

MCTIMONEY ANIMAL ASSOCIATION

STANDARDS OF PROFICIENCY 2019

INTRODUCTION

1. An important function of McTimoney Animal Association (hereafter MAA) is to establish a clearly defined standard of proficiency and expected level of knowledge and skill through McTimoney animal therapists practising in the United Kingdom. Maintaining and developing professional competence is a requirement for all McTimoney animal therapists.

2. This document outlines essential competences required of the McTimoney animal therapist for membership of the MAA. It focuses on essential competences required at graduation. The standard required for registration following completion of an animal manipulation Masters degree course run by the McTimoney College of Chiropractics should be seen as the starting point for an individual's continuing education and training needs throughout a career.

3. There are many definitions of competence and many views on how it can be developed and assessed. In general terms, competence is a concept that integrates knowledge, skills and attitudes, the application of which enables the professional to perform effectively, and to respond to individual circumstances, change, and the unexpected.

4. This document takes a broad definition of competence as being "the ability to perform the roles and tasks required by one's job to the expected standard" (Eraut & Boulay, 2001). This definition recognises that requirements and expectations change dependant upon job role and context. It also recognises that competence develops, and that an individual may work 'competently' at many different levels, either at different stages of their career, or indeed from one day to the next depending on the nature of their work.

5. It is important to distinguish between an individual's competence and performance. Competence is what one can do, performance is what one actually does. MAA aims to regulate competence through its primary function of determining the standard of proficiency required for membership and ensuring that individuals will have acquired the knowledge and skill needed for the safe and efficient practice of animal manipulation. Performance may be affected by factors such as workload, working conditions, levels of support, even transient personal circumstances. The MAA's regulation of performance is through disciplinary procedure. If a member's performance is called into question, standards outlined within this document will be considered when deciding what action, if any, need be taken.

1 "Developing the Attributes of Medical Professional Judgement and Competence", a review funded by the Postregistration Medical and Dental Education Research Initiative of the Dept. of Health's Policy Research Programme, by Professor Michael Eraut and Benedict du Boulay, University of Sussex. The full paper is available on the web at <http://www.cogs.susx.ac.uk/users/bend/doh>

6. The essential competences have been broken down into three main areas:
 - A. General professional competences and attributes
 - Describing the distinguishing characteristics of a McTimoney animal therapist
 - B. Underpinning knowledge and understanding
 - Describing in general terms the breadth of knowledge and understanding needed for a career as a McTimoney animal therapist
 - C. Practically-based competences
 - Describing the basic practical competences that are expected at first registration

The principles of the MAA set out below should be seen as overarching requirements for registration (and by implication, continued registration). The principles state that:

Your clients are entitled to expect that you will:

1. Understand and comply with your legal obligations in relation to The Veterinary Surgery exemption order (2015) seeking permission of a veterinary surgeon prior to any treatment being given
2. Make animal welfare your first consideration in seeking to provide the most appropriate attention for animals committed to your care
3. Ensure that all animals under your care are treated humanely and with respect
4. Maintain and continue to develop your professional knowledge and skills
5. Foster and maintain a good relationship with your clients, earning their trust, respecting their views and protecting client confidentiality
6. Uphold the good reputation of the McTimoney profession
7. Foster and endeavour to maintain good relationships with your professional colleagues
8. Respond promptly, fully and courteously to complaints and criticism

Meeting the standards

It is important that members meet expected standards and are able to practice lawfully, safely and effectively. There is normally more than one way in which each standard can be met. The way in which standards are met may change over time through improvements in technology, changes in individual practice or even industry and perhaps society wide changes. As autonomous professionals, members need to make informed, reasoned decisions about practice to ensure that applicable standards are met. This includes seeking advice and support from education providers, employers, colleagues and others to ensure that the wellbeing of clients is safeguarded at all times.

ESSENTIAL COMPETENCES REQUIRED OF THE MCTIMONEY ANIMAL PRACTITIONER

A - GENERAL PROFESSIONAL SKILLS AND ATTRIBUTES

The McTimoney Animal Practitioner should be able to:

A1. Be able to practise within the legal and ethical boundaries of their profession

- Be aware of current UK legislation applicable to the work of their profession; the Veterinary Surgery exemption order (2015)
- Understand and comply with legal obligations in relation to The Veterinary Surgery exemption order (2015) seeking permission of a veterinary surgeon prior to any treatment being given
- Communicate effectively with clients, the lay public, professional colleagues and veterinary surgeons; listen effectively and respond sympathetically to clients and others, using language in a form appropriate to the audience and the context

A2. Be able to practise in a non-discriminatory manner

A3. Understand the importance of and be able to maintain confidentiality

A4. Prepare clear case reports and maintain patient records in a form satisfactory to colleagues, veterinary surgeons and understandable by the public

A5. Recognise the need for effective self-management of workload and resources and be able to practise accordingly

- Have an elementary knowledge of how fees are calculated and invoices drawn up, and the importance of record keeping, including book-keeping and case reports
- Be able to use information technology effectively to communicate, share, collect, manipulate and analyse information

A6. Be able to practise as an autonomous professional, exercising their own professional judgement

- Be able to assess a situation, determine the nature and severity of the problem and call upon the required knowledge and experience to deal with the problem
- Be able to initiate resolution of problems and be able to exercise personal initiative
- Know the limits of their practice and when to seek advice or refer to another professional
- Recognise that they are personally responsible for and must be able to justify their decisions

A8. Understand the obligation to maintain fitness to practise

- Understand the need to practise safely and effectively within their scope of practice
- Understand the need to maintain high standards of personal conduct
- Understand the need and professional obligation for a commitment to continuing education and training, and professional development, throughout one's professional life

A9. Be willing to use one's professional capabilities to contribute as far as possible to the advancement of knowledge and understanding in order to benefit the profession and further improve the quality of animal care

B - UNDERPINNING KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

The McTimoney Animal Practitioner will need to have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the following:

B1. The sciences on which the activities of McTimoney practitioners are based

- Normal equine and canine anatomy and physiology, especially the dynamic relationships of structure and function, and the neuromuscular and musculoskeletal systems.
- The means by which biomechanics and applied exercise physiology can inform the understanding and analysis of movement and function
- Patterns of growth and development across the lifespan
- Factors influencing individual variations in ability and health status
- The aetiology, pathogenesis and clinical signs of common diseases and disorders that occur in equine and canine species that are commonly encountered in practice

B2. How McTimoney manipulation can cause physiological and structural change

B3. The principles and applications of scientific enquiry, including the evaluation of treatment efficacy and the research process

B4. Recognise the role of other professions in the animal care industry

- Understand the theoretical basis of, and the variety of approaches to assessment and intervention

B5. Understand the need to establish and maintain a safe practice environment

- Be able to establish safe environments for assessment and treatment, which minimise risks to clients, practitioners and others
- Know and be able to apply appropriate moving and handling techniques

C - PRACTICAL COMPETENCES

The McTimoney Animal Practitioner should be able to undertake the following:

C1. Obtain an accurate and relevant history of the individual animal, and its environment

C2. Be able to select and use appropriate assessment techniques

C3. Be able to undertake or arrange investigations as appropriate

C4. Be able to analyse and critically evaluate the information collected

C5. Handle and restrain an animal safely and humanely, and instruct others in performing these techniques

C6. Perform a comprehensive static and dynamic assessment

C7. Advise on, and offer appropriate treatment

C8. Be able to use research, reasoning and problem-solving skills to determine appropriate actions

- Recognise the value of research to the critical evaluation of practice
- Be aware of a range of research methodologies
- Be able to demonstrate a logical and systematic approach to problem solving
- Be able to evaluate research and other evidence to inform their own practice
- Recognise the need to discuss, and be able to explain the rationale for the use of manipulative treatment

C9. Be able to draw on appropriate knowledge and skills in order to make professional judgements

- Be able to change their practice as needed to take account of new developments
- Be able to demonstrate a level of skill in the use of information technology appropriate to their practice

C10. Be able to maintain records appropriately

- Be able to keep accurate, legible records and recognise the need to handle these records and all other information in accordance with applicable legislation, protocols and guidelines
- Understand the need to use only accepted terminology in making records

C11. Be able to monitor and review the ongoing effectiveness of planned activity and modify it accordingly

- Be able to gather information, including qualitative and quantitative data that helps to evaluate the animal's response to treatment.
- Be able to evaluate intervention plans using recognised outcome measures and revise the plans as necessary in conjunction with the client
- Be able to make reasoned decisions to initiate, continue, modify or cease treatment or the use of techniques or procedures, and record the decisions and reasoning appropriately
- Be able to evaluate treatment plans to ensure that they meet the needs of the animal.