Veteran Equine Research Studies and Collaborations
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Why is Research Necessary?

- Definition of research
- Good data informs good policy
- Need to tell the story so funders will listen
- Data collection is not the goal
- All data is not created equal
**Definition of research**

- The systematic investigation into and study of materials and sources in order to establish facts and reach new conclusions. (Oxford Dictionary)

What we think we know or observe

Research

What is proven as true or fact
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The Data

• Good data informs good policy
• Need to tell the story so funders will listen
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Data

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Levels of Evidence

Level I: Randomized control trial (RCT)

Level II: Non-randomized control trial. A preplanned study with predetermined eligibility criteria and outcomes measures.

Level III: Observational studies with control group. Retrospective study, cohort studies

Level IV: Observational studies with no control group. Convenient samples, anecdotal data, opinions

Source: United States Department of Health and Human Services
www.ahrq.gov
What is our goal and who are our partners?
Aims/Purpose of the Research

- Improve quality of life
- Decrease PTSD symptoms
- Increase participation
- Decrease depression
- Improve relationships
- Improve sleep
- Decrease physical pain
- Improve sleep
- Decrease depression
- Improve relationships
- Decrease physical pain
- Improve sleep
Possible Research Partners

• University faculty
  – Public/Community Health
  – Psychology
  – Social Work
  – Neuroscience
  – Physical and Occupational Therapy
  – Nursing
Possible Research Partners

- Therapeutic Riding Facilities
  - Equines
  - Certified Registered Instructors
  - Equine Specialists in Mental Health and Learning
  - PT and OT specialists
  - Facility director/supervisor
Possible Research Partners

• Military Installations
  – Veterans
  – Warrior Transition Battalions
  – Medical Research Centers
  – VA Centers
  – Joint university/military programs
  – Military IRB approval
Where will we get the funding?
You’ve Got Funding!
Funding Sources

• What’s hot and what’s not

- Federal funding varies
  - NIH, DOD, CDC
  - Foundations
  - Local funding (service groups)
  - University - internal funding
  - Fundraising

What do they want to fund?
What can you offer?
• The funding process takes time.

Less Time

More Time

Donor
University Internal funding

Foundations
Fundraising

Foundations
Federal Funding
Thinking through the funding process

**Funding Source**

- **Partial funding**
  - What part do you fund?

- **What expenses can be covered**
  - Who is responsible?

- **No funding**
  - Do we still conduct the research?
Special considerations for conducting research with veterans.
Lessons learned

- Veterans want to participate without formal psychological processing at the facility
- Military IRB approval is possible but difficult and is a lengthy process
- Standardization of protocol is vital
- Need a site supervisor for the research
- Study must have IRB and IACUC approval
- Frequent communication between all research partners is critical
• EAA and Children with Autism

• Completed Veteran pilot study
Second EAA and Veteran study

- Multisite (5 therapeutic riding facilities)
- Aim: 75 participants (including control group)
- Standardized TR protocol
- PTSD symptoms, depression, participation and functioning
- Baylor IRB, IACUC approval, internal funding
- BAMC approval (almost complete)
- Madigan approval (in process) following BAMC
- External funding pending
• Research Partners
  – Baylor University
  – Rainier Therapeutic Riding Facility (Yelm, WA)
  – Ride On Center for Kids (Georgetown, TX)
  – Courtney Cares TR facility, affiliated with Texas A&M (College Station, TX)
  – REACH TR facility (McGregor, TX)
  – Triple H TR facility (Pipe Creek, TX)
  – Fort Sam Houston/Baylor OT doctoral program
• Veterans (main military bases)
  – Joint Base Lewis-McChord
  – Fort Hood
  – Fort Sam Houston
Thank you

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