

# How Can Physio benefit your RDA group?

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- Introduction
- Community paediatric physiotherapist worked in Leeds for over 30 years.
- Involved with RDA for over 30 years. Group therapist for 20 years.
- Hippotherapist
- CPTRH North East and North West Representative.
- Profiler for Para Dressage Classification

# How can physio benefit your RDA group?

- **What can a physiotherapist offer a group?**

**Physiotherapy training sessions on:**

- Presentation of different medical conditions seen in riding groups.
- Advice on how the coach can assess the rider pre riding.

- Mounting and dismounting advice\*
- How to support the rider on the horse.
- Progression of rider using the horses movement and specific exercises.
- Liaising with rider and coach when riding no longer viable

# Why ride?

- Fun, recreation
- Social interaction
- Learning a skill, sport
- Part of an education programme
- Therapy

# Varieties of activities in riding which give a therapeutic benefit.

- Group riding lessons
- Individual riding lessons
- Dressage
- Jumping
- Vaulting
- Hacking, endurance. Pleasure rides
- Stable management
- Carriage driving
- Holidays
- Hippotherapy

# Where do physios and Occupational therapists fit in?

- Group physios
- County physios
- Regional physios
- Employed at centres
- Self employed as hippotherapists
- Serving on regional and national committees.

# Why do people with a disability ride?

- The same reason able bodied people ride.
- To experience a normal walking pattern.
- Achieve a sense of freedom.
- Physical activity in fresh air.
- Change of environment.
- Independence.
- Physical therapy on horseback.

# The Benefits of Riding

- Physical benefits?

- Increase strength, improve balance and coordination, relax spasticity, encourage speech.

## Psychological benefits?

- Well being, relationships
- Educational benefits?
- Tracker
- Social relationships-
- behaviour with side walkers, thank horse, following instructions



# Equine pelvic movement in relation to human gait.

- As a horse moves it transmits the movement of its pelvis into the passive rider.
- The movement of the horse at walk directly mimics the movement of the human walk.
- When a rider sits on a horse at a walk, her pelvis follows a very similar cycle as it would if she were walking.
- Sitting on a horse at a walk, the head, trunk, shoulder girdle, pelvis and hips experience the same movement as if one were walking-something many riders with a disability don't experience.

# Human pelvis at walk.

- The most important and undisputable fact is that the 3 dimensional movement of the horse's back simulates human gait (Reide,1988)
- At the walk the horse transfers the same movement pattern on to the rider's trunk that two normally functioning legs would create during walking
- The gait mechanisms of a larger horse more closely resembles the human gait than that of a smaller horse.
- At the walk the large horse transfers 90-110, 3 dimensional movement impulses per minute to the rider.

# Movement in the pelvis and lumbar spine during riding

- In the pelvis:
  - Lateral pelvic tilt to each side
  - Rotation
  - Anterior and posterior tilt
- In the lumbar spine:
  - lateral tilt & rotation

# Ideal riding position.



# Rider seat positions.



# Horses conformation will influence the rider.

- Size of horse
- Barrel shape.
- Riders with spasticity will find it uncomfortable to ride a wide horse.
- Shoulder angle
- Sloping encourages a longer stride. Short choppy stride good for floppy riders. A slim horse with a long stride good for rider with spasticity.
- Pastern angle.

Back shape.

A long back can be prone to injury

# Influence of leading.

- Good active walk- rider to achieve maximum benefit of horses movements.
- Head carriage
- Lower head carriage allows the horse freedom of its natural movement, it allows the horse to stride out allowing rotational movements to be utilized.
- Poor leading
- Limits the horses ability to use its natural stride.
- Fixing the horses head blocks his natural movement.
- Good leading
- Allows the horse to use its natural movement to influence the rider.

# Influence of side walker.

- Providing correct amount of support to rider:
- Physical support
- Learning support
- Reinforcing coaches instructions.



# Key points when Physiotherapist assessing a rider:

- Is the rider sitting symmetrically: when stationary, riding in a straight line and on either rein.
- What is the position of the pelvis.
- Can the rider maintain a symmetrical posture without using their arms for support
- What support should the side walker provide?
- Stirrups or no stirrups
- Saddle or no saddle.
- Special equipment



Fiona Hainsworth CPTRH September 2018

# How to contact a physiotherapist:

- Email: Fiona Hainsworth [afhains@btinternet.com](mailto:afhains@btinternet.com)
- Elizabeth Beckerlegge [elizabeth@beckerlegge.com](mailto:elizabeth@beckerlegge.com)
- Costs: Some work within RDA request travel expenses.
- Most physiotherapists work in private practise or the NHS and have limited free time.
- Access to CPTRH members.