

June 2, 2015

Andrew T. Maccabe, DVM, MPH, JD
Executive Director, AAVMC
1101 Vermont Ave., NW
Suite 301
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Dr. Maccabe,

I am writing to submit the case study proposal, “More Than Just Companions: The Role of Animal Assisted Therapy In Prevention, Health, and Wellness,” for consideration for inclusion in the AAVMC/APTR One Health Interprofessional Education Initiative. The topic of this case study, animal assisted therapy (AAT), and the case study’s emphasis on critical professional issues in AAT such as provider competence, patient welfare, and animal advocacy, are relevant to the One Health mission to promote, improve, and defend the health and well-being of all species via interprofessional collaboration. Through this case study, we hope to raise awareness about the advantages and applications of utilizing AAT in healthcare, human service, and mental health professions while simultaneously addressing ethical considerations unique to AAT. In this way, we hope to prepare students to promote the wellness of patients/clients through AAT interventions in ways that are professionally competent and ethical for the humans and animals involved.

In addition to this cover letter, we have attached a title page with author note and a case study proposal prepared according to the guidelines set forth in the original call for proposals.

The authors look forward to the reviewer’s feedback and decision.

Sincerely,

Leslie Stewart, Ph.D., LPC, NCC, Assistant Professor
Department of Counseling
Kasiska School of Health Professions
Idaho State University
Pocatello, Idaho 83209
678-485-6703 (voice)
stewlesl@isu.edu

More Than Just Companions:
The Role of Animal Assisted Therapy In Prevention, Health, and Wellness
Leslie Stewart, Ph.D.
Heidi McKinley, MS, LPC
Jennifer Gess, MA, LPC, NCC
Idaho State University

Case Study Synopsis:

This case study addresses the human-animal interaction component of the One Health Framework and will equip students in the health professions with the knowledge necessary to analyze the potential health benefits of animal assisted therapy (AAT) and to understand the interdisciplinary application of AAT interventions to prevent and treat a wide range of healthcare concerns.

In this case study, the director of a fictional integrative healthcare hospital is considering incorporating AAT services because of the potential benefits to healthcare, physical therapy, occupational therapy, psychiatric, and mental health patients. The hospital director hires a team of experts in AAT to serve as consultants. Students assume the role of members of the expert consulting team and, using a jigsaw technique, explain and explore the potential advantages, applications, and ethical considerations associated with incorporating AAT into healthcare and human services treatment settings.

Objectives:

- Define animal assisted therapy (AAT).
- Differentiate a therapy animal from a service animal, and ways in which AAT differs from other types of human-animal interaction.
- Discuss evidence-based research and outcomes related to AAT across multiple healthcare and human services disciplines.
- Describe the importance of standardized therapy animal registration processes and describe key areas of AAT provider competence.
- Discuss ways that AAT services could be integrated into patient treatment across a wide variety of clinical concerns.
- Identify and discuss ethical, legal, and multicultural considerations relevant to AAT.

Student Audience:

Health professions and human services students at the following levels: Undergraduate upper division, Graduate, Clinical education, General public & informal education.

Author Note

Leslie A. Stewart, Department of Counseling, Idaho State University; Heidi K. McKinley, Department of Counseling, Idaho State University; Jennifer M. Gess, Department of Counseling, Idaho State University.

Correspondence concerning this case study should be addressed to Leslie Stewart, Department of Counseling, Idaho State University, 921 South 8th Ave., Stop 8120, Pocatello, ID 83209-8120. E-mail: stewlesl@isu.edu