

A vision for safer equine transportation

Dr Emma Punt

Equine and Canine Sports Chiropractor

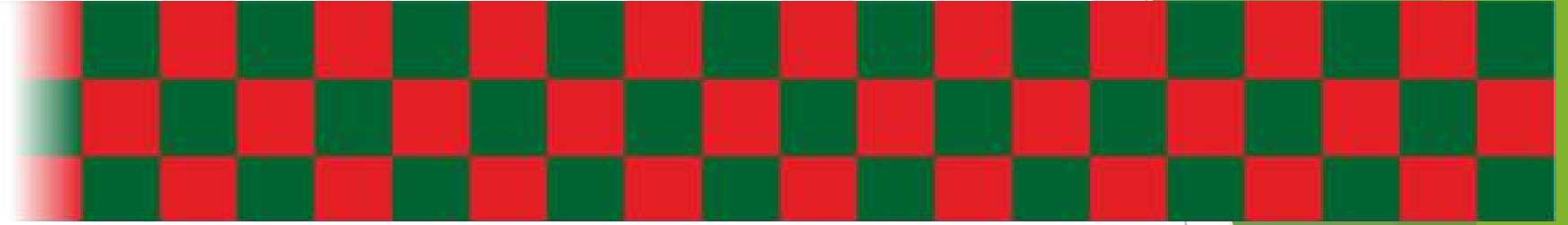
Research Lead for BARTA



BARTA's mission:

Advice, direction and training in fire and rescue situations
safeguard public and emergency responders
improve the welfare and viability of animals in emergency situations...





Our vision for safer equine transportation

Two key pillars to deliver safer equine transportation:

1. Decrease the number and severity of incidents/accidents taking place
 - ▶ Prevent accidents through evidence-based education/training and advice
 - ▶ Make recommendations e.g. for safer vehicle design
2. Post-trauma care to improve outcomes for horses (and owners)
 - ▶ Assessing viability and hidden injuries **AFTER** the accident
 - ▶ Follow-up care to return the horse to work

Detailed UK-wide Survey



Welfare Sector



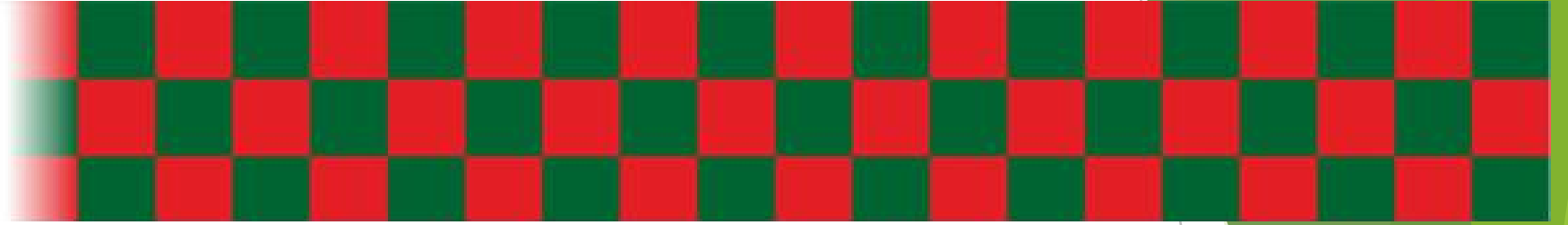
Commercial Sector



Public Sector



post-trauma

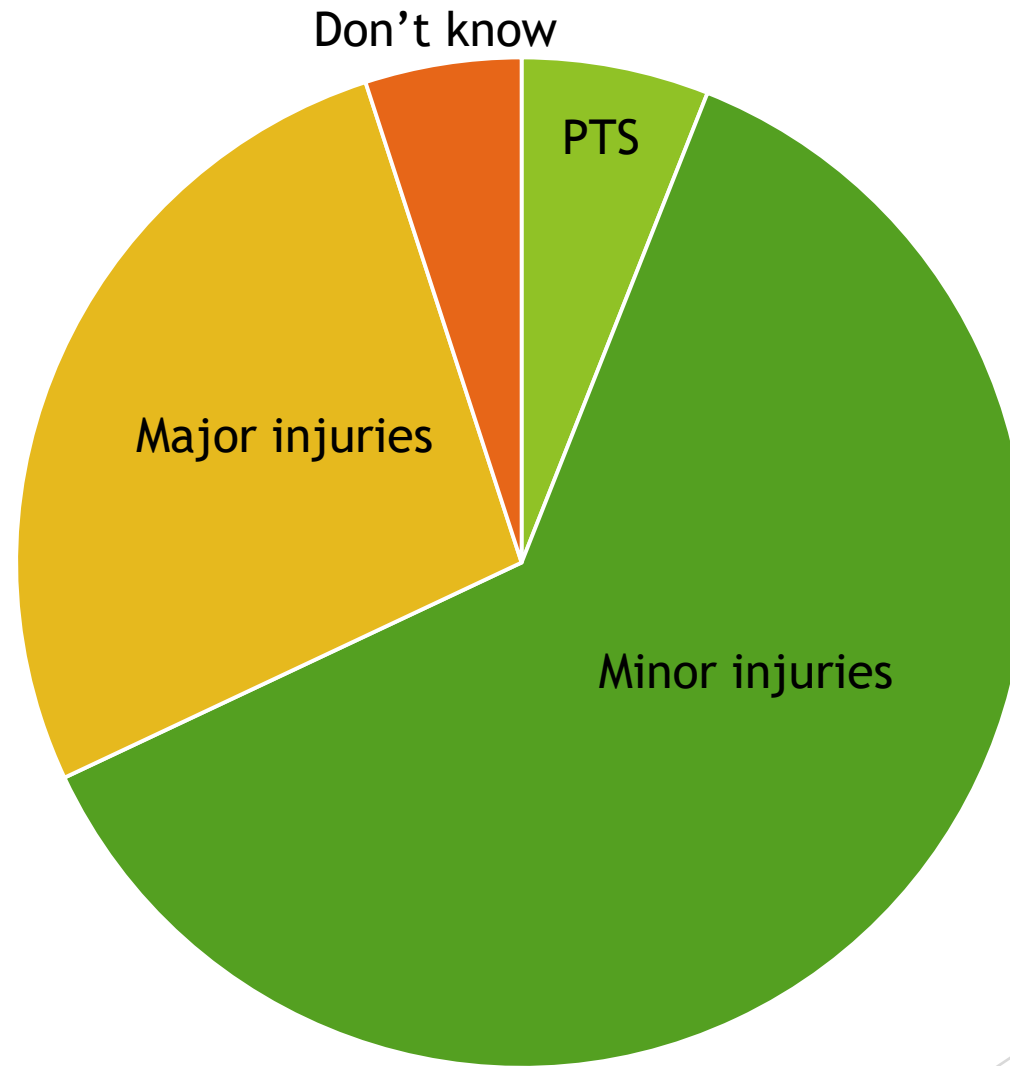


Post-trauma: insights and research

BARTA and Nottingham Trent University carried out a detailed UK-wide transportation survey

- ▶ 2116 respondents
- ▶ 342 incidents
- ▶ 571 “near miss”
- ▶ 179 horses injured
- ▶ 19 humans injured

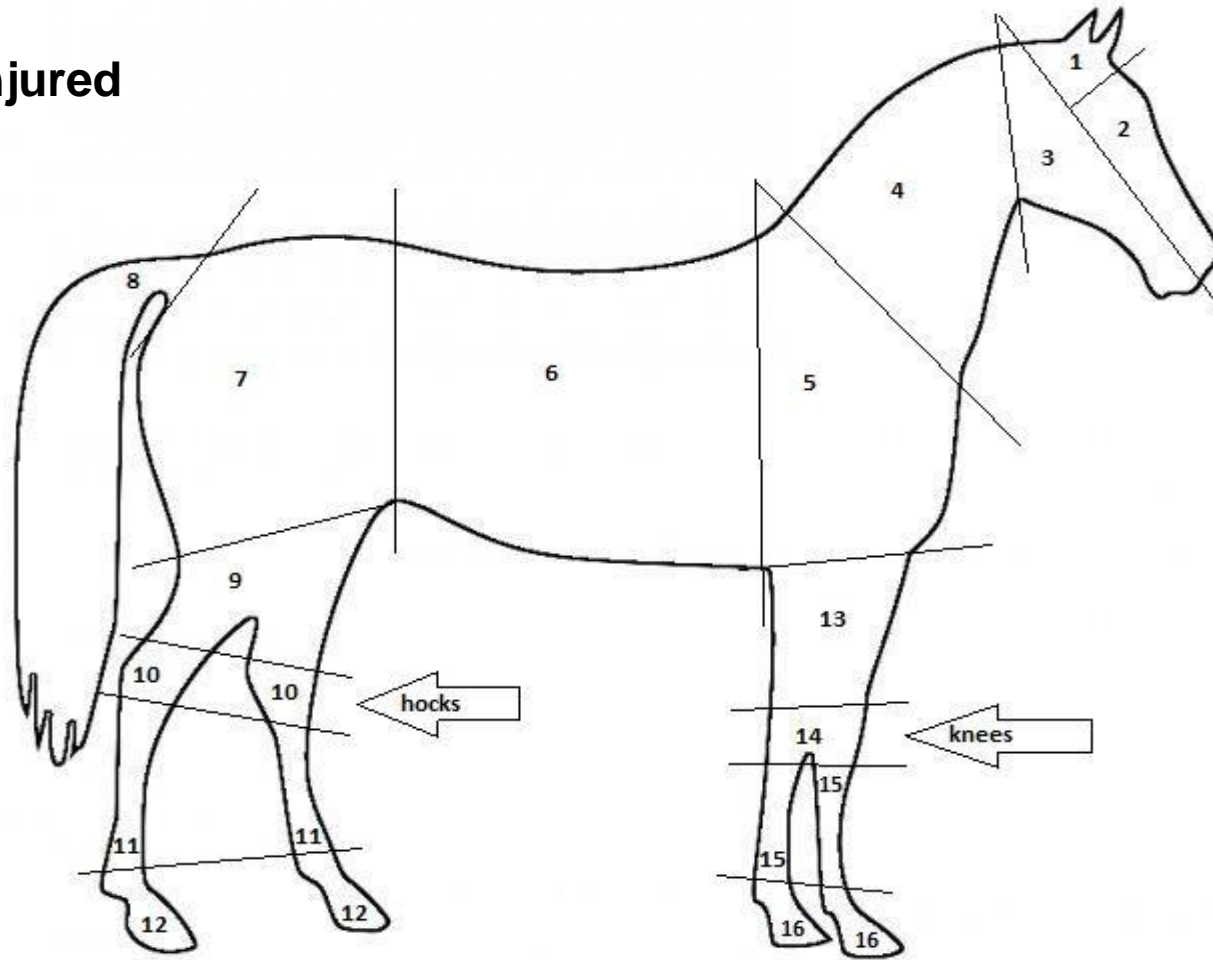
Type of injury and outcomes



Commonly injured areas

Top 5 most commonly injured areas:

- ▶ Hind limb fetlocks (11)
- ▶ Hind limb hocks (10)
- ▶ Front of head/face (2)
- ▶ Hind quarters (7)
- ▶ Hind feet (12)



Non-dramatic injuries - can still be fatal



Hidden injuries

- ▶ Soft tissue bruising/damage
- ▶ Joint damage/trauma to musculo-skeletal system
- ▶ Neurological deficit



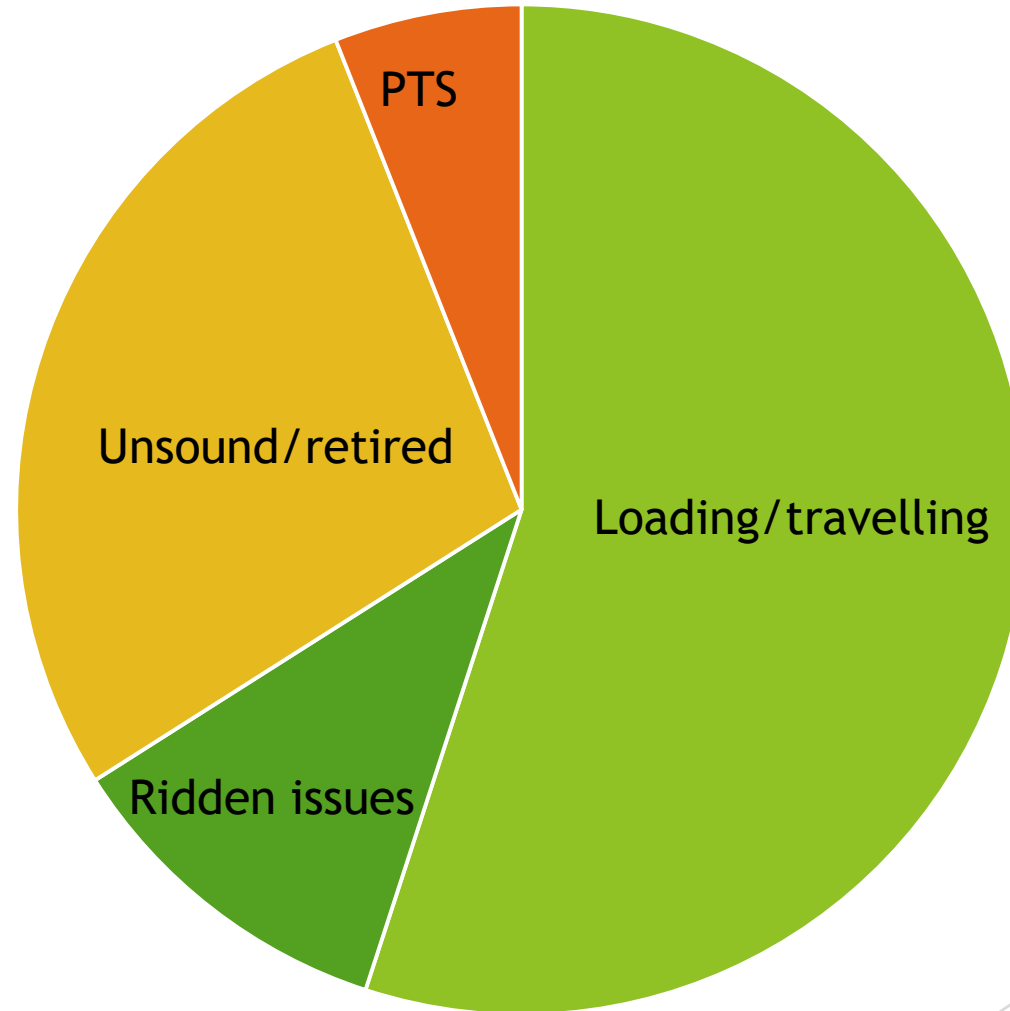
Impact on the horse and rider

- ▶ Short term- field rest, analgesics, physical therapy
- ▶ Short-long term- change in ridden expectations/performance, physical therapy
- ▶ Long term- not viable



Chronic issues

**30% of horses injured
were left with chronic issues**



Jake



- ▶ 4 year old 16.2hh WB
- ▶ Declared “fine” at the scene
- ▶ Deterioration in performance 3 months later
- ▶ 2 years later PTS
- ▶ Insurance implications

A successful rescue may still have a negative outcome

- ▶ A lot of horses are considered viable on first inspection...
- ▶ **But** are then put down at a later date
- ▶ **Or** never return to their previous level of work



A vision for rehabilitation post-accident

‘Golden Time Concept’



Why - return to original work

How - physical therapy & care

When - 2-6 weeks post-trauma

A vision for rehabilitation post-accident



Golden Time concept: ‘every animal involved in an accident would be assessed by a qualified and experienced physical therapist 2-6 weeks after an accident’

The “Golden Time Concept”



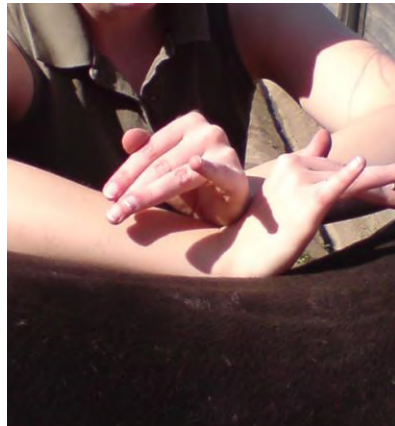
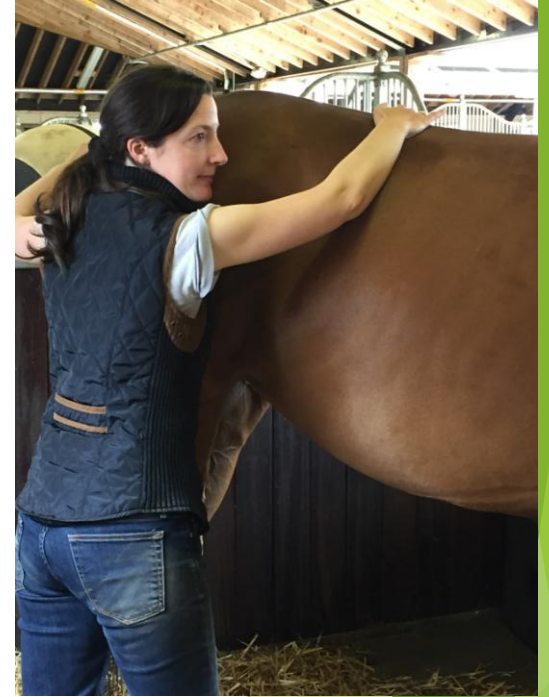
Evaluation

- ▶ Full case history, lifestyle, details of trauma and vet reports
- ▶ Visibly evaluate/assess **the injuries you can't see**:
 - ▶ static assessment
 - ▶ walk, trot, canter, turn short, rein back, lunge, ROM, reflex/pain tests, neurological assessment
 - ▶ palpation -spine, pelvis and any other relevant joints are analysed for any misalignments or spasm in the associated muscles



Treatment

- ▶ Problem areas are then treated with very precise and rapid adjustments to correct the misalignment and relieve any muscle spasm
- ▶ Stimulates nervous system- restores function in joints/soft tissues/nerves
- ▶ Practitioners only use their hands for analysis and treatment, and have a very finely tuned sense of touch capable of detecting the smallest misalignment



Aftercare

- ▶ Typically involves rest and/or limited exercise for a few days
- ▶ The animal may require several treatments, depending on the nature of its injury, regular check-ups to help maintain optimum performance and health as a preventative measure
- ▶ Rehab exercises- core strength/mobility/flexibility
- ▶ Specific tailored ridden exercises



Physical therapy & care

- ▶ Role of therapies
- ▶ Primary objective- Get the horse “back on its feet”
- ▶ Owner/rider confidence that the horse is fit for purpose



A partnership with Vets

- ▶ The skills of a chiropractor can complement veterinary care
- ▶ In an ideal world both vet and chiropractor would make the assessment
- ▶ This covers all the potential routes for treatment



A partnership with insurance companies



- ▶ BARTA is investigating potential for partnerships with leading insurance companies
- ▶ Educational material for owners
- ▶ Interested in survey results
- ▶ Potential for Golden Time assessments to improve outcomes, reduce suffering for horse and owner



Take home message.....

- ▶ Research shows that 30% of horses involved in transport accidents are left with chronic issues
- ▶ Issues include loading problems, ridden and behavioural issues, loss of performance, unsoundness, retirement and euthanasia
- ▶ Golden Time concept: Every animal involved in an accident would be assessed by a qualified and experienced physical therapist and vet 2-6 weeks post trauma
- ▶ Physical rehabilitation and then behavioural rehabilitation if necessary
- ▶ Potential to work with insurance companies to educate owners
- ▶ Further survey results coming soon

Chiropractic for all animals

