
Overview

This standard covers offering Reiki to animals.

Reiki, whether for people or animals, is a gentle and non-invasive hands-on or hands-off complementary and holistic energy therapy that can benefit the mind and body. It may help on a physical, mental or emotional level and may hence help with behavioural issues in animals. Reiki is known to be relaxing and to improve the feeling of well-being. Reiki translates as “universal life force energy” and its origins date back thousands of years, although the therapy as we know it today was developed by Mikao Usui in Japan in the early 1900s.

This standard details the expectations and requirements for the offering of Reiki to animals. Reiki is offered to animals, not given or provided, the animal is in charge and chooses whether or not to accept it

The standard will also require Reiki Practitioners to comply with the Reiki Council Code of Conduct and Ethics, to work within relevant policies and base their practice upon accurate and up-to-date information. This necessitates training at all levels to include in-person training or assessments.

Please also note:

- Reiki Practitioners must not only be trained to practitioner level to work with people but also specifically trained to work with animals at this level
- Their insurance cover must also include treatments to animals
- There is also a need to comply with general standards for animal care and animal complementary and natural/holistic complementary therapies, which includes this National Occupational Standard (NOS) and other relevant NOS listed in the Links to other NOS section of this document.

Performance criteria

You must be able to:

1. offer Reiki to the animal in line with relevant professional and legal requirements and in accordance with your teaching and subsequent learning, to meet the animal's needs
2. use safe practices as appropriate for the animal concerned and its requirements in order to minimise any risks to the animal, yourself and others
3. confirm that the location/environment where Reiki is offered is suitable, that you and the location are prepared appropriately and that you work in accordance with procedures required by the location
4. explain to the animal's owner or carer the process of Reiki and how it is offered to animals and encourage them to actively engage in discussions and decision making
5. confirm details of the animal's health, well-being, lifestyle, temperament, veterinary diagnoses, medication/treatment, and any other relevant information
6. approach, handle and work with the animal in a manner that is likely to gain their confidence, build trust and promote their co-operation, in order for you to offer Reiki effectively
7. allow the animal to choose its preferred distance from you unless you are segregated from the animal, in which case work from an appropriate distance
8. offer Reiki treatments in accordance with the plan agreed with the owner or carer
9. continually check the animal's well-being and response to the Reiki treatment and act accordingly, depending on the animal's response
10. adapt your treatment as you progress to meet the animal's needs and to address areas that you have identified require more attention
11. utilise different Reiki techniques where appropriate, especially for emotional and behavioural issues
12. propose offering Reiki to the owner or carer as appropriate, if the issue with the animal stems from the owner's or carer's behaviour
13. provide feedback from the session to the owner or carer in terms of

what the Reiki energy indicated and your observations of the animal's response to the session

14. assess the Reiki outcomes to determine its effectiveness and the most appropriate future actions and plans
15. request that the owner or carer provides feedback following the session and discuss any actions they might take that could benefit the animal
16. recognise when to cease the Reiki treatment, pause temporarily and/or give reassurance
17. produce records that comply with relevant professional, legal and organisational requirements
18. maintain standards of professional conduct and ethics and work within the limits of your own authority, expertise, training, competence and experience
19. reflect on your own performance and plan, record and evaluate your continuing professional development
20. maintain working relationships with colleagues, clients and other practitioners within your discipline as well as veterinary or other animal care professionals as required
21. comply with current legislation and associated codes of practice related to the healthcare and welfare of animals at all times

Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

1. Reiki theory at (human) practitioner level, including its history, development, principles, general use, the importance of self-treatments, and the practical benefits for the mind, body and spirit
2. your own/your teacher's lineage to Mikao Usui and the importance of receiving direct in-person attunements or initiations when training to become a Reiki Practitioner
3. the relationship between, and potential benefits of, using Reiki with orthodox veterinary medicine/care and other complementary therapies, as well as alone in appropriate circumstances
4. Reiki practice, including the offering of Reiki hands-on, hands-off and distantly, and which is best to use with different animals to achieve the most favourable response
5. how to gather information from the animal's owner or carer about the animal's current and past health conditions, veterinary diagnoses and treatments for physical, emotional, mental well-being and other issues, and why this is needed
6. under what circumstances you should consult with the animal's owner or carer to ensure a diagnosis is made by a veterinary surgeon prior to offering Reiki
7. the importance of explaining Reiki to the animal's owner or carer and gaining their understanding
8. the skeletal structure and the location and function of the main organs in the animals you will be offering Reiki to
9. key physical conditions that may arise in animals and how Reiki may support the animal's healthcare
10. how Reiki may help animals with behavioural issues that stem from emotional issues and how to utilise different techniques
11. how to recognise "red flag" symptoms where emergency veterinary assessment or treatment is necessary and an awareness of diseases that are notifiable
12. the possible outcomes following Reiki treatments

13. how to offer Reiki in a way that is tailored to the needs of each individual animal and circumstance, enabling the animal to choose whether, how and for how long it may wish to accept the Reiki
14. how to undertake your work in accordance with procedures at the location used for the Reiki treatment
15. situations when it may be appropriate to cease Reiki and how to discuss with the owner or carer
16. how to assess post-Reiki changes in the animal using your own observations and feelings as well as feedback from the owner or carer and use this to evaluate progress and determine the next steps
17. the relevant professional, legal and organisational requirements for producing and storing records for all consultations and treatments
18. your professional and ethical responsibilities, the limits of your authority, expertise, training, competence and experience and the need for appropriate insurance for working with people and animals
19. the role of Reiki professional organisations and associations
20. the requirements of current animal welfare legislation and the restrictions of the Veterinary Surgeons Act on diagnosing and treating animals

Glossary

An animal's history includes its:

- Life experiences
- Medical health and diagnoses
- Emotional health
- Psychological or mental health
- Behavioural problems
- Previous experience of the respective complementary holistic/natural discipline

It may be appropriate to cease Reiki when a practitioner:

- doesn't feel Reiki is appropriate
- doesn't feel they wish to conduct a Reiki session
- doesn't feel they have adequate experience (for the situation or the respective animal)
- believes that Reiki may help a little but the issue really requires more specialist help eg. an animal behaviourist or trainer
- believes that urgent medical care is required
- believes that a veterinary referral is necessary

Red flag symptoms – conditions requiring immediate medical attention

Reiki can be tailored depending on the animal's:

- size
- location
- temperament
- condition
- other "case specific" aspects

The possible outcomes following Reiki include:

- a wide range of healing responses
- improved well-being or feelings of well-being (including comfort)
- halting of further deterioration, achieving a state of maintenance and stability
- the possible need for a veterinary surgeon's review in relation to the current medication or treatment

Current animal health and welfare legislation:

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- England and Wales, Animal Welfare Act
- Scotland, Animal Health and Welfare Act
- Northern Ireland, Welfare of Animals Act

Veterinary Surgeons Act (1966):

It is illegal under the Veterinary Surgeons Act for non-veterinary surgeons to practise veterinary surgery.

The Act defines Veterinary Surgery as:

- the diagnosis of diseases in, and injuries to, animals, including tests performed on animals for diagnostic purposes;
- the giving of advice based upon such diagnosis;
- the medical or surgical treatment of animals;
- and the performance of surgical operations on animals.

Links to other NOS

LANACT1 Assess and define an animal's need for complementary and natural/holistic healthcare

LANACT2 Develop and agree plans for complementary and natural/holistic healthcare for an animal

LANAnC10 Observe and be aware of the behaviour of animals

LANAnC15 Handle and restrain animals

LANCS68 Work within professional, legislative and regulatory requirements for animal health and welfare

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