

**Presenter's name:** Anna-Kata Ferentz

**Degree, affiliation:** psychologist, Kaposi Mór Hospital in Somogy County

**Curriculum vitae:**

Ferentz Anna-Kata has been training horses and teaching horse riding for over a decade. She got her MA degree in psychology in 2020. She then was an equine assisted psychotherapy intern in California and Hungary. Since then, she has been working with groups and individuals using the tools of animal assisted psychotherapy, at Kapcsolat Horse Assisted Therapy and Training Center and BarangoLó Farm, Hungary. In January of 2024, she started working at Kaposi Mór Hospital in Somogy County, where she is now co-facilitating horse assisted therapy groups for adolescents, as well as for the residents of the hospital's new dual diagnosis rehab center.

**Category:** Oral presentation

**Topic:** Special Program / projects

**Authors:**

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**Title:** COMPLEX ANIMAL ASSISTED PROGRAM AT THE PSYCHIATRIC AND ADDICTION CENTER OF KAPOSI MÓR HOSPITAL

**Keyword 1:** animal assisted therapy

**Keyword 2:** group setting

**Keyword 3:** a variety of diagnoses

**Abstract:**

At the Psychiatric and Addiction Center of Kaposi Mór Hospital, in Somogy county, a unique animal assisted program started in September of 2023, being the first of its kind in our country. The program makes the benefits of animal assisted interventions accessible to children and adults of all ages, with a broad spectrum of diagnoses. With the inclusion of several species of animals (such as horses, dogs, rabbits or reptiles), the program is available to the patients at the hospital's in- and outpatient departments, as well as to the clients of the new rehabilitation

unit. Within the framework of the program, elementary school kids with anxiety get the chance to take part in bunny assisted fairy tale therapy, middle school children with behaviour challenges can join art therapy groups with the assistance of different companions (snail, hedgehog, turtle), while adolescents facing social challenges can choose between horse and dog assisted relationship focused psychotherapy groups. What's more, children with learning disabilities can benefit from individual sessions of therapeutic riding and vaulting. Furthermore, at the hospital's addiction center, patients can now take part in weekly horse and dog assisted group therapy sessions. And at our new dual diagnosis rehab unit, animals are an integral part of the residents' recovery journey. All in all, thanks to this unique program, about 80 people are benefiting from animal assisted therapy at the same time, in 7 differently themed groups. Every element is carried out by trained professionals: childrens' and adults' clinical psychologists, special education teachers, horse assisted therapists in the fields of psychology and therapeutic riding and vaulting, and dog assisted therapists. We are continuously monitoring the program, and therefore hope that in the future, the results of our work can contribute to a better understanding of the effects of animal assisted therapies.