**Veterinary Physiotherapy**

**Day One Competencies**

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| **Veterinary Physiotherapy Competencies** |
| 1. **General professional skills and attributes;**

**The new animal/veterinary physiotherapist graduate should be able to:** | **Evidence or Syllabus / Course reference** |
| **Competence**  | **Guidance**  |
| 1. 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 *Guide to Professional Conduct*;
 | Veterinary practice legislation; scope of practice; standards of conduct, performance and ethics for Veterinary Physiotherapy; ethical practice and standards of proficiency; professional conduct |  |
| 1. work effectively as a member of a multi-disciplinary team in the delivery of services;
 | Effective communication, identification of members of the team: veterinary surgeon, veterinary nurse, hydrotherapist, behaviourist, farrier, saddler, trainer etc. |  |
| 1. communicate effectively with the public, 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, poster and oral presentations and advice leaflets  |  |
| 1. 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 & boundaries; ethical standards |  |
| 1. 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. |  |
| 1. 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 |  |
| 1. identify personal and professional goals for continuing professional development in order to enhance competence to practice and maintain registered professional status;
 | Importance of CPD; evidence based practice; literature review and understanding of the hierarchy of evidence; maintaining a portfolio of evidence; reflective practice |  |
| 1. promote, monitor and maintain health and safety in the working environment applying principles of risk management, manual handling and bio-security.
 | Safe and empathetic animal handling; personal health and safety including safe working positions; risk assessment and dynamic risk assessment, client safety; record keeping, evidence based practice, disinfection of equipment and clothing, animal notifiable and reportable diseases. Select appropriate personal protective equipment and use it correctly |  |
| 1. understand the economic and emotional context in which the veterinary/animal physiotherapist operates.
 | need for emotional resilience and clinical confidence in areas of conflicting demands; recognition of stress and where to seek assistance for themselves or others  |  |
| 1. understand and apply principles of clinical governance, and practise evidence-based clinical *practice.*
 | Reflection, analysis and improvement in clinical practice; importance of clinical audit and effect on future practice; peer review; case discussions & presentations; importance of CPD |  |
| 1. Use their professional capabilities to contribute to the advancement of veterinary/animal physiotherapy knowledge, in order to improve the quality of animal health and welfare.
 | Understand the research process; participate in active research; recognise the need to support the education and training of future graduates; duty of candour |  |
| 1. Service management
 | Business skills including; financial, marketing and advertising, personnel management. |  |
| 1. Perform professional duties within their Scope of practice and legal framework as set out in *Code of Conduct for Veterinary Physiotherapy* and *Standards of Proficiency for Veterinary Physiotherapy*
 | Acknowledge and work within scope of practice; undertake appropriate training in order to develop scope of practice within the boundaries of the profession; have a knowledge and understanding of the legal framework in which they work |  |

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| **Veterinary Physiotherapy Competencies** |
| 1. **Practical and clinical competences**
 | **Evidence or Syllabus / Course reference** |
| **Competence**  | **Guidance**  |
| 1. assess patients safely and effectively taking into account physical, welfare and behavioural needs of the individual animal and supporting the owner client;
 | Humane and empathetic/careful animal handling to include the use of therapeutic handling techniques. The use of appropriate restraint and directing others in effective constraint. Subjective assessment / history taking; interpretation of referral and results of relevant investigations. Objective assessment; observation, palpation, mobilisation etc. Analysis of normal movement and functionality linked to structure and biomechanics. |  |
| 1. Clinical reasoning linking patient assessment to the treatment plan
 |  Evaluate a prioritised problem list from the assessment and reassessment leading to the clinical reasoned SMART goal planning (short, mid and long term) using a variety of objective and subjective outcome measures. |  |
| 1. construct specific, safe and effective treatment plans for patients, using problem-solving and clinical reasoning skills;
 | Evidence based; tailored to individual animal and client and assessment findings whilst prioritising the welfare of the animal; clinical reasoning and decision making models/skills  |  |
| 1. use therapeutic exercise safely and effectively, incorporating decision making, goal setting and design of exercise programmes;
 | Principles of exercise therapy – both MSK and CV/resp. Education principles; normal response to exercise; adaptation to species type and work/social environment |  |
| 1. use manual therapy in the application of mobilisation, manipulation, massage and respiratory therapy techniques, safely and effectively;
 | Manual therapy: - palpation skills – soft tissues and bony landmarks; massage; manipulation; mobilisation. Indications; contraindications; precautions and application of specific techniques |  |
| 1. Proprioceptive rehabilitation techniques and movement therapies.
 | Therapies including; guidance movement shaping techniques, touch therapies, proprioceptive neuromuscular facilitation. |  |
| 1. use electrotherapeutic modalities safely and effectively, in the selection and application of a range of modalities based on the therapeutic use of electrical, thermal, light, sonic and magnetic energy;
 | Modalities – ultrasound; laser; TENS; electrical stimulation; heat and cold; magnetic energy. Contraindications; precautions and application of specific commonly encountered techniques on a variety of species and anatomical regions. Health and safety considerations including disinfection of equipment. |  |
| 1. assess and manage pain.
 | Pain mechanisms; pain behaviour, responses to pain, compare and contrast clinical signs in a variety of species, understanding of pharmacological and non-pharmacological management of pain. Pain management in a physiotherapeutic context |  |
| 1. appraise available evidence in order to choose and evaluate treatment interventions;
 | Critical review of the literature; literature searching; research principles; audit; clinical decision making |  |
| 1. 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.  |  |
| 1. demonstrate an understanding of the role of veterinary/animal physiotherapy in the prevention of illness and injury and in health promotion and performance enhancement
 | Principles of good husbandry, normal response to exercise; principles of training; stretching warm up cool down ; specific exercises etc. to maximise and enhance performance |  |
| 1. practice good biosecurity and infection control measures when dealing with patients
 | Effective disinfection procedures for clothing, equipment and self, use of correct PPE |  |

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| **Veterinary Physiotherapy Competencies** |
| 1. **Underpinning knowledge and understanding**
 | **Evidence or Syllabus / Course reference** |
| **Competence**  | **Guidance**  |
| 1. An understanding of the structure, function and behaviour of animals under their care including their physiological and welfare needs.
 | Anatomy, physiology and behavioural sciences relating to commonly encountered small and large animal species.Musculoskeletal, nervous, cardiovascular, respiratory, digestive system Normal behavioural repertoire of different species; Interpreting behavioural signs |  |
|  1. Knowledge of the businesses related to animal breeding, production, performance and keeping.
 | Businesses relating to both large and small species. Animal Husbandry. Working animals as well as those kept for social and pleasure reasons |  |
| 1. Understand the competition rules or activities and the demands of different equine and canine sports and activities
 | Acknowledge differing sporting/physiological requirements e.g. polo compared to dressage and field sports compared to agility; or working activities e.g. police dogs, guide dogs etc. |  |
| 1. Understanding of and competence in, the logical approaches to both scientific and clinical reasoning, the distinction between the two, and the strengths and limitations of each.
 | Research paradigms; hierarchy of evidence; case study presentations; Research process; evidence informed practice |  |
| 1. The clinical sciences that aid understanding of pathophysiology and resulting clinical features of conditions usually encountered in animal/veterinary physiotherapy practice that also underpin effective clinical reasoning and clinical assessment skills;
 | Pathophysiology and clinical features of commonly encountered musculoskeletal and neurological conditions in animal/veterinary practice. Normal physiology and changes with disease, injury, poor welfare, levels of fitness, sporting or production levels |  |
| 1. Physical sciences as applied to veterinary/animal physiotherapy practice in relation to movement analysis, measurement techniques, electro-physical modalities, biomechanics and ergonomics;
 | Biomechanics of movement; objective assessment of joint and muscle – range of movement, pattern of movement, cadence Methodologies for data collection and analysis of data relating to movement and structure. |  |
| 1. Legislation relating to animal health and welfare
 | Specific laws governing animal welfare and health. Animal Welfare Act 2006; Welfare of Farmed Animals Regulations 2007; Animal Health Act 1981. Reporting mechanisms re suspected cruelty, poor husbandry, animal disease etc. |  |
| 1. Recognition of suspicious signs of notifiable, reportable and zoonotic diseases of commonly kept large and small animals.
 | Recognition of the clinical signs and modes of transmission of the important notifiable, reportable and zoonotic diseases that can affect the species commonly worked with  |  |
| 1. Understand the ethical framework within which veterinary/ animal physiotherapists should work, including important ethical theories that inform decision-making in professional and animal welfare-related ethics.
 | Understand the implications of client/owner/trainer/financial demands on practice. Develop and evaluate ethically based treatment programmes to maximise animal welfare and health. |  |

With thanks to the Physiotherapy Department at the University of Hertfordshire & the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons Day One Competencies.