

## Evaluation of assistance in the Riding Therapy Centers of a city in the central region of Rio Grande do Sul-Brazil

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### Abstract

Throughout the development of the sciences and in search of an answer to disturbing questions, professionals from different areas of knowledge, mainly health, sought and seek alternatives to assist in the treatment of different diseases and limitations, which affects individuals, causing irreversible biopsychosocial damage. In this view, and in order to assist in the treatment, Equine Therapy has been discovered as a therapeutic resource, a therapeutic and educational method that uses the horse from an interdisciplinary approach between the areas of health and education. Thus, this study aims to analyze the Riding Therapy Centers of Santa Maria, in the central region of Rio Grande do Sul, aiming to evaluate the services according to the ANDE-BRASIL norms in the biopsychosocial development of people with intellectual needs. For this, a survey was carried out with questionnaires and observations in three Riding Therapy centers in the city of Santa Maria - RS, between May and June 2019, realizing that riding therapy develops the inclusion and improves the practitioner's biopsychosocial aspects in a mediating and complementary way. treatment proposed by conventional medicine, since this therapy offers a variety of stimuli: visual, auditory, olfactory, tactile and kinesthetic. It is concluded, therefore, that hippotherapy, not only benefits people with intellectual needs, but several pathologies, being difficult to focus its benefits only in one pathology, since, it benefits the global development, both of the patient, and of the team involved, bringing an improvement for patient, family and community involved.

**Keyword:** Education; Rehabilitation; Intellectual Disability; biopsychosocial;

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## **Evaluation of assistance in the Riding Therapy Centers of a city in the central region of Rio Grande do Sul- Brazil**

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### **Abstract**

*Throughout the development of the sciences and in search of an answer to disturbing questions, professionals from different areas of knowledge, mainly health, sought and seek alternatives to assist in the treatment of different diseases and limitations, which affects individuals, causing irreversible biopsychosocial damage. In this view, and in order to assist in the treatment, Equine Therapy has been*

*discovered as a therapeutic resource, a therapeutic and educational method that uses the horse from an interdisciplinary approach between the areas of health and education. Thus, this study aims to analyze the Riding Therapy Centers of Santa Maria, in the central region of Rio Grande do Sul, aiming to evaluate the services according to the ANDE-BRASIL norms in the biopsychosocial development of people with intellectual needs. For this, a survey was carried out with questionnaires and observations in three Riding Therapy centers in the city of Santa Maria - RS, between May and June 2019, realizing that riding therapy develops the inclusion and improves the practitioner's biopsychosocial aspects in a mediating and complementary way. treatment proposed by conventional medicine, since this therapy offers a variety of stimuli: visual, auditory, olfactory, tactile and kinesthetic. It is concluded, therefore, that hippotherapy, not only benefits people with intellectual needs, but several pathologies, being difficult to focus its benefits only in one pathology, since, it benefits the global development, both of the patient, and of the team involved, bringing a improvement for patient, family and community involved.*

**Keywords:** Education; Rehabilitation; Intellectual Disability; biopsychosocial;

## 1. Introduction

The present study does not deal with a theme on the Evaluation of enterprises in the Riding Therapy Centers of a city in the central region of Rio Grande do Sul, aimed at people with intellectual disabilities, based on the ratified Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. in Brazil, by Decree no 186/2008 and by Decree no 6949/2009, article 9, which states that:

“[...] in order to enable persons with disabilities to live independently and participate fully in all aspects of life, States Parties should take appropriate measures to ensure access to them, on an equal basis with others, physical environment, transportation, information and communication (Decree n ° 186/2008; Decree n ° 6949/2009, article 9).”

It is very important to first know how to define the correct nomenclature to be used for the disability, the correct way is intellectual disability (ID), according to the Declaration of Salamanca, American Association of Mental Retardation (AAMR) and American Association in Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD), however it has already been defined with several other nominations, the denominations mental retardation, exceptional, retarded, deficient, among others, currently no longer used. Today, the correct way to be used is “person with a disability”, for any disability, that is, for intellectual disability the correct way to be used is “a person with intellectual disability” (COELHO, 2019).

The World Health Organization (1995, p. 938), defines intellectual disability as an incomplete development of intellectual functioning, which compromises the global development of cognitive functions. And according to the latest estimate from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE, 2010) 0.8% of the Brazilian population has an intellectual disability, of which 0.5% was born with limitations.

However, the fact that a person has an intellectual disability does not mean that its structuring is subjective, which allows the possibility of this individual becoming a subject with desires, wants and dreams, regardless of cultures, should be included in society. in a way that allows full access and your quality of life. In this view, we seek inclusive and dynamic ways of including people with disabilities in society, and

one way of enabling this total access, an example of social inclusion and quality of life, is Equine Therapy, which in addition to including, manages to provide global rehabilitation of the disabled.

Equine therapy is a therapeutic and educational treatment that uses the horse in an interdisciplinary approach, in the areas of health, education and riding, seeking to improve the biopsychosocial aspects of people with disabilities (The National Equine Therapy Association - ANDE-BRASIL, 2010, P .45), motivating through its movements, develops postural, psychomotor control, muscle tone, strength, flexibility, improving motor balance. The practitioner is aware of his body and the movements he makes, due to the stimulus that the horse provides. Despite being a large animal, the horse is very docile, which contributes at the time of training to use it in this type of therapeutic practice.

However, Riding Therapy must follow the norms of ANDE BRASIL (2010), which defines that assistance can only occur after a favorable opinion in medical, psychological and physical therapy evaluation, and these assistances must be based on technical-scientific. It is important to support the fact that the team that will assist patients is a multidisciplinary team with interdisciplinary performance, with the largest possible number of professionals in the areas of health, education and riding. And generally, equine therapy services must have a philanthropic nature so that the least favored people are affected by this beneficial practice and thus not be built on an elite therapy.

In this context, this study aimed to analyze the Riding Therapy Centers of Santa Maria, in the central region of Rio Grande do Sul, aiming to evaluate the services according to the ANDE-BRASIL norms in the biopsychosocial development of people with intellectual needs.

## **2. Methodology**

The research project is characterized as a qualitative, experimental and descriptive approach. Where, from this, a new order of education based on scientific and technological training was sought, focusing on a universe of meanings, motives, beliefs, values and attitudes, which corresponds to a deeper space of relationships, the role of analysis qualitative, which cannot be reduced to the operationalization of variables (MINAYO, 2012).

The exploratory research is carried out with the collection of data in the researched place, and the descriptive research is characterized by the selection of the questioned subjects in relation to the developed problematization, where the subjects interacted as a whole. In this premise, Data collection was carried out in the city of Santa Maria, located in the central region of Rio Grande do Sul, from May to June 2019, the choice of this city was random. After choosing the city, three Horse Riding Centers were contacted: Andaluz - Horse Riding and Equestrian Center, Hippos Equoterapia and the Physical Education and Sports Center. Upon contacting these centers, the objective and context of the research was explained, delivering a free and informed consent form (ICF), a term of participation of the Riding Therapy Center in the project and a term of use of image, which were signed and accepted, authorizing research in these centers. After acceptance, attendance from these centers was observed, seeking to verify the following questions: if the centers are affiliated with the National Equine Therapy Association, analyze whether the multidisciplinary team complies with the rules, with riding therapy courses, ascertain whether the services reach the necessary for people with intellectual disabilities and special educational needs.

At the end of this observation, a questionnaire was applied with some questions (if there were patients with

intellectual disabilities, how long the center is in force, if it is affiliated with ANDE-BRASIL, among others) with those responsible for the practitioners and also with the coordinators / directors of the researched Riding Therapy center. The purpose of collecting and analyzing the collected data, of a qualitative nature, was to relate the theorization presented to situations observed in the researched context, to describe the services provided by the Andalusian center - Centro de Equoterapia e Hipismo; Hippos hippotherapy; Physical Education and Sports Center; aimed at intellectual disability, selected for analysis, without interfering in the information process.

Data analysis was done through data categorization and content analysis by Bardin, transcribed in a Word document, where notes were made about the services, which were organized and extracted the units of meaning, grouping them into categories. It is important to emphasize that the data were analyzed, always respecting the cultural, social, moral, religious and ethical values, as well as the habits and customs of each center.

### **3. Results and discussions**

Data collection was carried out in the city of Santa Maria, located in the central region of Rio Grande do Sul-BRAZIL, from May to June 2019, in the centers of Equine Therapy, Andalusian - Equine and Equestrian Center, Hippos Equoterapia and Centro of Physical Education and Sports. Upon contacting the Physical Education and Sports Center, a coordination related to the projects that are suspended, with no expected return, already with the other centers in operation.

In these two centers in operation, three sessions of hippotherapy were observed and a questionnaire was applied with some questions about the affiliation to the National Equine Therapy Association, to analyze if the multidisciplinary team is in accordance with the rules, with hippotherapy courses, to check if the attendances reach the necessary for people with intellectual disabilities and special educational needs.

Riding therapy is a therapeutic method based on the practice of equestrian activities spanning the areas of health, education and riding, which uses the horse as an instrument of interdisciplinary work. The rhythmic, precise and three-dimensional movement of the horse, which when walking moves forward / brings, sideways and up / down, can be compared with the action of the human pelvis in walking. The horse riding practitioner is led to follow the horse's movements, having to maintain balance and coordination to move trunk, arms, shoulders, head and the rest of the body simultaneously, within their limits (MEDEIROS; DIAS, 2008).





Figure 1. Riding Therapy Service.

Source: personal archive.

After observing the visits, the centers were asked if they were affiliated with the National Equine Therapy Association (ANDE-BRASIL), the answer was no, justifying that they did not obtain enough financial resources to make the payment, but they follow all rules and conduct. of ANDE-BRASIL. The NATIONAL EQUOTHERAPY ASSOCIATION, whose official acronym is ANDE-BRASIL, was founded on May 10, 1989 and is a non-profit civil entity, of philanthropic, assistance and therapeutic character. Headquartered in Brasília - DF, it operates throughout the Brazilian Territory, it seeks to offer equine therapy as a means of rehabilitation, education and social inclusion to improve the quality of life of people with disabilities or special needs (ANDE-BRASIL, 2019) .

One of the norms of ANDE, is that the center has an interdisciplinary team, and the two centers have an interdisciplinary team with Physiotherapist, psychologist, special educator, physical education,

psychopedagogue, equestrian and occupational therapist. The evaluation of patients is carried out in an interdisciplinary way, planning the care together, discussing cases and anamnesis as a team. This interdisciplinary assessment is of paramount importance, according to Motti (2007), the practice of hippotherapy is performed by teams of professionals who work in an interdisciplinary way. In order to start the service, it is necessary to have a diagnosis and medical indication, as well as evaluations by professionals in the areas involved, in order to plan the services individually. This team of professionals should be as broad as possible, covering the areas of health, horseback riding, specialists in rehabilitation and education of people with disabilities, whether they are physical therapists, psychologists, pedagogues, occupational therapists, physical education teachers, speech therapists, social workers, among others.

The centers serve pathologies such as: down syndrome, cerebral palsy, autism, ADHD, Depression and intellectual disabilities, to serve them the centers have a waiting room, sanitary facilities adapted for people with disabilities, an adequate place to set up, with ramps, room for team meeting, room for educational activities, room for family care, sufficient stalls for accommodation of horses, place for harnessing, equipment and forage storage, storage of veterinary medicines, paddocks for animals to be released outdoors, and covered place for the practice of hippotherapy.

In Intellectual Disability, the losses generated by the disease can be extensive and varied, according to the etiology, diagnosis, early interventions, family support and stimuli offered. Thus, it is noted that hippotherapy is fundamental as a stimulus for a higher level of intellectual commitment, which will be assessed according to the limitations presented in the areas of learning, motor skills, intellect, communication and personal care, which will characterize the level deficiency in mild, moderate, severe or profound.

Regardless of the pathology, the peculiarities of each patient and his needs must be considered, and the Hippotherapy has several resources and individualized programs, organized according to the needs and potential of the patient, namely, hippotherapy, with emphasis on rehabilitation and habilitation in health and education, with the riding professional; education and re-education, when practitioners have better conditions and greater independence in controlling the animal during activities, with the participation of health, education and riding professionals; pre-sport and para-equestrian, with greater performance of the riding professional, when the practitioner already performs equestrian activities and / or able to participate in sport activities for equestrian (UZUN, 2005).



Figure 2. Example of hypotherapy care.

Source: Archive of the Riding Therapy Center of the Northwest Region of Rio Grande do Sul.

In relation to the services, which are the benefits identified by the professionals towards the practitioners of Riding Therapy, the centers responded, which observed improvements in balance, muscle tone, autonomy, improvement in self-esteem, socialization and psychomotor development. It can be seen, then, that Riding Therapy provides organic, psychological and social gains, such as: the adequacy of muscle tone; motor coordination; head and trunk control; balance adequacy; facilitation in the school learning process; stimulates attention and concentration; socialization; self confidence; works with the activation of the cardiorespiratory and musculoskeletal systems and acts on stress relief (UZUN, 2005).

The practitioner develops postural, psychomotor control, strength, muscle tone, flexibility, improving motor balance, being aware of his own body and the movements he makes, due to the stimulus that the horse provides. In this sphere, the term “practitioner of hippotherapy” refers to the “person with physical disability when in hippotherapy activities” (ANDE-BRASIL, 2004, p. 16).

These visits, which improved, occurred twice a week, in the morning and afternoon shifts, the Andalusian center, serves 10 patients and was created in 2009, the Hippos Equoterapia center serves 30 patients and started in 1998. The two centers have the support from Universities in Rio Grande do Sul, where there is



excellent communication and direction between supporters, staff and patients.

It is noted that the positive results of hippotherapy start at the moment the student comes into contact with the horse, starting with the correct way of riding and the commands, which already develops self-confidence and affection, working the limits, because in this interaction there are rules that cannot be broken, as it aims to perform several commands at the same time, such as hand, foot and calf movements, providing discipline and education, in addition to working laterality, perception, coordination and spatial and temporal orientation, thereby highlighting attention and concentration during the session.

#### **4. Conclusion**

It is noticed that hippotherapy develops inclusion and improves the practitioner's biopsychosocial aspects in a mediating and complementary way to the treatment proposed by conventional medicine, since this therapy offers a variety of stimuli: visual, auditory, olfactory, tactile and kinesthetic. It is concluded, therefore, that hippotherapy, not only benefits people with intellectual needs, but several pathologies, being difficult to focus its benefits only in one pathology, since, it benefits the global development, both of the patient, and of the team involved, bringing a improvement for patient, family and community involved.

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