**AHPR**

**Canine Hydrotherapy**

**Day One Competencies**

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| **Canine Hydrotherapy Competencies** | |  |
| **General professional skills and attributes**  **The canine hydrotherapist should be able to:** | | **Evidence or Syllabus / Course reference** |
| **Competence:** | **Guidance:** |
| Conduct themselves in a professional manner with regard to professional and legal responsibilities and understand and apply the ethical codes as set out in the *‘Standards of Proficiency and Code of Conduct for Canine Hydrotherapy’* | Have a knowledge and understanding of the legal veterinary paraprofessional framework in which they work; animal welfare legislation; scope of practice and limitations - undertake appropriate training in order to develop scope of practice within the boundaries of the profession; work on a veterinary consent/referral basis only; standards of conduct, performance and ethics for Canine Hydrotherapy; ethical practice and standards of proficiency; professional conduct. |  |
| Recognise their own limitations, know when to seek assistance, understand the protocols for dealing with referrals | Scope of practice; reflection and reflective practice; legislation relating to referral and veterinary practice; communication with the referring veterinary surgeon; practice within personal scope and limitations. |  |
| Identify personal and professional goals for continuing professional development in order to enhance competence to practice and maintain registered professional status | Importance of CPD, effective recording of CPD making it available for audit; evidence-based practice; literature review and understanding of the hierarchy of evidence; maintaining a portfolio of evidence; reflective practice. |  |
| Understand the ethical framework within which canine hydrotherapists should work | Understand the implications of client/owner/trainer/financial demands on practice. Develop and evaluate ethically based treatment programmes to maximise animal welfare and health. |  |
| **Canine Hydrotherapy Competencies** | |  |
| **General professional skills and attributes (cont.)**  **The canine hydrotherapist should be able to:** | | **Evidence or Syllabus / Course reference** |
| **Competence:** | **Guidance:** |
| Promote, monitor and maintain health and safety in the working environment applying principles of risk management, manual handling and biosecurity | Health and safety legislation; manual handling legislation; reporting of specified incidences legislation and controlling substances potentially hazardous to health; Safe and empathetic animal handling; personal health and safety including safe working positions and PPE; risk assessment and dynamic risk assessment, client safety; record keeping; evidence based practice; disinfection of equipment and clothing; animal notifiable and reportable diseases. |  |
| Understand principles of clinical governance, and practice evidence-based clinical hydrotherapy practice | Reflection, analysis and improvement in clinical practice; importance of clinical audit and effect on future practice; peer review; case discussions and presentations; importance of CPD. |  |
| Work effectively as a member of a multi-disciplinary team in the delivery of services | Effective communication, identification of members of the team: first opinion and specialist veterinary surgeon, veterinary nurse, physiotherapist, behaviourist etc. |  |
| Communicate effectively with the public, clients, professional colleagues and appropriate authorities | Appropriate language and terminology for audience, use of professional terminology; verbal, non-verbal and written communication including discharge summaries/treatment synopsis, posters, oral presentations and advice leaflets, social media and websites |  |
| **Canine Hydrotherapy Competencies** | |  |
| **General professional skills and attributes (cont.)**  **The canine hydrotherapist should be able to:** | | **Evidence or Syllabus / Course reference** |
| **Competence:** | **Guidance:** |
| Foster and maintain a good professional relationship with clients and colleagues, developing mutual trust and respecting professional views and confidentiality | Professional conduct; professional competence; honesty and integrity; independence and impartiality; client confidentiality and trust; professional accountability; professional socialisation and boundaries; ethical standards. |  |
| Prepare accurate clinical and client records and case reports when necessary, in a form satisfactory to colleagues and understandable by the public; | Importance of record keeping; legal and ethical requirements of documentation and record keeping. |  |
| Understand the economic and emotional context in which the small animal hydrotherapist operates; | Need for emotional resilience and clinical confidence in areas of conflicting demands; recognition of workplace stress and where to seek assistance for themselves or others. |  |
| Use their professional capabilities to contribute to the advancement of canine hydrotherapy knowledge, in order to improve the quality of animal health and welfare; | Recognise the need to support the education and training of future canine hydrotherapists; the importance of CPD, duty of candour. |  |
| Perform effective service management with the use of suitable techniques and systems appropriate for canine hydrotherapy; | Skills including negotiating expectations; personnel management; effective and appropriate communication; management of risk assessments; diary management and customer care. |  |

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| **Canine Hydrotherapy Competencies** | |  |
| **Underpinning knowledge and understanding**  **The canine hydrotherapist should be able to:** | | **Evidence or Syllabus / Course reference** |
| **Competence:** | **Guidance:** |
| Understand the canine structure, function and relevant clinical behaviour | Canine anatomy and physiology relating to musculoskeletal and nervous systems. Normal behaviour and interpreting normal and abnormal behavioural signs in a clinical context. Apply the underpinning knowledge and understanding to meet the animal welfare needs of the canine patient. |  |
| Understand the demands of canine competitive and working activities | Acknowledge differing sporting/physiological requirements e.g. field sports compared to agility; or working activities e.g. police dogs, guide dogs. |  |
| Understand the pathophysiology and resulting clinical features of common conditions encountered in canine hydrotherapy practice | Pathophysiology and clinical features of commonly encountered musculoskeletal and neurological conditions in canine hydrotherapy practice. Apply accurate clinical reasoning to treatment approaches in the management of common canine conditions. |  |
| Understand basic canine biomechanics relating to hydrotherapy practice | Biomechanics of movement and key patterns of movement; the use of subjective and objective assessment for movement. |  |

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| **Canine Hydrotherapy Competencies** | |  |
| **Underpinning knowledge and understanding (cont.)**  **The canine hydrotherapist should be able to:** | | **Evidence or Syllabus / Course reference** |
| **Competence:** | **Guidance:** |
| Identify, and apply to hydrotherapy practice, legislation relating to animal health and welfare | Specific laws governing animal welfare and health. Animal Welfare Act 2006, Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966. Referral and report back to the veterinary surgeon with any concerns. |  |
| Identify and apply legislation applicable to the canine hydrotherapy practice | Management of Public Swimming Pools British Standards Institute BSI PAS 39.2003; Health and Safety at Work Act 1974; Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999; The Control of Legionella Bacteria in Water Systems (L8) ISBN 0717617726; Managing Health and Safety in Swimming Pools (HSG179) 3rd Ed. ISBN 9780717626861; Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH); The Legionella Code of Practice & Guidance on Regulations (L8 Fourth Edition) including HSG274 and/or Health Technical Memorandum 04-01; Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013; Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966; Veterinary Surgery (Exemptions) Order 2015; Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981; The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992; Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011; Electricity at Work Regulations 1989; Environmental legislation. Infection control and reporting of notifiable diseases via referring veterinary surgeon. |  |
| **Canine Hydrotherapy Competencies** | |  |
| **Underpinning knowledge and understanding (cont.)**  **The canine hydrotherapist should be able to:** | | **Evidence or Syllabus / Course reference** |
| **Competence:** | **Guidance:** |
| Recognise the signs and symptoms of ill health in canines | Recognition of the clinical signs of ill health and modes of disease transmission that can affect canines and the risks associated with human health. |  |

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| **Canine Hydrotherapy Competencies** | |  |
| **Practical and clinical competencies**  **The canine hydrotherapist should be able to:** | | **Evidence or Syllabus / Course reference** |
| **Competence:** | **Guidance:** |
| Assess patients safely and effectively, considering physical, welfare and behavioural needs of the individual animal and supporting the owner client | Humane, empathetic and careful animal handling to include the use of therapeutic handling techniques and equipment as appropriate. The use of appropriate restraint and directing others in effective constraint. Subjective assessment and detailed history taking; interpretation of referral and results of relevant investigations. Objective assessment; observation, palpation etc. Assessment of normal movement and functionality linked to structure and biomechanics. |  |
| Undertake clinical reasoning linking patient assessment to the treatment plan | Evaluate a problem list from the assessment and reassessment leading to the clinical reasoned approach, goal planning (short and long term) using a variety of relevant and appropriate outcome measures. |  |
| Construct specific, safe and effective treatment plans for patients, using problem-solving and clinical reasoning skills | Tailored to individual animal, client and assessment findings whilst prioritising patient welfare; applying a clinically reasoned approach. |  |
| Use aquatic therapeutic exercise safely and effectively, incorporating decision making, goal setting and design of treatment programmes | Principles of aquatic therapy; normal response to exercise; adaptation to breed type, condition or disease process and work/social environment. |  |
| **Canine Hydrotherapy Competencies** | |  |
| **Practical and clinical competencies (cont.)**  **The canine hydrotherapist should be able to:** | | **Evidence or Syllabus / Course reference** |
| **Competence:** | **Guidance:** |
| Use safe and effective application of hydrotherapy techniques | Use of suitable hydrotherapy pool and aquatic treadmill case-specific treatments and techniques. Indications; contraindications; precautions and application of specific techniques. Health and safety and animal welfare considerations. |  |
| Be able to recognise pain and understand the principles of pain management | Pain mechanisms; pain behaviour, responses to pain and clinical signs. Pain management in a hydrotherapeutic context to include an understanding of the role of the Hydrotherapist and other MDT members in relation to pain management. Appropriate reporting of relevant findings to the veterinary team in relation to pain. |  |
| Participate effectively in inter-professional approaches to the promotion of animal health | Knowledge and understanding of the roles of individual members of the animal health team. |  |
| Apply a proactive approach with the canine hydrotherapy patient | Principles of good husbandry, normal response to exercise; warm up and cool down; specific aquatic exercises to maximise and enhance performance and health promotion. |  |
| **Canine Hydrotherapy Competencies** | |  |
| **Practical and clinical competencies (cont.)**  **The canine hydrotherapist should be able to:** | | **Evidence or Syllabus / Course reference** |
| **Competence:** | **Guidance:** |
| Practice good biosecurity and infection control measures when dealing with patients, clients and staff | Relevant legislation – see ‘identify legislation and guidance appertaining to the canine hydrotherapy industry’ on page 6. Effective disinfection procedures for clothing, equipment and self, use of correct PPE and knowledge of environmental and health, safety and welfare legislation. |  |

(With thanks to The RMPR MSK group for allowing the adaptation of their document “standards of Proficiency & Code of conduct” thus allowing greater cohesion across the animal/veterinary rehabilitation sector).