Spring 2018

Therapeutic Riding and Psychological Health in Older Adults

Alyssa Pattison  
*University of Southern Maine*

Craig Ashford  
*University of Southern Maine*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.usm.maine.edu/thinking_matters](https://digitalcommons.usm.maine.edu/thinking_matters)

Part of the Animal-Assisted Therapy Commons, Health Psychology Commons, Movement and Mind-Body Therapies Commons, Occupational Therapy Commons, Physical Therapy Commons, and the Recreational Therapy Commons

**Recommended Citation**

Pattison, Alyssa and Ashford, Craig, "Therapeutic Riding and Psychological Health in Older Adults" (2018). *Thinking Matters Symposium*. 132.  
[https://digitalcommons.usm.maine.edu/thinking_matters/132](https://digitalcommons.usm.maine.edu/thinking_matters/132)

This Poster Session is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Scholarship at USM Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Thinking Matters Symposium by an authorized administrator of USM Digital Commons. For more information, please contact jessica.c.hovey@maine.edu.
PIO Question
Do people 65 or older who participate in a therapeutic riding program experience decreased depressive symptoms?

Conclusion
Our findings indicate a gap in research supporting the effects of therapeutic horseback riding on decreasing depressive symptoms in older adults; however, similar research suggests therapeutic riding for older adults may benefit psychological health.

Recommendations
For Hearts & Horses: Create a pilot program incorporating mindfulness, coping strategies, and social supports. Track program efficacy by offering participants a depression questionnaire & Satisfactory With Life Scale.

For Research: Further research is needed at higher levels of evidence, with a focus on older adults.

For references or questions, please email alyssa.pattison@maine.edu or craig.ashford@maine.edu