**The impact of Animal-Assisted Interventions on dog welfare: A Systematic Literature Review**

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Dogs are currently used in several different types of animal-assisted interventions (AAIs), for example, as adjuncts to human therapy or to enhance quality of life of patients or residents, including: during postoperative awakening in pediatric surgery wards; and in adult mental healthcare, such as in-patient substance abuse therapy sessions. Yet empirical research on the effects of such experiences on dog welfare remains limited. This poster summarizes results from a systematic literature review examining the impact of AAI on dog welfare. Review methods adhered to the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines. Five databases (PubMed, Web of Science, Scopus, Taylor & Francis Online and ProQuest Dissertations & Theses) were searched. To qualify for inclusion studies must have involved a canine based animal intervention programme, the programme must have been visitation and not residential based and the study methods must have included an objective measure of animal welfare. While there was an extensive amount of literature on AAI visitation programmes, a relatively low number of studies reported dog welfare measures. Although evidence is limited by several methodological weaknesses, from the available literature it appears participation on AAI programmes has the potential to negatively impact on a dog’s physical and mental welfare. However, included studies reported on highly varying types of interventions, restricting the ability for conclusions on any specific type or design of AAI programmes. Further rigorous research is essential to identify short and long-term welfare risks of dog participation and to evaluate the effectiveness of strategies of reducing any negative effects. Ultimately, this is needed to support the development of evidence-based best practice.

This research is currently being written up for peer review publication.