

Research Study on Trauma-Focused, Equine-Assisted Therapy (TF-EAT) for Veterans with Posttraumatic-Stress Disorder (PTSD)

*New York State Psychiatric Institute
1051 Riverside Drive / New York, NY 10032*

In collaboration with the Bergen Equestrian Center, staff at the New York State Psychiatric Institute are conducting a research study to explore the efficacy of Trauma-focused, Equine-assisted Therapy (TF-EAT) in treating veterans clinically diagnosed with PTSD. The planned research study will be carried out in two phases.

- In Phase 1, we will create a manual for the intervention, so that it can be delivered with fidelity. During this phase, we will include 8–12 veterans who will help us refine this investigational treatment.
- In Phase 2, we will use the manualized therapy to treat 24–36 veterans with PTSD.

Why Horses?

Horses are highly attuned prey animals, and, by nature, they are skittish or hypervigilant. Horses resemble humans in their behavior, particularly in social contexts. In equine-assisted therapy, the horse assumes the role of the “co-therapist” in providing a holistic experience for patients.

What Is the Treatment?

- This is a group treatment. Each group will comprise 4–6 veterans with PTSD.
- As currently planned, the treatment will be delivered in eight 90-minute weekly sessions.
- The treatment sessions will take place at the Bergen Equestrian Center in Leonia, NJ.

Who Is Eligible to Participate?

Veterans who are:

- Between the ages of 18 and 60
- Have a current DSM-5 diagnosis of PTSD (as determined by: diagnostic measures and clinical assessment)
- Are fluent in English

What Are Some of the Benefits of Participating?

All participating veterans will receive:

- A comprehensive psychiatric evaluation
- 8 weeks of equine-assisted therapy
- A referral to local providers or treatment centers, if desired

The treatment is provided at no cost and participants will be paid up to \$300 for research assessment visits.

When Will the Study Start?

We plan to begin the first treatment group in April 2016.

For further information, please contact Anne Hilburn (646-774-8042).