

## English Abstracts

### **The Effects of Equine-Assisted Learning on Soldiers with PTSD and Their Partners – Theoretical Framework and Study-Design Outline**

*Kai Köhler, Carolyn Rose, Gerd Willmund*

The number of cases of German soldiers needing care for trauma-related mental health problems after deployment abroad rises every year. To augment their treatment we offer a learning environment using horses by way of the EAGALA-method. Due to the scarcity of studies to date, there are no evidence-based reports on the effects of these therapies on symptom severity of PTSD, depression, or quality of partnership. Therefore we will

recruit a sample of military personnel in patients and their partners to evaluate equine-assisted learning to augment therapy. This paper presents the theoretical framework and outlines the study design for this project.

**Keywords:** PTSD, depression, soldiers, equine assisted therapy, partnership, EAGALA

### **Examination of Expression and Behaviour of Horses, to Determine Wellbeing in Different Stable Systems**

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The appropriate keeping of horses is one of the most important conditions, to enable the fulfillment of their basic needs and consequently the development of their wellbeing. Since humans have taken responsibility with the domestication of horses, one major question in current research remains unanswered: How, if even, can we define, quantize or qualify and afterwards interpret the wellbeing of horses? The monitoring of expression and behaviour of horses provides a detailed and qualitative evidence of their wellbeing. The intend of this paper was, to determine, in which types of stable systems (single box, paddock box, open stable keeping and active stable keeping), the natural needs of the horses were most closely

met, in regard to their wellbeing. To determine and define the current behavioural state, more than 60 different displays, each symbolizing one behavioural state, were established. The conclusion of the study is, that the keeping of horses in groups in combination with a multi-room-stable with outdoor compartments (active and open stable keeping) most closely mirrors the conditions horses would live in naturally and is most beneficial to their wellbeing and natural behaviour.

**Keywords:** Horse, welfare of horses, behavior expression of horses, body language of horses, displays, ethical husbandry