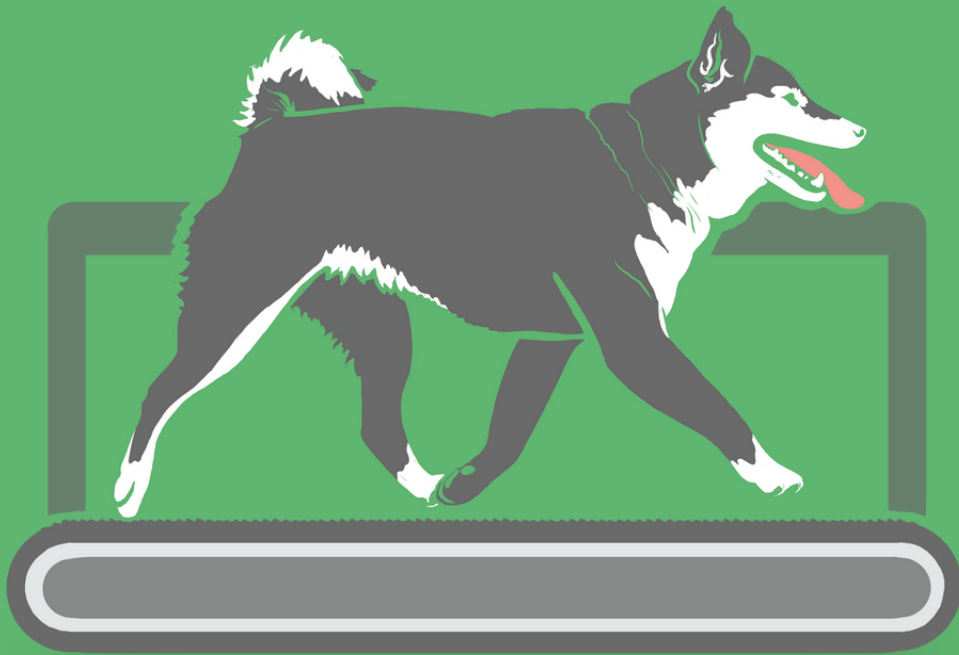




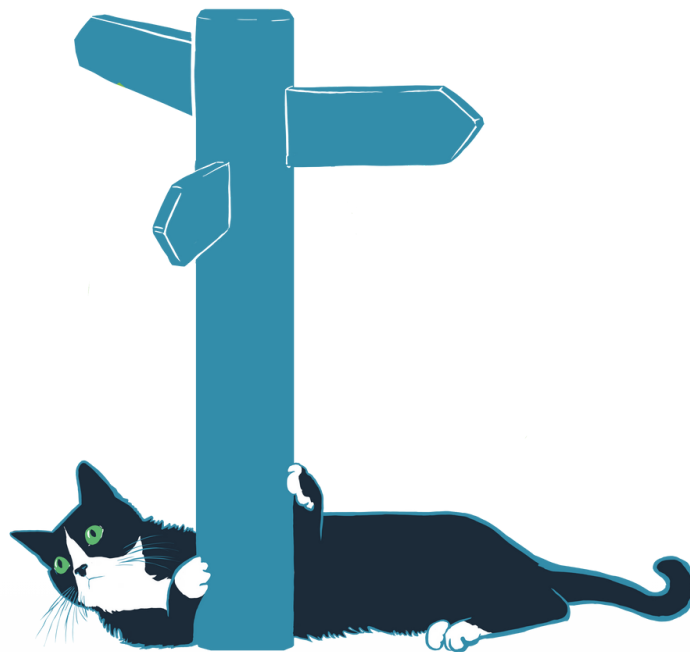
**hamilton**  
SPECIALIST REFERRALS

A mini guide to:  
**Choosing a Veterinary  
Physiotherapist**



# Overview: What is a physiotherapist?

If your vet recommends that your pet undergo physiotherapy, the process of choosing a veterinary physiotherapist can be quite challenging.



The term **veterinary physiotherapist (VP)** is not a protected title. This means that - unlike human physiotherapy, where chartered physiotherapist is a title protected by law - there are no laws preventing anyone from calling themselves a **VP**.

# What to look for: Referral process

The veterinary surgeon is the person responsible for an animal's treatment, therefore, anyone wishing to see a **VP** must be referred by their vet. A reputable **VP** will be familiar with the process below:



Owner or vet wishes pet to receive physiotherapy



Owner finds a suitable therapist



Therapist sends referral form to vet



Vet provides pet's history and signs the form indicating required treatment



Therapist is now legally able to treat animal and liaise with the owner to book first appointment

# What to look for: Qualifications

Most well-qualified **VPs** will be more than happy to discuss their education, including where they studied, what level their **qualification** is, and which **governing body** they're registered with.

Those that have completed a recognised course will have:



**BSc**



**MSc**



**PgDip**

**VPs** will often be a member of a **governing body**, some are purely animal based, others are for both animals and humans. Therapists will commonly be members of more than one register, these include:



**RAMP**



**AHPR**



**IAAT**



**NAVVP**



**APCAT**



**IRVAP**

All registrants of these **governing bodies** will require **liability insurance** in order to join and maintain their membership and to hold the required **qualifications**.

Always ask any potential **VP** about their insurance before committing to a first appointment.

# What to look for: Facilities

Facilities should look clean and dry, flooring should be non-slip and clean and there should be facilities for **biosecurity** in place (cleaning down between patients). All equipment used should look to be in good working order and well maintained. For **VPs** who are mobile and come to you, their treatment mats and equipment should be clean and well maintained.

**Laser** - used for wound healing, and helping to resolve muscular trigger points

**Neuromuscular electrical stimulation** - Used to help stimulate nerves and build/maintain muscle mass

**Pulsed Electromagnetic Energy Therapy (PEME)** - used for helping speed resolution of inflammatory processes, helps with bone healing, neurological deficits, pain management effect

**Dry Treadmill** - used for reintroduction of more intense activity, helps with gait re-education, and strength

**Underwater treadmill** – Used early in recovery to help with range of motion, swelling control, gait patterning, and initial strengthening

**Pool** – Used late in recovery, can be used for range of motion, non-weight bearing activity, and fitness

**Exercise equipment such foam, wobble cushion, poles, peanut balls, platforms, paw pods, targets, bosus, ramps, steps etc**

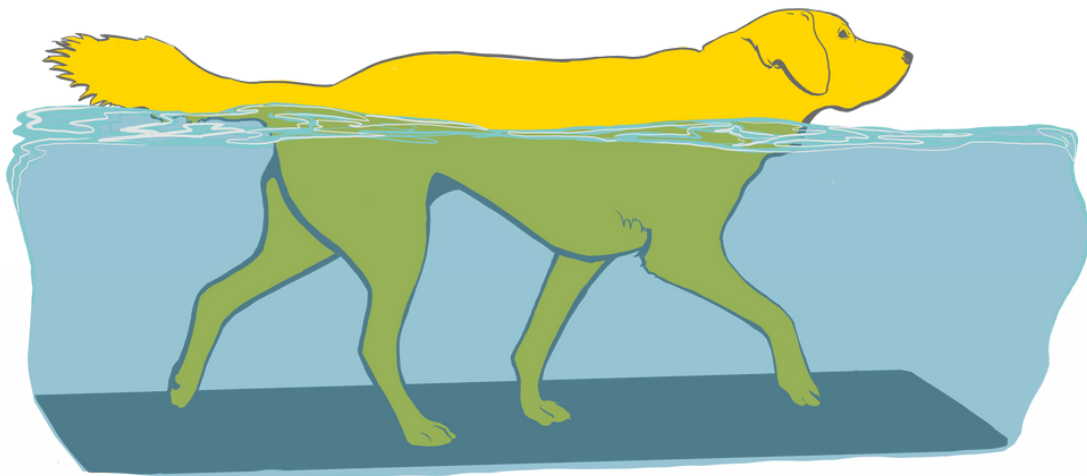
These provide a massive range of possibilities to help with range of motion, balance, proprioception, strengthening, core work and gait patterning

# What to look for: Hydrotherapy

## Hydrotherapists should also be qualified and insured

**Governing bodies** ensure that all **insurance** and **qualifications** are in place for therapists.

They will also ensure water quality tests for hydrotherapy are completed and that first aid certificates are in place and renewed regularly.



**Governing Bodies** to look out for:



CHA



NARCH