



Top Ten Advisements for PATH International Centers with PTs, OTs and SLPs Using Equine Movement (Hippotherapy) as a Treatment Tool

1. Understand that a licensed (PT, OT, or SLP) therapy practice should operate under a business model designed to accurately represent a therapy practice separate from a PATH Intl. center's adaptive/therapeutic riding services.

Some examples of business structures include:

- Therapist in private practice who negotiates with a facility to be onsite with a lease for horses, staff, arena time, clinic space, etc.
- Therapist in private practice with their own office location, who then contracts with a facility by leasing a designated arena/clinic space on site at the PATH Intl. center for their practice.
- Be hired as an employee of an onsite therapy practice to provide PT, OT, or SLP therapy services that would incorporate the use of equine movement (hippotherapy) into the patient's plan of care. The therapy practice pays the therapist as an employee, will collect fees for therapy services and/or bills the patient/insurance through the practice. The agreement/contract is between the PATH Intl. center and the therapy practice and covers all operational costs. The PATH Intl. center does not charge the patient facility fees.
- Be an employee of a national or franchise therapy practice or an employee of an out-patient/rehabilitation agency. This organization/agency would negotiate with the PATH Intl. center the terms of the space and contract as they would with any other landlord and abide by all practice rules and regulations. They would set up the therapy practice on site of the PATH Intl. center who is then the landlord. The therapist is managed and paid

directly by the national/franchised or private practice therapy organization/agency who would then bill the patient/insurance.

- The PATH Intl. center can set up a therapy practice but should adhere to identifying the therapy practice appropriately in terms of separate business identification numbers, standard healthcare practices, and standardized healthcare billing protocols.

2. Understand that therapists must be licensed in their state of operation and follow all state rules and requirements.
3. Understand that the practice should be marketed as a **clinical practice** and not a “hippotherapy program”.
4. All sessions should be described as OT/PT/SLP treatment and not “hippotherapy sessions”.
5. The use of equine movement (hippotherapy) is one part of a patient’s total plan of care. This means that hippotherapy should not be the only treatment tool used in an OT/PT/SLP therapy session. PATH Intl. centers should have an appropriate clinical space for treatment of the patient when they are off of the horse.
6. All patients should have written prescriptions for the clinical service(s) provided per the state rules and regulations and therapist scope of practice. The prescriptions should not be for hippotherapy as it is not a therapy service, but a treatment tool.
7. The therapy practice needs to be aware of the appropriate billing and coding. AHA, Inc. has billing guidelines. The therapy practice is responsible for knowing and abiding by contractual agreements for billing through insurance companies and Medicaid/Medicare.
8. Licensed PT/OT/SLP therapists and PATH Intl. centers should follow the Statements of Best Practice published by AHA, Inc.
9. It is critical for the PATH Intl. center and any treating therapists to understand the business structure, best practices, and terminology when using equine movement as a treatment tool in a PT/OT/SLP clinical practice.
10. Each state has its own rules and regulations with respect to therapy practices. Please check with your state rules and regulations as well as an attorney who specializes in medical therapy practices.