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A BILL FOR AN ACT

101   CONCERNING MEDICAID REIMBURSEMENT FOR THERAPY USING EQUINE

102   MOVEMENT.

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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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 JULY 1, 2024,

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.