

**Please vote to support HB 2723  
and make HIPPOThERAPY accessible to OHP patients.**

At this time the Oregon Health Plan **excludes** ‘hippotherapy’ (Physical, Occupational or Speech and Language Therapy using equine movement) as an acceptable treatment option for Oregon residents. **HB 2723 would remove the exclusion thereby allowing more Oregonians to receive and benefit from services by Physical, Occupational or Speech and Language Therapists using equine movement.** This is a well-studied, evidence based therapy tool with targeted outcomes that include, improving patient function, promoting patient independence, and diversifying treatment options. **Thousands of Oregonians stand to significantly benefit from the passing of this bill.**

- It is widely accepted that physical, occupational, and speech/language pathology are imperative and effective interventions for many patients. Using equine movement as a therapy tool is an appropriate and key part of a patient’s integrated therapy plan when addressing certain physical challenges such as neuromuscular disorders, motor and sensory deficits and developmental disorders. Currently PTs, OTs, and SLPs who incorporate equine movement into their treatment plan are not able to bill Oregon Health Plan causing many Oregonians to unfairly go without this beneficial therapy tool within their treatment.
- **This is not a new or experimental therapy tool.** Per the 2003 Guide to Physical Therapist Practice, 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.” Using the movement of the horse (hippotherapy/Physical, Occupational or Speech and Language Therapy using incorporating equine movement) is ‘consistent with interventions of therapeutic exercise’. (APTA, 2012)
- American Physical Therapy, American Occupational and American Speech and Hearing Associations all consider it appropriate to bill Physical, Occupational or Speech and Language Therapy using equine movement services as neuromuscular education, therapeutic exercise, therapeutic activities, or sensory integration, depending on the intent of the intervention, the patient diagnosis and goals, and assuming all other payer requirements are met.

Currently the OHP lists Hippotherapy as an excluded “service”. As stated above this is clearly not a “service” but a well-established, research supported therapy tool within PT, OT and SLP. We ask that this exclusion be removed, allowing equine movement to become one of a multitude of treatment tools available to therapist so that they can best maximize their patient’s outcomes and quality of life. This will provide a clear and significant benefit to the residents of Oregon.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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