

# AAT at LTP

↓ ANIMAL-ASSISTED THERAPY ↓

The inclusion of Animal-Assisted Therapy (AAT) in the Life Transformation Program is critical to our efforts to improve homeless SUD recovery participation, as well as improving successful program outcomes.

AAT has been consistently proven to increase the positive interpersonal relationship between a patient and therapist, and also lower patient anxiety and program discomfort.

Differences in patient-reported therapeutic alliance (as measured by the HAQ-II) for patients who completed sessions with a therapy animal (experimental group) and without a therapy animal (control group)

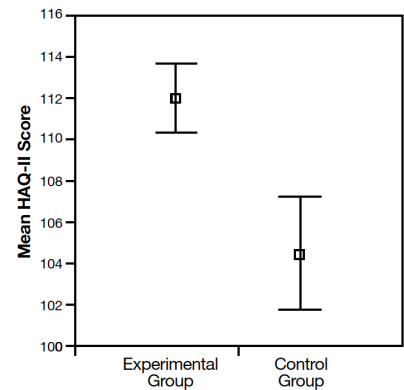


Figure 1. Mean HAQ-II total scores for the AAT experimental group ( $n = 135$ ) and the control group ( $n = 96$ ). Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

Source: Wesley, Minatrea, & Watson (2009).

Interacting with animals has been shown to decrease levels of cortisol (a stress-related hormone) and lower blood pressure. Other studies have found that animals can reduce loneliness, increase feelings of social support, and boost your mood.



When you are responsible for caring for animals, a routine is created around them. This is beneficial for individuals to maintain a sense of purpose and provides self-confidence through completing daily tasks.

# Benefits of Animal Companion Therapy for Substance Use Disorders

