, offerings and definitions it is not easy for the interested layperson to get a clear and discerning idea of the matter.



a range of different concepts, depending on the origin, expertise and reputation of the source



✗ therapeutic riding, hippotherapy, hippocoaching, hypotherapy, hippotherapy, equithérapie, equine assisted therapy, equine assisted learning, equine assisted training, equicoaching, pedagogy with horses, equotherapy, therapeutic vaulting, remedial vaulting, equine assisted psychotherapy, equine facilitated development, natural horse therapy, esoteric horse therapy, horse sense therapy, motor therapeutic riding, equine therapy, horse sense learning



"Specialists for horses and people",

sometimes professionally trained but sometimes also self-proclaimed, offer their services on numerous homepages. Horse therapy centres introduce themselves, while horse projects are springing up all over. It appears that the horse "as helper" has been discovered.



Different concepts

- ✗ Differences
- ✗ Therapeutic concept
- ✗ Therapy model
- ✗ The therapy horse
 - + Selection of the therapy horse
 - + Schooling of the therapy horse
 - + Training of the therapy horse
 - + Which of the horse's abilities are used
- ✗ Horse's function in the process
- ✗ Horse's role in the relationship triangle
- ✗ Is the relationship triangle used as the basis of work?
 - + Moving on the horse
 - + Moving with the horse
 - + Relationship with the horse
- ✗ Therapy structure
- ✗ Therapy settings
- ✗ Transfer model from therapy to everyday life



Different training

- ✗ Duration of training
 - + (days/hours) Period (years/months)
- ✗ Basic profession
- ✗ Equestrian qualification
- ✗ Therapeutic assistance during therapy
- ✗ Equestrian assistance during therapy
- ✗ Training
 - + Supervision yes/no
 - + Group process yes/no
 - + Practical project yes/no
 - + Theory exam yes/no
 - + Practical exam yes/no
- ✗ Code of ethics yes/no
- ✗ Personal relationship between therapist and horse yes/no
- ✗ Personal development, feedback yes/no
- ✗ Supervised work placement



What is good/bad practice in therapeutic horseriding?



Risks and safety aspects

- ✗ The horse seems to hold great appeal not just for clients but also for moderately well trained or self-proclaimed "helpers". This means that an often great enthusiasm, combined with little previous information and knowledge, leads to unprofessional provisions that lack expertise – often despite best intentions

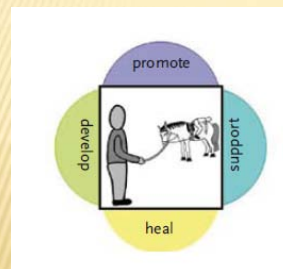


Results of a Survey in NL

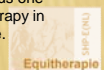
- ✗ The work field becomes increasingly unclear to care givers, care recipients, government and the professionals themselves
- ✗ The lack of uniform terminology, protocols, and quality criteria, stand in the way of a good development of this field
- ✗ Defining standards in different areas, for providers to cling to and which will eventually separate the wheat from the chaff is necessary



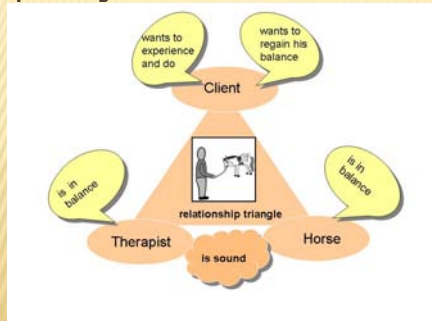
Why we joined the project We wanted to learn and help to improve the quality of EMAT



In contrast to the general positive effects of having contact with the horse or riding in the course of equine assisted activities, equithérapie deals with the targeted promotion, development, support and healing in the course of a systematic, defined process, that is supervised by the therapist and supported by the horse. Thus one can speak of therapy in the proper sense.

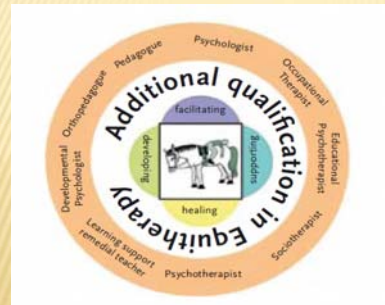


Balance between horse, Therapist and client - a question of ethics and quality



SHP (NL)
Equithérapie

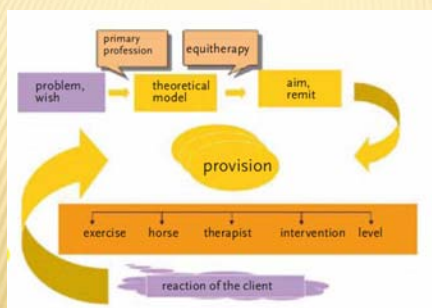
Additional Qualification



The training concept underlying the acquisition of an additional qualification as SHP-E(NL) Equitherapist seeks primarily to enable the trainee to use the framework of their primary profession in care, support or healing (to a minimum of university or university of applied sciences level) to provide equine-assisted therapy to augment the services they offer their clients.

SHP (NL)
Equithérapie

The cyclical process model



The impact factors in the cyclical process between therapy provision and reaction of the client to the equithérapie. This cyclical progressive working method ensures that each subsequent step in the process is attuned to the momentary needs of the client.

SHP (NL)
Equithérapie

A cyclical well defined process

The therapeutic process is defined as a step-by-step, cyclical process, resulting

- ✗ from (1) the interplay between therapist - client - horse within a secure and inviting
- ✗ situation, adjusted to suit (2) the individual problems of the client and
- ✗ (3) the level of therapy at the given moment, involving (4) the exercises and, as
- ✗ appropriate, (5) the intervention of the therapist, as well as (6) the reaction of
- ✗ the client to this.



SHP (NL)
Equithérapie

Admittance criteria and trainings programme



Trainees' own professional practice, and equestrian experience and qualifications, are the foundations on which this training rests. However it is often the case that a further development in these areas is experienced during the training towards becoming an equitherapist.

SHP (NL)
Equithérapie

The performance- and skill I - profile of The equitherapist



The performance profile of the equitherapist shows the areas of competence in which the prospective equitherapist needs to acquire sufficient knowledge, skills and personal development during their studies. These areas of competence are also the criteria according to which the equitherapist is evaluated in the interim and final examinations of the course.

SHP (NL)
Equithérapie

The Equitherapists' Oath

- ✗ „I promise
- ✗ to act with the greatest
- ✗ care and clarity
- ✗ towards clients,
- ✗ horses and the foundation.”



+Hope and disappointment: the Da Vinci project on AMAT



Project proposal

- ✗ The organizations joining in this project are working on EMAT. So our project aims on what we are still missing, namely a guaranteed level of identical interventions of quality within different fields and functions in EMAT in the EU. This can only be realized by conforming training programs to a well defined level of quality and competences that we will research and develop within this project. This will result in a system of quality and security guaranties for the clients in the EU.



EU Partnership Project

Our objectives are to build a multi-dimensional framework of contents, legal and organizational aspects of quality criteria. So we will also assist mental health organizations by giving them tools to compare different forms and competences in Animal Mediated Assistance (AMAT) in the different European countries.



Why did we not reach our goal ?

- ✗ Unfortunately this project did not bring the intended outcomes but lead to very interesting but a bit discouraging results.



- ✗ What are the regional conditions and individual quality criteria of organisations promoting EMT in the EU at the moment?



What we wanted to do

- ✖ Survey in 2 phases
 - + Information of the requirements of all partner organizations
 - + Informations on good and bad practice in the field
 - + What are the problems, do we have solutions to offer?
- ✖ Forming our Project standpoint on good and bad practice (in qualification and quality control)
- ✖ Filling in our part in the created framework



To start up

- ✖ Information on the used models
- ✖ Information on the existing certification systems
- ✖ Finding common requirements for training, qualification and registration we suggest as parts of the worked out framework



+ State of the art: Results of a survey

- ✖ Safety aspects
- ✖ Training of the horse
- ✖ Training of the Therapist
- ✖ Definition of Quality
- ✖ Ethical code



1st survey NL

- ✖ Research of literature
- ✖ An online poll, for which different means have been used to gather as many respondents as possible
- ✖ To be used to construct an efficient international questionnaire



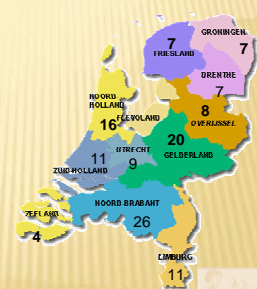
2nd survey NL

- ✖ Second Improved Questionnaire (more detailed)
- ✖ Comparison of quality standards partner organizations and others
- ✖ Internet survey on the practice in NL
- ✖ Complete literature collection
- ✖ Start up research within SHP practitioners group



Providers of AMAT in our 1st survey

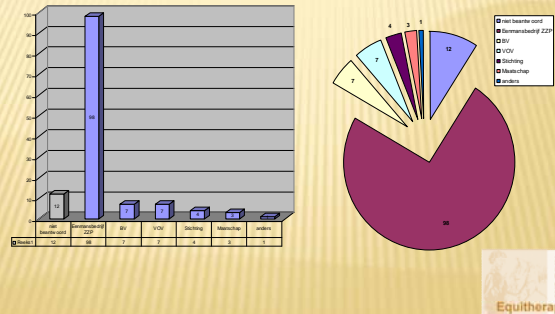
	aantal	%
niet ingevuld	1	8
belgie	3	23
drenthe	7	53
duitsland	1	8
frankrijk	1	8
friesland	7	53
gelderland	20	152
groningen	7	53
limburg	11	83
noord-brabant	26	197
noord-holland	16	121
overijssel	8	61
utrecht	9	68
zeeland	4	30
zuid-holland	11	83
Totaal	132	1000



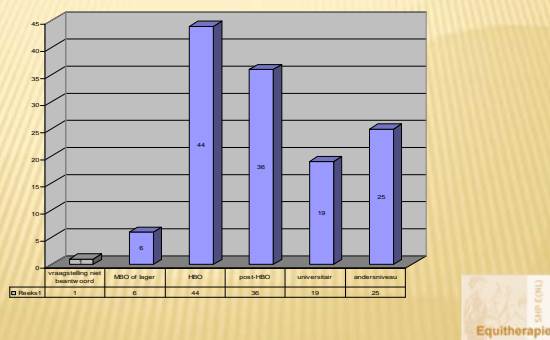
Providers of educations for AMAT



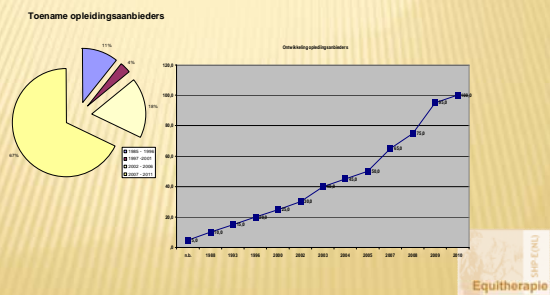
Most persons working for themselves in NL



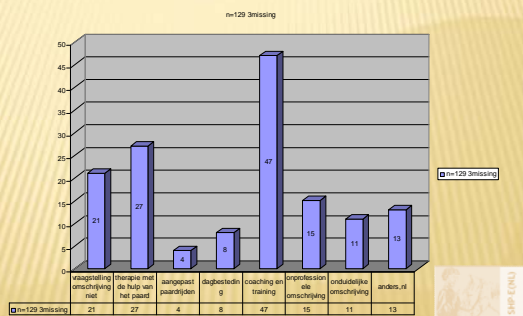
Education level of respondents



When did they start their activities



Wat do they offer to clients?



The Horse

- Within different approaches of equine assisted therapy or activities the horse plays different roles. Therefore the education of the horse differs according these different approaches.



Welfare of the horse:

:

- ✗ Therefore they have the intention of ensuring their horses' well-being
- ✗ There are no specific legal regulations on how this goal should be achieved
- ✗ Everyone works on the horse's well-being based on their own vision and convictions



Training and use of the horse

✗ Only a happy and well-balanced horse literally and symbolically can stand and enjoy his profession as co therapist with his own responsibilities and tasks. Next to physical training and education being experienced together therapist and horse develop a deep and dynamic relationship being a fundamental factor during the therapeutic process.



Who pays for it?

From what budget are you paid?	mentioned
Private, the client / customer pays for him / herself	95
Personal budget	65
Employer / company from individual personnel	41
Employer / company from training policy for staff	36
Employer / company from recreational budget: team outing	29
Other, namely:	13
Health insurances	9



+Conclusions after interpreting the data and the way of working together

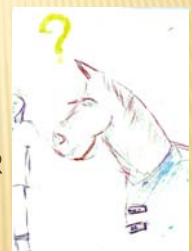


Common aspects of partners



Results and conclusions Da Vinci Project

- ✗ Different interests
- ✗ Different critical abilities
- ✗ Different wishes to well or not analyse the situation
- ✗ Wish to learn or only to do PR
- ✗ PR or science based development of framework based on data



✕ What do we need, what can we do?



The aspects and the primary aims of qualified trainings providers working together in EMAT should be



- the professional ethics
- the extent and content of the training
- the professional and hippological conditions
- the shared public image
- cooperation, collaboration and mutual support
- the quality criteria and quality assurance
- continuing education and certification
- the continuing development of the training courses
- the documentation of the training courses
- the admission criteria for training courses
- the contact to groups with a similar outlook
- the cross-border standards and recognition



This could finally lead to
Certification and Quality standards

- ✕ Definitions of working model and objectives
- ✕ Official quality control of training and practice
- ✕ Guaranteed payment for certified specialists
- ✕ Clients can choose the fitting therapist by means of clear quality and qualification criteria
- ✕ Safety and well being for clients and horses must be guaranteed
- ✕ Ethical standards must be guaranteed

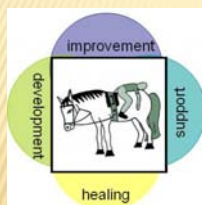


Official Recognition needed

- ✕ Quality control
- ✕ Guaranteed payment for certified specialists
- ✕ Clients can choose the fitting therapist
- ✕ Safety and well being for clients and horses
- ✕ Ethical standards guaranteed



EMAT Definition
Equine mediated assistance and therapy



- ✕ Includes measures for educational, social, therapeutical or rehabilitative activities being carried out by professionals with the help of the animal as subject within the triangular process (the client, the animal and the professional undergo a relation on which the process is based). The involvement of the animal is supposed to be a sort catalyst within the intended process.



Thank you for your attention

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