

## HISTORICAL ASPECTS AND PROSPECTS OF PET THERAPY DEVELOPMENT IN UKRAINE

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### Summary

Pet therapy is characterized as a separate area. There are well-developed areas for nowadays: hippotherapy, dolphin therapy, canine therapy, feline therapy. The formation of PET therapy as a separate direction in rehabilitation, psychotherapy and special education from ancient times to the present is considered. The most defining events that affected the development of this area are noted and on this basis four stages in the formation of this area in chronological order are identified (I – unsystematic use of animals in the home; II – targeted use of animals for therapeutic purposes; III – targeted use of animals for pet -therapy on a scientifically sound methodological basis; IV – the modern period of the current direction of PET therapy). It is noted that the current stage is characterized by the fact that the developed techniques are deepening, the scope of application in this area is expanding, the probable risks are taken into account, research in PET therapy is characterized by a significant volume and thorough methodological approaches, and so on. The state of development of this direction in Ukraine is estimated. It is noted that Pet therapy is beginning to be actively used in our country. In recent decades, the number of specialized centers for pet therapy has increased significantly, contact zoos are organized at zoos, animals are used in educational centers to simplify the perception of information, and so on. The latest approaches are applied, the latest methods are introduced, resource centers are organized, methodical elements of PET therapy are introduced into the educational programs of specialized educational institutions.

**Keywords:** pets, animal-associated therapy, animal-associated activity, history of PET-therapy, Animal-Assisted Therapy.

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### 1. Introduction

Modern medicine and special education uses animals to interact with patients and students for therapeutic purposes and to facilitate the perception of educational information. But, despite the fact that historically, keeping animals at home has long been used in people's lives to meet a number of psycho-emotional needs and, in particular, to optimize and stimulate the development of children in the family (*Filippova, 2004*), the formation of pet therapy due to the stage of rejection and mistrust has not yet taken place and has not been widely used in the practice of doctors and speech pathologists. It is also important to

consider that today the urbanization and technologicalization of society contributes to the fact that man is trying to fill the lack of contact with nature by keeping animals at home (*Filippova, 2004*). At the same time, the same urbanization and technologicalization, and with them the dynamic way of life of modern society, often does not allow keeping pets. In this case, as noted by (*Bugaeva, 2011*), pet owners in early adulthood generally feel better than people who do not have their own pets. This proves the importance and effectiveness of PET therapy (*Bugaeva, 2011*).

## 2. Modern PET therapy's main elements and orientation

PET Therapy or Animal-Assisted Therapy has developed rapidly in recent decades. One of the applied problems solved by pet therapy is the use of knowledge about the psyche of animals for further use in providing development and psychotherapy. In this case, we are talking about those animals that can positively contribute to the human psyche. Interaction with such animals promotes the development of perception, attention, motor activity, communication and cognition in children (*Savicheva, Krjachko, & Lukojanova, 2015*). This is primarily psychotherapy, in which the main therapeutic tool is human interaction with animals. This interaction is significantly different from other therapeutic agents (interaction with inanimate objects in different types of therapy, with the therapist or group therapy participants). The main differences are as follows: the animal has an internal source of activity. As a result, it becomes relatively unpredictable for both the patient and the therapist, the animal has an "internal position", its own motivation and is involved in the process of interaction with man, actively expressing this position, the animal is not a bearer of meaningful and evaluative function (*Filippova, 2004*).

In Pet therapy itself there are two main areas. The first is the actual therapy with the use of animals. The so-called animal-associated therapy. This therapy is aimed at direct treatment, including the development of motor skills, recovery from serious illness, alleviation of mental illness, etc. The second direction is more general work with animals. This is the so-called animal-associated activity. This work is aimed primarily at evoking positive emotions in patients. Among the main subsectors should be highlighted sufficiently developed areas today: hippotherapy (work with horses), dolphin therapy, canine therapy (work with dogs), feline therapy (work with cats). Training animals (*Hooker, Freeman, Stewart, 2002*) are better suited for specific work with patients. According to research (*Smolova, 2008*), the animal is able to reduce the stress associated with the loneliness of isolated people, can compensate and meet the daily needs of communication. If there was a dog in a wheelchair with a child, in the study they were service dogs (servicedogs), the people around them approached them much more often. Dogs created favorable conditions for communication, reducing the discomfort of communication, because a child with a disability who had a dog, others considered more healthy (*Dudar', Husjainov, 2008*).

The use of animals has proven itself in particular for the treatment of epilepsy, rehabilitation after stroke, training for cerebral palsy and others. Pet therapy is also used in medical and special pedagogical practice for diseases and disorders not related to the nervous system. (*Duncan, Susan, Loneliness, 1995*) also note the positive effect of contact with pets on lowering blood pressure. Even the usual observation of aquarium fish lowers blood pressure more than at rest, when a person just sits and looks at the wall. Also noted (*Chinner, Dalziel, 1991; Cox, 1993 and Hooker, Freeman, Stewart, 2002*) as a separate use of PET therapy in hospices to help patients and staff interact, and to reduce tension and stress.

### 3. Origins of PET-therapy formation

PET-therapy as a separate area in rehabilitation, psychotherapy, special education and other fields began to be used in the late twentieth century (*Klevaka, 2017*). However, even before the 1960s, the practice of using animals for therapeutic purposes was used. Thus (*Tuke, 1964*), as well as (*Hooker, Freeman, Stewart, 2002; Klevaka, 2017*) indicate that in 1792 the Quakers in a psychiatric hospital revised the rules of treatment with crazy after the tragic death of a patient at the Retreat Clinic, opened by William Tuck. Under the new rules, the treatment process at this hospital was based on the principles of humanism, which included gardening, yard exercises and the presence of animals.

(*Levinson, 1997*) notes that despite such a rich and interesting history and the fact that such therapy has been used informally at the household level since the time of animal training, pets have brought comfort, relaxation and motivation to family members for centuries, only since 1960 The term pet therapy was introduced and official documentation on its use was started. During this time, PET therapy has passed the way to its formation as a successful theoretical and practically significant science. According to (*Hooker, Freeman, Stewart, 2002*), during this time, the use of pet therapy has grown from unsystematic use to inclusion in health care programs supported by research. This evolution remains unfinished. There is much more to learn and explore using animal health to help heal the human mind and body (*Hooker, Freeman, Stewart, 2002*).

Until 1961, there were some mentions of the benefits of using animals in the practice of therapeutic and psychological work. Thus (*Nightingale, 1860*), noted that poultry in cages are sometimes the only pleasure for a disabled person whose space is limited to one room.

In the United States, the history of pet therapy began in 1919, when Home Secretary F. K. Lane proposed the use of dogs with psychiatric patients at St. Mary's Hospital. Elizabeths Hospital in Washington, D.C. During 1944-1945, Army Air Corps Convalescent Hospital at Pawling, New York used animals to heal veterans. However, data on the therapeutic effect were not collected at that time (*Hooker, Freeman, Stewart, 2002*).

The stage of formation of Pet-therapy as a separate direction of therapy can be outlined in 1961, because, as noted (*Hooker, Freeman, Stewart, 2002*) it was this year that New York psychotherapist Boris Levinson documented his observations in the field of security health began to consider the integration of pet therapy for legitimate therapeutic use.

Dr. Levinson was the first to write about the use of a dog as a tool to facilitate work with a child-client (*Levinson, 1997*). Dr. Levinson found that the presence of a dog was a positive focus at the beginning of communication, allowing the defenses to soften, build relationships, and initiate therapy. After Dr. Levinson presented his findings at the 1961 American Psychological Association convention, he described part of the audience as "enthusiastic, some embarrassed, and some others asking if my dog was attending the meeting" (*Levinson, 1997, 38*). Dr. Levinson's work on the use of pets was then extended to adolescent and adult psychiatric hospitals at Ohio State University by psychiatrists Sam and Elizabeth Corson in the early 1970s. They were the first to use animals in the hospital and collected quantitative data from pilot studies (*Corson, Corson, Gwynne, Arnold, 1975*). In 1975, the couple moved their animal therapy project to a nursing home, where elderly patients were successfully introduced to pet therapy. It was in the nursing home that the Corsons began to celebrate the improved physical, psychological, and social status of pet care patients. The proposal to study using pets as independent living helpers and using them as institutional therapy, similar to music and art therapy, also proceeded from this situation (*Hooker, Freeman, Stewart, 2002*). In 1977, the first permanent Pet Therapy program

was opened at the University of Ohio. In 1980, there were about twenty programs like these in the United States, and by 2000 – more than a thousand (*Ostroumova, & Makarova, 2016*).

#### 4. Future historical development of PET therapy

During the 1980s, the professional literature began to pay attention to the topic of pets. Articles have discussed its definition and use of animals as resources for nursing interventions (*Davis, Juhasz, 1984; Haggard, 1985; Davis, 1988; Carmack, Fila, 1989*). Many studies have included descriptive information on the positive effects of pet therapy on patient outcomes (*Erickson, 1985*). Most articles also contained tips on initiating a pet. therapy, selection of appropriate animals, avoidance of possible dangers (*Davis, Juhasz, 1984; Haggard, 1985; Davis, 1988; Carmack, Fila, 1989*). (*Baun, Langston, 1984*) published studies confirming the conclusion that in people who do not suffer from hypertension, communication with their own dog lowers blood pressure. The results showed that people with pets had a much higher survival rate than those who did not have pets. The effects of a dog's presence on children at rest and during light stressful activities without a dog were also considered. These types of publications contributed to further research and articles (*Hooker, Freeman, Stewart, 2002*).

The 1990s brought an explosion of information and research into animal therapy. One such area, which included research on pet therapy, was home health. The study found that elderly patients who had previously had pets had significantly lower blood pressure and heart rate after visiting a wellness center that included a dog (*Harris, Rinehart, Gerstman, 1993*). Studies on the effects on the cardiovascular system have also been conducted (*Friedmann and Thomas, 1995*). Dogs were later used in this study when visiting home medical facilities with children (*Hooker, Freeman, Stewart, 2002*).

The effect of pet therapy on elderly patients, both at home and in long-term care, was also studied. A long study of independent living of older people found that after 1 year, pet owners maintained a higher level of activity in everyday life than those who did not have pets (*Raina, Waltner-Toews, Bonnett, Woodward, Abernathy, 1999; Staats, Pierfelice, Kim, Crandell, 1999*).

Studies of inpatients with Alzheimer's disease have also shown increased socialization or social activity in the presence of a therapy dog (*Hooker, Freeman, Stewart, 2002; Kongable, Stolley, Buckwalter, 1990; Chruchill, Safaoui, McCabe, Baun, 1999*).

Research on psychiatric patients has also continued. The study (*Barker and Dawson, 1998*) showed a reduction in anxiety for a greater variety of mental health diagnoses, compared with the use of recreational therapy alone.

Studies with chemically addicted recovering individuals in group therapy have revealed the presence of a therapy dog which helps to remove barriers to communication (*Campbell-Begg, 2000*).

The increase in the number of animals used for pet therapy has raised questions about the likelihood of zoonoses, leading to a variety of recommendations, rules and protocols for the use of animals. It is also important to choose the right animal for further therapy. After all, it is crucial for success and requires consideration of the animal's personality and training it as a therapeutic pet. These considerations reduce the incidence of allergic reactions, bites, and programs have been noted to prevent the occurrence of specific infections in immunocompromised patients (*Connor & Miller, 2000*). To date, protocols for the use of animals for pet therapy provide that all of them must be regularly examined by a veterinarian, be vaccinated against major diseases in order to prevent a variety of animal-specific diseases (*Guay, 2001*).

Current research allows us to process a significant amount of experimental data and obtain reliable results regarding the effectiveness of PET therapy. Thus, (Barker; Dawson, 1998), from the School of Medicine at the University of Virginia studied the effect of therapy dogs on the level of anxiety of hospitalized mentally ill patients. Of 230 people who participated in the study, patients with depression, bifurcation, and schizophrenia were among the most significant diagnoses. Almost all showed a significant reduction in animal anxiety. Exceptions were patients with pronounced degrees of dependence – which, according to the author, is associated with the withdrawal syndrome (Barker; Dawson, 1998; Sawicki, 2002; Bugaeva, 2011).

So, summarizing, in the formation of PET therapy as a separate area can be divided into the following stages of development:

- unsystematic use of animals in the home. This stage is characterized by the fact that the animals were used primarily for their intended purpose, but, at the same time, communication with domestic and farm animals caused a certain therapeutic effect. Time period – from ancient times to the end of the XVIII century;

- targeted use of animals for therapeutic purposes. This stage is marked by the fact that animals began to be used for a direct purpose – to obtain therapeutic and psychological effects. Time period – from the end of the XVIII century to the end of the XX century;

- targeted use of animals for PET therapy on a scientifically sound methodological basis. This stage of formation of PET therapy as a separate direction in rehabilitation, psychotherapy and defectology is marked by the fact that the use of such therapy is already based on reliable data on the positive impact of animal use in therapeutic practice, used techniques, etc. Time period – from the 70s of the twentieth century to the 90s of the twentieth century;

- the modern period of the formed direction of PET therapy. This stage is characterized by the fact that the developed techniques are deepened, the scope of application of this area is expanded, the probable risks are taken into account, research in PET therapy is characterized by a significant volume and thorough methodological approaches, and so on. Time – from the 90s of the twentieth century to nowadays.

## 5. PET therapy development in Ukraine

Pet therapy begins to be actively used in Ukraine. In recent decades, the number of specialized centers for pet therapy has increased significantly, contact zoos are organized at zoos, animals are used in educational centers to simplify the perception of information, and so on. The newest approaches are applied, the newest techniques are introduced, resource centers are organized, methodical elements of PET therapies are brought in educational programs of profile educational institutions.

Thus, in Veseliv'sky psychoneurological boarding school, located in the village of Uritske, Zaporizhia district, Zaporizhia region, there is a project "Pet therapy". The aim of the project is social adaptation, creative and sports rehabilitation, ecological and physical education of wards, improvement of their moral and psychological condition through hippotherapy, zootherapy (communication with horses, contact with animals, riding training, development of ecological, physical culture and creative growth personality, occupational therapy); prevention of socially dangerous forms of behavior; career guidance; organization of summer leisure. After the implementation of the first stage of the Project, the psychologists of the institution observed positive dynamics in the behavior of all wards after classes: the girls, being outside the boarding school, became more sociable and gained indispensable experience in managing themselves in unusual life situations. They began to behave more confidently and calmly, became more open, cheerful.

The significant level of interest in Pet therapy is indicated by the fact that on May 22, 2018 in Kharkiv a round table was held with the participation of the Deputy Mayor for Health and Social Protection, leaders and representatives of public organizations, the utility company “Center for Behavior with animals”, juvenile prevention regarding the creation of the first in Ukraine resource center for canis therapy.

In Kharkiv, in the Kharkiv City Shelter for Homeless Animals, volunteer dog walking is organized, which not only simplifies the work of the staff, but also allows everyone to get in touch with animals for the purpose of psychological relief.

## 6. Conclusions

Pet therapy, as a separate area, is rapidly developing and gaining popularity in recent decades. These approaches are very promising not only in medicine and rehabilitation but also in special pedagogy. Today, pet therapy has a wide and diverse field of application and is characterized by two main areas – animal-associated therapy and animal-associated activity. To the current level of development of this area there has been an evolution in the perception of Pet therapy by society from non-perception and frivolous attitude to the use at the level of other methodological approaches. This formation clearly outlines the four stages of formation of PET therapy. In Ukraine, in recent decades, Pet therapy is becoming more widespread on a scientifically sound methodological basis with the involvement of innovative approaches and new techniques.

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