ISNHCP Scope of Practice

1. Purpose and Scope

1.1 Purpose

1.1.1 The purpose of this document is to establish the scope and limitations of professional practice undertaken by practitioners qualified through Integrated Studies for Natural Hoof Care Practitioners Ltd (ISNHCP).

1.1.2 This Scope of Practice defines the professional activities, responsibilities and boundaries associated with the application of the Natural Trim method and Natural Horse Care.

1.2 Application

1.2.1 This Standard applies to ISNHCP-qualified practitioners undertaking Natural Hoof Care services in professional capacity and, where applicable, other activities within this scope of practice.

1.2.2 Practitioners shall operate within the limits of their qualifications, demonstrated competence, professional experience and applicable legislation.

1.2.3 This Standard shall be read alongside the ISNHCP Training and Qualification Standard, Membership Rules and Code of Conduct.

2. Foundation of Professional Practice

2.1 The Wild Horse Model

2.1.1 ISNHCP professional practice is founded upon Jaime Jackson's U.S. Great Basin Wild Horse Model, as established in the ISNHCP Training and Qualification Standard.

2.1.2 The Wild Horse Model provides the frame of reference for Natural Horse Care, including the relationship between equine adaptation, natural lifestyle and habitat conditions, and natural hoof growth patterns.

2.1.3 Practitioners shall apply the principles of Natural Horse Care consistently with the research and findings underpinning the Wild Horse Model, recognising the influence of domestic, non-adaptive environments on equine health and hoof condition.

2.2 Application of Natural Horse Care

2.2.1 Professional practice shall be informed by the Four Pillars of Natural Horse Care, recognising their interdependent relationship and their relevance to the management and care of domestic horses.

2.2.2 The Natural Trim method shall be applied in accordance with its established Four Guiding Principles and the approved ISNHCP Natural Trim trimming guidelines.

2.2.3 Practitioners shall not knowingly misrepresent, substitute or modify the fundamental principles of the Wild Horse Model or the Natural Trim method while presenting their work as ISNHCP sourced and associated.

3. Scope of Natural Hoof Care Practice under Full ISNHCP Membership

3.1 Permitted Professional Activities

3.1.1 Subject to their qualifications and competence, ISNHCP-qualified practitioners may undertake professional Natural Hoof Care services involving:

a. Observation and evaluation of hoof form, growth patterns, wear and function.

b. Application of the Natural Trim method in accordance with its prescribed principles and guidelines.

c. Routine barefoot hoof maintenance and management.

d. Monitoring hoof development and changes over time.

e. Providing guidance on environmental and management factors relevant to Natural Horse Care.

f. Maintaining appropriate professional records and communicating findings and recommendations to horse owners or those responsible for their care.

3.1.2 Practitioners shall exercise professional judgement in determining whether a horse can be safely and appropriately managed within their competence and scope of practice.

3.2 Scope of Professional Services

3.2.1 ISNHCP-qualified practitioners may provide a broad range of professional services, including consultation, education, practical care, rehabilitation and other activities associated with Natural Horse Care.

3.2.2 The nature and extent of these services may evolve in response to professional experience, developments in knowledge, emerging areas of practice and the needs of horses and their owners.

3.2.3 Practitioners shall exercise professional judgement in determining the services they offer, taking account of their individual competence, the principles of Natural Horse Care and applicable legal requirements.

3.2.4 The teaching of the Natural Trim method is excluded from the general scope of professional services authorised under this Standard. Practitioners wishing to teach the Natural Trim method under ISNHCP shall apply for admission to the ISNHCP Instructor Training Programme and obtain the required teaching authorisation.

3.2.5 ISNHCP-qualified practitioners shall not provide instruction or practical training to horse owners or other individuals in the trimming, or maintenance of equine hooves, including between scheduled professional hoof care visits. Practitioners shall not encourage or promote owner-performed hoof trimming or maintenance as an alternative or supplement to professional hoof care.

3.2.6 This restriction applies to formal and informal instruction, demonstrations and supervised practice, whether provided to clients or other individuals, and whether offered commercially or without charge.

4. Qualifications and Competency Boundaries

4.1 Foundation Qualification

4.1.1 Practitioners holding the Natural Trim Foundation qualification may undertake professional Natural Hoof Care activities within the competencies established by the Foundation Programme and demonstrated through its assessments.

4.1.2 Practitioners shall not undertake advanced professional activities beyond their qualifications, training and demonstrated competence. They shall accurately represent their professional capabilities and shall not claim, imply or publicly present themselves as possessing specialist knowledge, expertise or qualifications that have not been formally recognised by ISNHCP. Practitioners shall not misrepresent their own professional standing or the authority and endorsement of ISNHCP.

4.2 Advanced Qualification

4.2.1 Practitioners holding the Natural Trim Advanced qualification may undertake more complex Natural Hoof Care work within the competencies established by the Advanced Programme.

4.2.2 Advanced qualification does not remove the obligation to recognise individual competency limits or confer authority to undertake veterinary diagnosis, treatment or other regulated activities.

4.3 Individual Professional Competence

4.3.1 Practitioners remain personally responsible for evaluating their competence in relation to each horse, the circumstances presented and the work proposed.

4.3.2 Where a case exceeds the practitioner's competence, they shall seek appropriate professional assistance, refer the case or decline to undertake the work.

5. Veterinary and Legal Boundaries

5.1 Veterinary Responsibilities

5.1.1 An ISNHCP qualification does not confer the status, authority or statutory privileges of a veterinary surgeon.

5.1.2 Practitioners shall not represent themselves as qualified to diagnose or treat veterinary medical conditions unless separately authorised to do so under applicable legislation.

5.1.3 The recognition of abnormal hoof conditions or signs of disease or injury does not constitute authority to undertake veterinary diagnosis or treatment.

5.2 Veterinary Referral and Collaboration

5.2.1 Where a horse presents signs of injury, disease, significant pain or other circumstances requiring veterinary assessment, practitioners shall recommend appropriate veterinary involvement where and as appropriate.

5.2.2 Practitioners may work collaboratively with veterinary surgeons and other equine professionals, provided that their activities remain within their lawful scope of practice and professional competence.

5.2.3 Practitioners shall not allow client requests or professional disagreements to justify undertaking work beyond their lawful authority or demonstrated competence.

5.3 Compliance with Legislation

5.3.1 Practitioners are responsible for complying with the legislation and regulatory requirements applicable to their activities and the jurisdiction in which they practise.

5.3.2 Nothing in this Scope of Practice shall be interpreted as authorising an activity restricted or prohibited by applicable law.

6. Humane Handling and Equine Welfare

6.1 Welfare Responsibilities

6.1.1 Practitioners shall exercise sound judgement when undertaking hoof care procedures, taking into consideration the horse's physical condition, behaviour, welfare and the circumstances in which the work is performed.

6.1.2 Practitioners shall recognise and respond appropriately to signs of fear, pain, distress, fatigue or an inability to cooperate safely.

6.1.3 Practitioners shall not continue a procedure where doing so would create an unreasonable risk of injury to themselves or others, or compromise the horse's welfare.

6.2 Humane Handling of Horses

6.2.1 Professional hoof care shall be undertaken in accordance with the principles of humane horsemanship, recognising the importance of trust, cooperation and respect for the horse.

6.2.2 Practitioners shall employ handling practices appropriate to the individual horse and shall not rely upon force, intimidation or inappropriate restraint to complete hoof care procedures.

7. Professional Responsibilities and Limitations

7.1 Professional Judgement

7.1.1 Practitioners shall exercise independent professional judgement while remaining accountable for the services they undertake.

7.1.2 Practitioners shall explain the nature and limitations of their services and obtain appropriate consent where appropriate before undertaking Advanced hoof care.

7.1.3 Practitioners shall not guarantee specific rehabilitation outcomes or make representations unsupported by their professional knowledge and the circumstances of the individual horse.

7.2 Professional Representation

7.2.1 Practitioners shall accurately represent their qualifications, competencies and current ISNHCP membership status.

7.2.2 The award of an ISNHCP professional qualification does not independently confer authority to teach, assess or certify students on behalf of ISNHCP.

7.2.3 Independent instruction in the Natural Trim method, including practical hoof trimming instruction, is subject to the teaching authorisation requirements established by ISNHCP.

7.3 Professional Accountability

7.3.1 Practitioners shall maintain appropriate records of their professional services and communicate relevant observations, limitations and recommendations to the horse owner or responsible person.

7.3.2 Practitioners shall maintain appropriate professional indemnity and public liability insurance where required by applicable ISNHCP rules or legislation.

7.3.3 Practitioners shall comply with the applicable ISNHCP Codes of Ethics and Conduct and other requirements governing professional practice.

8. Compliance and Review

8.1 Compliance

8.1.1 Compliance with this Scope of Practice is a requirement of professional standing under the applicable ISNHCP Membership Rules.

8.1.2 Alleged breaches of this Standard may be considered in accordance with the applicable ISNHCP complaints and disciplinary procedures.

8.2 Review and Amendments

8.2.1 ISNHCP reserves the right to review and amend this Scope of Practice to maintain consistency with its educational standards, professional requirements and applicable legislation.

8.2.2 Amendments shall be communicated through appropriate official channels and shall take effect in accordance with the applicable ISNHCP governance procedures.