

CHAPTER 311

HEALTH CARE POLICY AND FINANCING

HOUSE BILL 22-1068

BY REPRESENTATIVE(S) McCormick and Lynch, Amabile, Bernett, Bird, Boesenecker, Caraveo, Cutter, Esgar, Exum, Froelich, Geitner, Gonzales-Gutierrez, Gray, Hooton, Jodeh, Kipp, Lindsay, Lontine, McCluskie, McKean, Michaelson Jenet, Mullica, Pelton, Pico, Ricks, Roberts, Sirota, Snyder, Tipper, Titone, Valdez A., Valdez D., Will, Woodrow, Young;
also SENATOR(S) Jaquez Lewis, Coram, Danielson, Fields, Ginal, Hisey, Kolker, Lee, Moreno, Pettersen, Priola, Scott, Simpson, Sonnenberg, Story, Winter, Woodward.

AN ACT**CONCERNING MEDICAID REIMBURSEMENT FOR THERAPY USING EQUINE MOVEMENT.**

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

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

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

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

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

(d) Across the United States, there are at least 37 states that provide medicaid

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reimbursement for the use of equine movement as a treatment tool. These states recognize that it is within the role of the treating professional to select the appropriate treatment tools and activities to meet each client's needs.

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

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

25.5-5-332. Therapy using equine movement - federal authorization - definition. (1) SUBJECT TO FEDERAL AUTHORIZATION AND FEDERAL FINANCIAL PARTICIPATION, ON OR AFTER JULY 1, 2024, THERAPY USING EQUINE MOVEMENT MAY BE PROVIDED BY A PHYSICAL THERAPIST LICENSED PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 285 OF TITLE 12, AN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST LICENSED PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 270 OF TITLE 12, OR A SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGIST CERTIFIED PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 305 OF TITLE 12.

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

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

Approved: June 2, 2022