

Second Regular Session  
Seventy-third General Assembly  
STATE OF COLORADO

INTRODUCED

LLS NO. 22-0116.01 Shelby Ross x4510

HOUSE BILL 22-1068

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HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

McCormick,

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Jaquez Lewis,

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House Committees

Public & Behavioral Health & Human Services

Senate Committees

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A BILL FOR AN ACT

101 CONCERNING MEDICAID REIMBURSEMENT FOR THERAPY USING EQUINE  
102 MOVEMENT.

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Bill Summary

*(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at <http://leg.colorado.gov>.)*

Subject to federal authorization and federal financial participation, on or after January 1, 2023, medicaid reimbursement is available for therapy using equine movement when provided by a physical therapist, an occupational therapist, or a speech-language pathologist.

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Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.  
Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material to be added to existing statute.  
Dashes through the words indicate deletions from existing statute.

1 *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

2 **SECTION 1. Legislative declaration.** (1) The general assembly  
3 finds that:

4 (a) Therapy using equine movement, often referred to as  
5 hippotherapy, is regarded as standard practice for occupational therapists,  
6 physical therapists, and speech-language pathologists and is used to  
7 engage sensory, neuromotor, and cognitive systems to promote functional  
8 treatment outcomes. Therapy practitioners use equine movement as a tool  
9 integrated with the use of other standard therapy tools, equipment, and  
10 activities during a treatment session.

11 (b) Since the 1980s, the American Occupational Therapy  
12 Association, the American Physical Therapy Association, and the  
13 American Speech-Language-Hearing Association have recognized that  
14 the use of equine movement is included in each respective scope of  
15 practice and is an effective therapy tool that can be utilized in patient  
16 treatment plans;

17 (c) Currently, there are 102 peer review journal articles, 12 peer  
18 review case studies, and 13 meta-analyses that support the value of using  
19 equine movement as a treatment tool to improve function within a therapy  
20 plan of care for patients with cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, Down  
21 syndrome, postural instability, spinal cord injury, traumatic brain injury,  
22 language-learning disability, and stroke; and

23 (d) Across the United States, there are at least 37 states that  
24 provide medicaid reimbursement for the use of equine movement as a  
25 treatment tool. These states recognize that it is within the role of the  
26 treating professional to select the appropriate treatment tools and  
27 activities to meet each client's needs.

1           (2) Therefore, the general assembly declares that occupational  
2 therapists, physical therapists, and speech-language pathologists should  
3 not be penalized and denied medicaid reimbursement for therapy services  
4 using equine movement as part of their respective practices.

5           **SECTION 2.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add 25.5-5-332** as  
6 follows:

7           **25.5-5-332. Therapy using equine movement - federal**  
8 **authorization - definition.** (1) SUBJECT TO FEDERAL AUTHORIZATION  
9 AND FEDERAL FINANCIAL PARTICIPATION, ON OR AFTER JANUARY 1, 2023,  
10 THERAPY USING EQUINE MOVEMENT MAY BE PROVIDED BY A PHYSICAL  
11 THERAPIST LICENSED PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 285 OF TITLE 12, AN  
12 OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST LICENSED PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 270 OF TITLE  
13 12, OR A SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGIST CERTIFIED PURSUANT TO  
14 ARTICLE 305 OF TITLE 12.

15           (2) AS USED IN THIS SECTION, UNLESS THE CONTEXT OTHERWISE  
16 REQUIRES, "THERAPY USING EQUINE MOVEMENT" MEANS THERAPEUTIC  
17 ACTIVITIES THAT LEVERAGE HORSE-HUMAN INTERACTIONS TO FACILITATE  
18 PROGRESSION TOWARD MEETING THERAPEUTIC GOALS.

19           **SECTION 3. Safety clause.** The general assembly hereby finds,  
20 determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate  
21 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety.