

# The effectiveness of Animal Assisted Therapy in adults with an Autism Spectrum Disorder

No registrations found.

<b>Ethical review</b>	Positive opinion
<b>Status</b>	Recruitment stopped
<b>Health condition type</b>	-
<b>Study type</b>	Interventional

## Summary

### ID

NL-OMON24083

### Source

NTR

### Health condition

Autism Spectrum Disorder  
Animal Assisted Therapy  
Dogs  
Stress

## Sponsors and support

**Primary sponsor:** GGZ oost Brabant: Mcs. Carolien Wijker  
Open University: Prof. Dr. M. J. Enders-Slegers and Dr. T. Verheggen  
Autismekenniscentrum: Dr. A. A. Spek

**Source(s) of monetary or material Support:** Stichting Olim, GGZ Oost Brabant

## Intervention

## Outcome measures

### Primary outcome

Stress (self-reported, salivary measurements, heart rate variability measurements)

Psychological distress (self reported)

Self-confidence (self reported)

Autistic traits (self reported)

## **Secondary outcome**

Video analysis

# **Study description**

## **Background summary**

Adults with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) often experience high psychological distress. In literature, two treatments are described where research has shown a reduction of comorbid symptoms in adults with ASD such as anxiety and depression. For this reason, it is of great importance to develop new interventions and to examine the effectiveness of those interventions on reducing comorbid symptoms in adults with ASD.

The present exploratory study is conducted in adults with ASD. The study aims to provide insight into the effects of AAT.

The AAT intervention consists of ten, weekly one-on-one sessions in presence of a dog. The results of the AAT are compared with a randomized waiting list control condition. Participants in this study are randomized after the baseline measurement and equally distributed towards the AAT or waiting list control condition.

## **Study objective**

Exploration of the effects of AAT in adults with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (because this study has an explorative character, there is no hypothesis formulated)

## **Study design**

Baseline

Post intervention (10 weeks)

Follow-up (20 weeks)

## **Intervention**

The AAT program exists of ten weekly one-on-one sessions, with a duration of 60 minutes per session. The therapist follows a strict therapy protocol. The therapy dog that is present in the therapy sessions is a trained service dog from the Dutch foundation 'Hulphond'. The therapy dogs are under supervision of a dog trainer and have regular veterinary check-ups. Participants work together with a therapydog on exercises under supervision of the therapist.

## Contacts

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## Eligibility criteria

### **Inclusion criteria**

A primary diagnosis within the autism spectrum is required for participation in the study. The participants must be diagnosed through, a semi-structured interview based on the DSM-V criteria and the ADI-R

Age between 18-60.

WAIS-IV score > 80.

Participants suffer from stress (PSS > 20), and overall psychological distress (SCL-90 > 133).

### **Exclusion criteria**

Psychosis

High Suicide risk

Fear of dogs

Medicin that involves the ingredient cortison

Involving other treatment than AAT during the 20 weeks of research

## Study design

### Design

Study type:	Interventional
Intervention model:	Parallel
Allocation:	Randomized controlled trial
Masking:	Open (masking not used)
Control:	N/A , unknown

### Recruitment

NL	
Recruitment status:	Recruitment stopped
Start date (anticipated):	01-01-2014
Enrollment:	72
Type:	Actual

## Ethics review

Positive opinion	
Date:	09-06-2016
Application type:	First submission

## Study registrations

## Followed up by the following (possibly more current) registration

No registrations found.

## Other (possibly less up-to-date) registrations in this register

No registrations found.

## In other registers

Register	ID
NTR-new	NL4054
NTR-old	NTR5938
Other	CMO regio Arnhem-Nijmegen : 2014-292

## Study results

### Summary results

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