

# Effectiveness of Equine-Assisted Activities for Individuals With Mild to Moderate Dementia



Charmaine Lim, OTD/S

Faculty Mentor: Manisha Sheth, MSOT, OTD, OTR/L

Site Mentors: Donna Hyde, PATH Certified Instructor, & Martha Gibson, OTR



## INTRODUCTION

- In 2030, 80 million people are projected to develop some form of dementia worldwide (World Health Organization [WHO], 2019)
- Deterioration in memory, decision-making, and executive functioning are commonly associated with dementia
- When brain functions begin to decline, people commonly experience decreased quality of life

## SITE DESCRIPTION

### Mission

"improve the lives of the people with disabilities through therapeutic horse-related programs" (NDR Therapeutic Riding, 2019)

- A non-profit organization located in Norco, California
- Specializes in riding services to help people with various disabilities

## LITERATURE REVIEW

- Enhancement in **socialization** because of the natural tendency of animals to create a bond with people (Munoz et al., 2011)
- Laughed** and interacted through touching significantly more (Pope et al., 2019)
- Improved **active participation** in leisure activity and daily activities (Wehofer et al., 2013)

## IDENTIFIED NEEDS

- Program Expansion
- Evidence for Equine-Assisted Activities
- Increase Funding



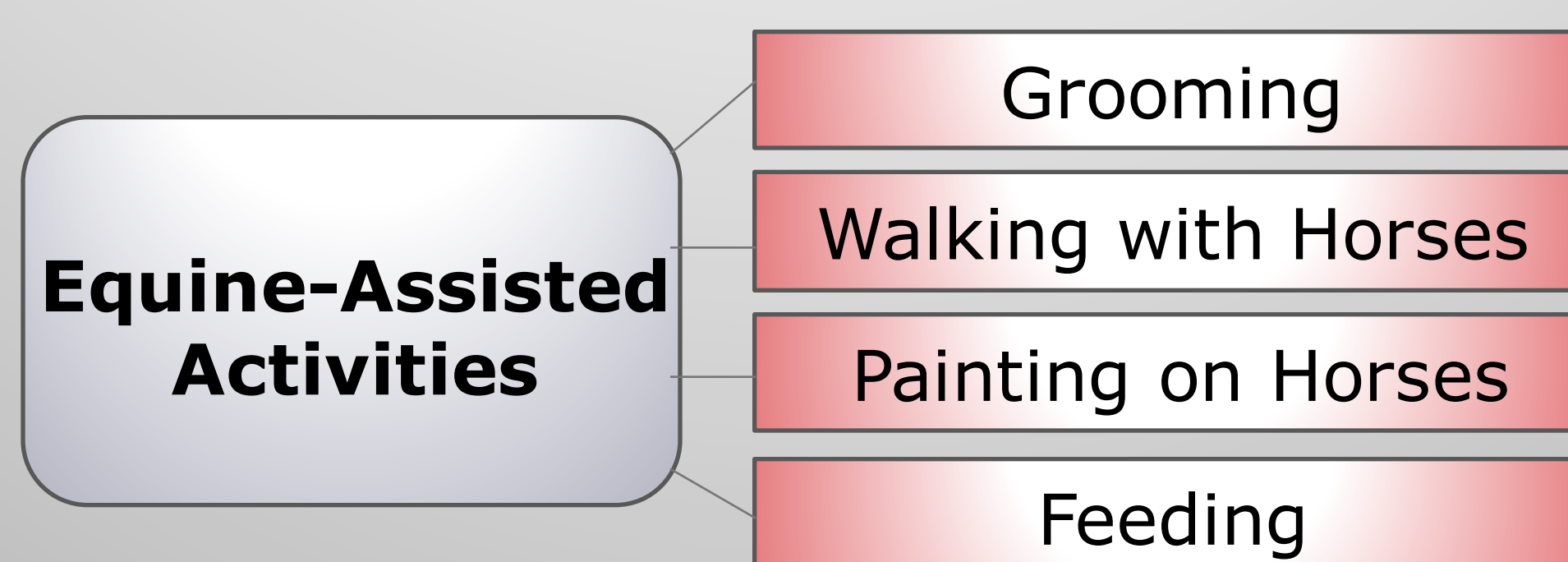
## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Implement an evidence-based research to evaluate the effectiveness of equine-assisted activities for target population
- Proficiently advocate for the benefits of equine-assisted activities to collegiate team
- Demonstrate advanced knowledge on equine-assisted activities, and its impact on quality of life and relational skills

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

### Horses in the Moment

- Nine-week program of equine-assisted activities for people with mild to moderate dementia
  - 30-min. sessions, 2x/week



## METHODOLOGY

### Recruitment

#### Inclusion Criteria

- Ages 65-85
- Ambulatory
- Verbal
- Diagnosis of Mild to Moderate Dementia
- No Other Comorbidities

### Project

- Program Development
- Mixed-Methods Study
- Quantitative and Qualitative Data Analysis

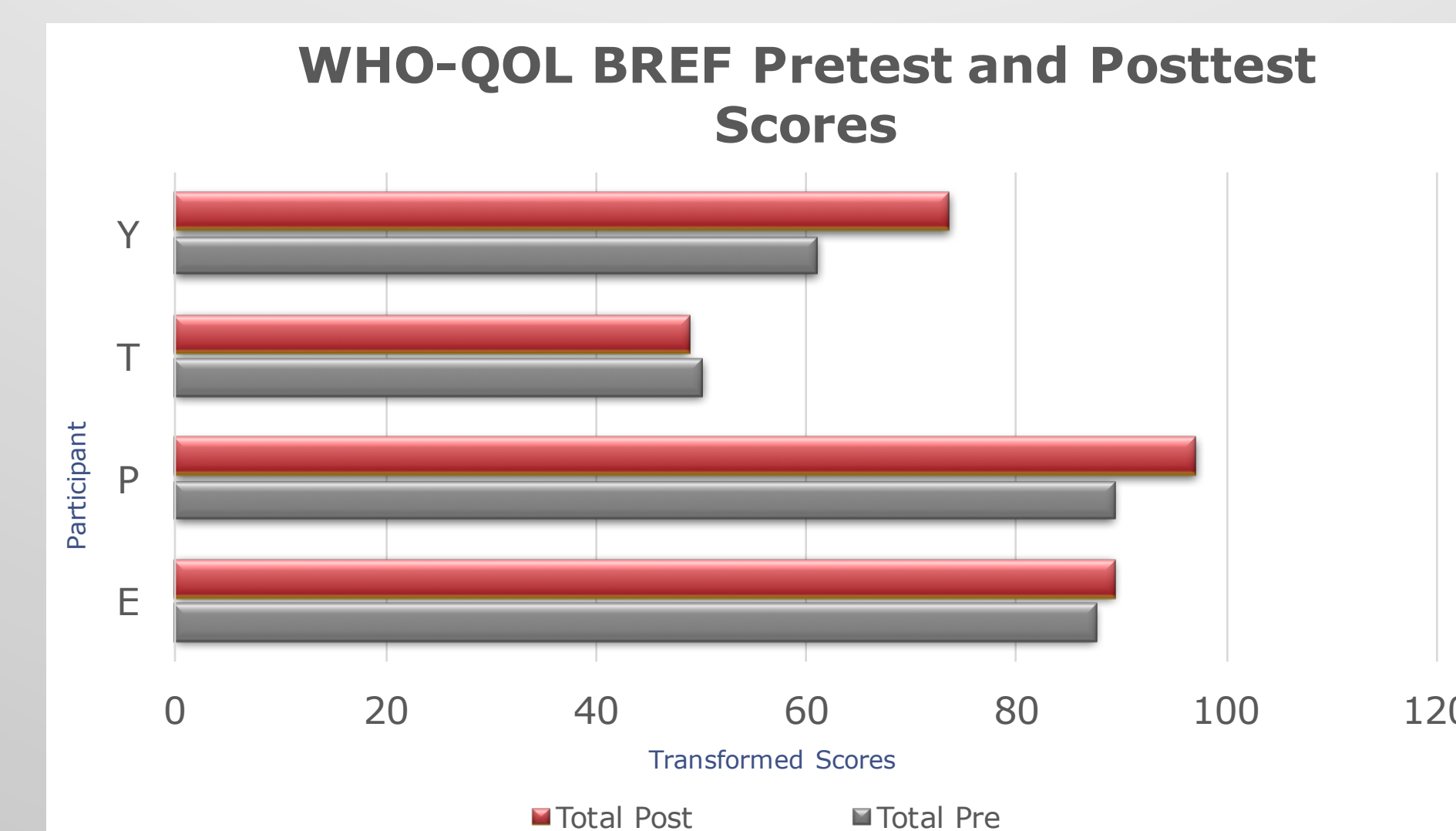
### Evaluation

#### Four Participants

- WHO-QOL BREF
- Open-Ended Survey
- Feedback Forms

## OUTCOMES

- Quantitative data analysis using JASP
  - Total scores increased significantly from the pre-measure (**mean=71.94**) to the post-measure (**mean=77.13**) using a Paired Samples T-test



- Qualitative data were coded for emerging themes

### Outcomes from Caregivers

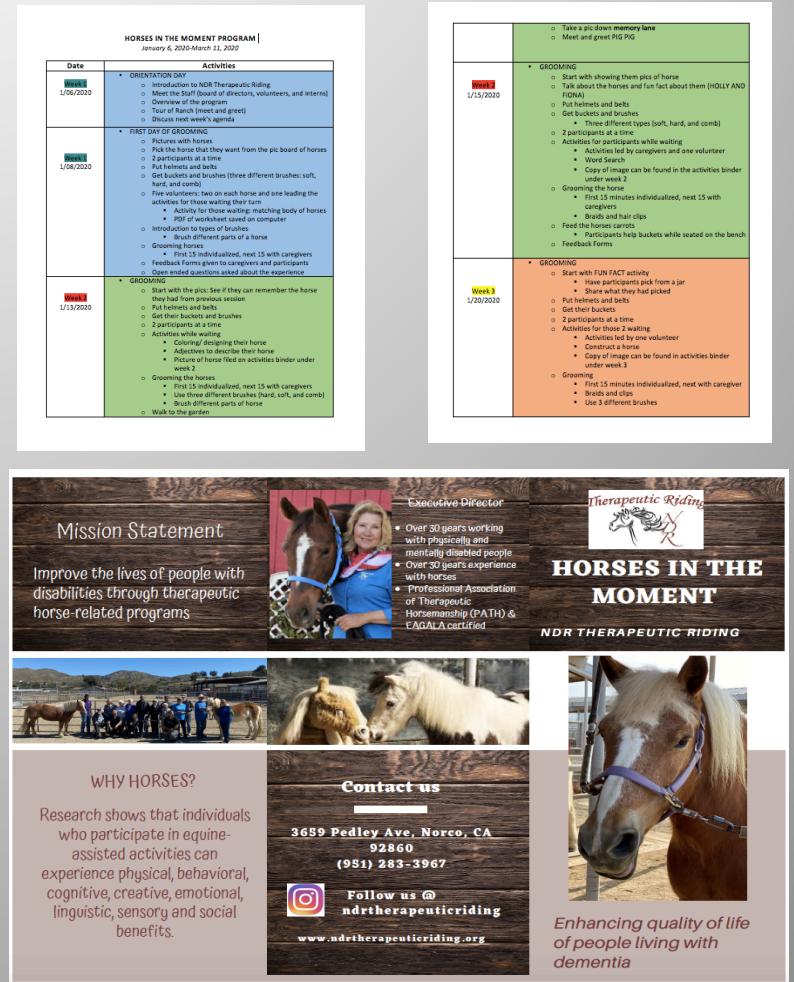
- Improvement in socialization
- Increase recall memory and attention
- Improvement in communication
- Increase in laughter

### Outcomes from Participants

- Increase relaxation
- Improvements in relationship
- Facilitated simplicity of life
- Facilitated feelings of empowerment

## DELIVERABLES

- Brochure
- Program Outline
- PowerPoint Presentation
- Activities Compiled in Physical Binder



## IMPLICATIONS

- Equine-assisted activities can potentially be used as a media to intervention and a form of social participation
- Horses in the Moment advocated for occupational therapy in a non-traditional setting

## FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- Future students can explore the impact of equine-assisted activities in **memory** and **attention**



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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REFERENCES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST