

# THE AMERICAN HIPPO THERAPY ASSOCIATION, INC. POSITION ON CODING AND BILLING WHEN HIPPO THERAPY IS PART OF A PLAN OF CARE



"Treatment with the Help of the Horse"

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It is the position of The American Hippotherapy Association (AHA, Inc.) that therapy professionals should use the *Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS) Level I Current Procedural Terminology (CPT)* codes when coding and billing for occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech-language pathology services where hippotherapy is part of the skilled intervention that has been incorporated into a plan of care. This is in accordance with the coding and billing guidelines given by the American Medical Association (AMA) and supported by American Physical Therapy Association (APTA), the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) and the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA).

Therapy professionals are mandated to use the billing codes that most accurately describe the medical treatment services being rendered. Licensed professionals providing occupational therapy, physical therapy or speech language pathology services provide skilled therapeutic intervention during the entire therapy treatment including the portion that incorporates an equine and/or its movement. There are no licensed or credentialed professionals called "hippotherapists" in the United States. This is an inaccurate representation of the therapy services provided; there is no billable therapy service called "hippotherapy". It is the responsibility of the treating therapy professional to determine what billing codes best represent the clinical service/procedure being provided and the clinical processes reflected within that service. To use any other coding to represent therapy services rendered by a licensed physical therapy, occupational therapy or speech-language therapy professional has ethical and legal implications for the treating therapist.

The CPT codes that most accurately describe therapy services when hippotherapy/related activities have been included as a tool/strategy within the treatment protocol are as follows:

## **Physical Therapy Services:**

- 97110 – Therapeutic Exercise
- 97112- Neuromuscular Reeducation
- 97116 – Gait Training
- 97530 – Therapeutic Activities

## **Occupational Therapy Services:**

- 97110 – Therapeutic Exercise
- 97112 - Neuromuscular Reeducation
- 97530 – Therapeutic Activities
- 97535 - Self Care Management Training

## **Speech-Language Therapy**

- 92507-Speech/Language therapy activities, individual
- 92508 – Speech/Language therapy activities, group
- 92526 – Treatment of swallowing dysfunction and/or oral function for feeding
- 97127 or G0515 (depending on payer) – Therapeutic Intervention for Cognitive Function