



## **ANIMAL REHABILITATION ASSOCIATION OF CANADA**

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### **DIPLOMA IN CANINE REHABILITATION (Dipl. Canine Rehab)**

#### **REQUIREMENTS**

##### ***Course Work***

Candidates will be required to take both the introductory and advanced canine rehabilitation courses. The prerequisite for both courses is a license to practice physical therapy in their province (or equivalent). The Independent Learning Course: 'Introduction to the Canine Patient' has been created as an additional prerequisite and pre-reading material for the Introduction to Canine Rehab Course. The Animal Rehabilitation Association of Canada courses are designed to augment PT knowledge and constitute 100 hours of course work (plus 100 hours of self-directed study). A description of the courses is found below:

##### ***Introduction to the Canine Patient***

This course is required prior to engaging in the Canine Rehab series of courses. Course content includes an introduction to dogs, anatomy, orthopaedic and neurologic conditions of the dog, gait patterns in the dog, occupation health considerations, common canine medications and nutraceuticals, legal, political and practice issues.

##### ***Introduction to Canine Rehabilitation***

This is a three-day course that introduces physiotherapists to the field of small animal rehabilitation - focusing on the canine. Instruction will include the topics of comparative anatomy, canine behavior, handling skills, and identification and treatment of many

common musculoskeletal and neurological problems. This course will be both lecture and practical. Upon completion of the program, the participant will be able to recognize gait abnormalities, recognize conditions within their scope of physiotherapy skills, have an ability to execute a rudimentary physical examination, gain an appreciation of key anatomical / musculoskeletal / biomechanical differences between the human and the animal, gain an enhancement of problem solving skills in regards to treatment planning for the canine patient, and have a comprehension of the legal, political, and ethical considerations pertaining to the practice of animal rehabilitation in Canada.

### ***Advanced Canine Rehabilitation***

This evidence-based four-day practical course is intended to build upon the information presented in the Introductory Canine Rehabilitation Course. Topics included in this course are musculoskeletal joint by joint physical assessment and physical therapy diagnostics (including all peripheral joints, as well as the temporomandibular joint, spine and pelvis). Advanced manual therapy techniques (i.e. joint and spinal mobilizations) are

covered. Additionally students are instructed in neurological evaluations. A surgical lecture is also included in this course to provide students with an understanding of surgical interventions for common orthopaedic and neurologic conditions. Further information is presented regarding canine-specific therapeutic exercise, research-based application of modalities to the animal patient, neurologic rehabilitation, canine conformation as it relates to biomechanics, function and sporting dog injuries. Business and marketing perspectives are also presented.

### ***Examination***

Upon completion of the course work above candidates will be eligible to take the examination pertaining to those courses. The take-home exam is based on the Introductory course and the Advanced course (2003 version and later). Those students that took the advanced course prior to this time may challenge the examination. A passing grade of 85% must be achieved.

### ***Case Study***

All candidates must submit a case study (an example will be provided) that follows a case

through from referral to discharge. It will be two parts, the first based on the veterinary information provided and/or surgical report and referral and the second will be the rehabilitation portion. Cases will be graded on sound rationale for treatment choices, use

of outcome measures, timely communication with the referring veterinarian and professional appearance of the report.

### ***Veterinary Clinic Observation***

All candidates will be required to complete 40 hours (5 days) of veterinary clinical experience. This is intended to give the candidate an appreciation for the veterinary side

of animal health care and provide an opportunity to gain animal experience and see many

different conditions and diagnostic procedures. Candidates will provide the Animal Rehabilitation Association of Canada with information on which veterinarian / veterinary clinic they will be completing this experience with and the Division will provide the appropriate forms for the veterinary clinic to fill in and sign off on. Past experience will be accepted, but must be verified and signed off on.

### ***Animal Husbandry and Handling Skills***

Perhaps most important to successful entry into canine rehabilitation for the physical therapist is the possession of good animal husbandry and handling skills. This category requires the candidate to be 'checked off' on a list of skills. Persons qualified to witness and check off the candidate are veterinarians, veterinary technicians, dog trainers or practicing canine rehabilitation practitioners (PTs) with 4 or more years of animal experience. The persons checking off the skills must be someone other than the candidate him/herself! The dogs used to test the candidate must be other than the candidate's own animal(s). Each skill must be signed and dated and the candidate must provide a contact phone number or e-mail for the Animal Rehabilitation Association of Canada to be able to verify authenticity if needed. The Association will provide the necessary forms to be checked-off.

The following skills will need to be demonstrated and witnessed:

- Demonstrate knowledge of and ability to give 'sit' and 'down' commands
- Demonstrate the ability to lead 5 dogs who are not one's own (not all at the same time!)
- Identify the presence of a hind limb lameness or gait abnormality
- Identify the presence of a forelimb lameness or gait abnormality
- Body condition score 5 different animals based on the Purina body scoring system
- Demonstrate an ability to lie a dog on its side (5 different animals)
- Demonstrate an ability to restrain and calm an overactive dog
- Demonstrate an ability to muzzle a dog
- Demonstrate an ability to perform full range of motion of the forelimbs and hind limbs in both lying and standing positions.
- Evaluate dental health, nail length and overall grooming in 5 different animals

### ***Safety Issues***

All candidates must provide a short written assignment that answers the following questions. Please use references to justify your answers. A combination of literature and/or personal communications is acceptable. (Answers are worth 3 marks per question)

1. What are common signs of aggression and warning signals displayed by dogs?
2. How would you deal with an aggressive dog?
3. What are some common triggers for aggressive behaviour?
4. How would you handle a dog in excessive pain?
5. What are some calming signals used by dogs when stressed?

To help complete this assignment or for future reference, the Animal Rehabilitation Association of Canada recommends the following resources:

Aloff, Brenda. (2005) Canine Body Language A Photographic Guide. Dogwise publishing ([www.dogwise.com](http://www.dogwise.com)), ISBN 1-929242-35-2

Beaver, Bonnie. (1999) Canine Behaviour: A Guide for Veterinarians. W.B. Saunders Co. ([www.elsevier.com](http://www.elsevier.com)), ISBN 0-7216-5965-9

Fogle, Bruce. (1990) The Dog's Mind Understanding Your Dog's Behaviour. Howell Book House, New York or Maxwell Macmillan, Canada, Toronto.

Rugas, Turid. (2000) (Video) Calming Signals: What Your Dog Tells You, or (Book) On Talking Terms With Dogs. ([www.hanaleipets.com](http://www.hanaleipets.com) or [www.dogwise.com](http://www.dogwise.com))

### **Expectations and Assumptions**

The process to complete the requirements for the Diploma in Canine Rehabilitation is estimated to take 200 hours inclusive. Completion of the necessary course work, veterinary observation experience, written examination, case-study treatment and write up, animal husbandry and handling requirements, and behavioral short answer questions

must be completed within 3 years from the time of taking the Introduction to Canine Rehabilitation Therapy course. A fee of \$400 + GST/HST must be submitted along with all of the required documents.