

Ethical Guidelines of inclusion of animals in therapy spaces for ANZAP members

Many therapists are now introducing animals to the therapy room. This may be a personal pet or a therapy animal. Therapists should be aware that:

1. introducing an animal to the therapy room in both face to face and online environments can change the frame of the work and can impact attachment work and transference work;
2. safety in the therapeutic space is of primary importance and therapists should be alert to any changes in client responses following the introduction of an animal;
3. inclusion/introduction of a therapy animal must be a real choice for clients and not deemed coercive in any way;
4. inclusion/introduction of a therapy animal in both face to face and online environments in supervision sessions should proceed by way of consent of both parties;
5. clients who wish to bring their support animal or pet to therapy should gain the consent of the therapist beforehand. The therapist has the right to refuse an animal in the therapy room.

On introducing an animal to the therapeutic space by the therapist:

1. a formal consent process is advised via written notice. This is for any animal including a support animal. This should set out clearly how the new set up would work, and the expectations of client and therapist;
2. the animal should be trained appropriately to manage forms of spaces where two people are talking to each other for a length of time;
3. therapists should be aware of any legal and insurance rules regarding animals in buildings where therapy practices are based.

For further information we recommend the following references:

Jo Silbert, Jo Frasca (eds) *Animals as the third in relational Psychotherapy: exploring Theory, Frame and Practice* (Routledge, 2021).

Keren Bachi (2012) Equine-Facilitated Psychotherapy:
The Gap between Practice and Knowledge *Society and Animals* (20) 364-380

Jane K. Wilkes & Charles C. Thomas, (2009) *The role of companion animals in counselling and psychology: Discovering their use in the therapeutic process*, Springfield, IL

Sarah M. Germain, Karlene D. Wilkie, Virginia M. K. Milbourne & Jennifer Theule (2018) Animal-assisted Psychotherapy and Trauma: A Meta-analysis, *Anthrozoös*, 31:2, 141-164, DOI: 10.1080/08927936.2018.1434044

Caroline Case (2005) *Imagining Animals Art, psychotherapy and primitive states of Mind* Routledge, new York

Lori R. Kogan, Karen Schaefer, Phyllis Erdman & Regina Schoenfeld-Tacher (2016) University Counseling Centers' Perceptions and Experiences Pertaining to Emotional Support Animals, *Journal of College Student Psychotherapy*, 30:4, 268-283

Anke Prothmann, Manuela Bienert & Christine Ettrich (2006) Dogs in child psychotherapy: Effects on state of mind, *Anthrozoös*, 19:3, 265-277

Laura Meyer & Ann Sartori (2018) Attachment Theory and Equine-Facilitated Psychotherapy for Vietnam Veterans, *Society and Animals* 1-19