



Standards of Practice for Recreation Therapists and Recreation Therapy Assistants

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Welcome Address

With privilege, honour and excitement, I welcome you, on behalf of the 2023 Board of Directors, to the updated Canadian Therapeutic Recreation Association's (CTRA's) Standards of Practice for Recreation Therapists and Recreation Therapy Assistants.

I want to express my most profound respect and gratitude to the Indigenous Peoples of Turtle Island. I know my great standard of living is directly related to their resources, friendship, and suffering. I reside with my husband and four children on the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe peoples. The Upper Canada Treaties cover this land and are within the land protected by the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Agreement. I am grateful for the many teachings I have received on the Indigenous ways of thinking and being, and I honour that our process of bringing together colleagues spanning turtle island to incorporate diverse perspectives into this creation is a practice learned from the original peoples of this land. I honour that reconciliation requires action! While I share Indigenous roots, I was adopted as an infant and raised to love and live as a settler. As such, I am committed to my position as a lifelong learner in all Indigenous spaces. I value the opportunity to honour the wisdom of Indigenous Peoples and choose to make a conscious effort for action every day. As a reader, I ask you to consider the history of the land on which you reside. It is land that facilitates the privilege to live in and serve our community in meaningful ways, and the Indigenous Peoples as stewards of the land and waters connect us.

Extraordinary change begins along the path of ordinary people, and land acknowledgements are a steppingstone to honouring broken treaty relationships. We can be and do so much more, and this begins with a collective effort. I invite each of you to join me in connecting your journey to that of others while promoting an authentic and purposeful commitment to *act* in Truth and Reconciliation. To learn more about Territories, Languages, and Treaties in the land you live on, please take the time to visit Native-Land.ca.

In friendship,



Lauren Cripps
Chair, Standards of Practice Task Force
Education Director, CTRA
President-Elect, CTRA

Preamble

The 2023 CTRA Standards of Practice reflect the strengths-based language and our 21st-century society. This document establishes consistent standards necessary for the pursuit of regulation across Canada, supporting therapeutic recreation associations as they seek regulation status in their respective provinces. These revised standards emerged through an evidence-informed process that honours the experiences, knowledge and research that underpin the ongoing developments and change within the therapeutic recreation profession and practice of recreation therapy. A detailed description of the process is available for public review on the CTRA website.

Background

The third edition of the Canadian Therapeutic Recreation Association (CTRA) Standards of Practice for Recreation Therapists and Recreation Therapy Assistants practicing in Canada evolved from the 1996 and 2006 editions of the CTRA Standards of Practice and contributes to the advancement of the profession by guiding practice, education, research, leadership, and future regulation.

Purpose

The CTRA Standards of Practice provides a framework which articulates the required competencies to ensure safe, effective, and ethical practice within recreation therapy in Canada. It includes role clarity for recreation therapists and recreation therapy assistants. It reflects ongoing developments and critical changes guided by best practice evidence, the evolving healthcare environment, the evolution of the recreation therapy curriculum, and the needs of the public. The standards are broad to capture the diverse settings in which recreation therapists and recreation therapy assistants practice.

This document aims to:

- Articulate the required competencies for practice
- Reinforce key values inherent to the recreation therapy profession
- Provide role clarity for recreation therapists and recreation therapy assistants within their clinical practice
- Promote consistency in service delivery
- Assist practice and operational leadership in the development of job descriptions, performance evaluation, and quality improvement tools
- Educate stakeholders about recreation therapy practice
- Inform curriculum and support research
- Inspire reflective practice and ongoing professional development

Use of Terms

An essential feature of the 2023 Standards of Practice is the purposeful use of therapeutic recreation and recreation therapy. Within this document, therapeutic recreation can be understood as an umbrella term that refers to the field. This term is typically associated with the theoretical underpinnings of the profession and is best suited when describing educational frameworks. In contrast, recreation therapy can be understood as a person-centred, strength-based, evidence-informed approach that supports people with disability, illness, or other limitations to engage in meaningful leisure opportunities to increase health and well-being in

clinical and community-based service delivery settings. Recreation Therapy is also congruent with the professional titles of Recreation Therapist (RecT) and Recreation Therapy Assistant (RecTA), in alignment with other allied health professions.

FOR VOTE

Who Will Use This Document?

Recreation Therapy Practice Leaders

- Provides a foundation for practice leadership
- Assists in developing staffing models to ensure safe, high-quality service delivery
- Provides a mechanism for the creation of job descriptions, including role clarity for recreation therapy staff
- Guides competency evaluation
- Serves as an educational tool for recreation therapy practice within organizations

Recreation Therapists and Recreation Therapy Assistants

- Provides practice guidelines and support for self-reflection, continuing competence, and professional development
- Provides clear delineation between the job role and function of a recreation therapist and a recreation therapy assistant

Education Programs:

- Provides a national framework to support post-secondary education programs across Canada
- Supports curriculum development for recreation therapy practice in the context of student learning outcomes

Students:

- Provides a foundational understanding of recreation therapy practice
- Guides student practicum and internship experiences
- Provides a bridge between curriculum theory and workforce practice
- Provides clear role delineation between a recreation therapist and a recreation therapy assistant

Employers:

- Provides role clarity around the function of a recreation therapist and a recreation therapy assistant and informs performance evaluation
- Informs planning related to recruitment and retention, orientation, on-the-job training, and performance management

Clients:

- Outlines expectations for safe, ethical, and effective recreation therapy services
- Strives to increase protection to the public through the endorsement of NCTRC® certification and the CTRS® credential, which provides assurance that recreation therapists are competent upon entrance to the field, remain accountable to advance their knowledge, and adhere to practices and processes that minimize any potential harm to public health and/or safety

Therapeutic Recreation Professional Associations:

- Guides provincial associations on consistent job titles, qualifications, and competencies
- Provides consistent, national standards that support the pursuit of regulation

- Supports efforts to advance excellence in recreation therapy practice in Canada

Other Professional Groups and Shareholders:

- Increases understanding of recreation therapist and recreation therapy assistant roles and competencies

Unions:

- Promotes role clarity, identifies responsibilities and consistent qualifications of recreation therapists and recreation therapy assistants to support the fair, consistent and appropriate classification of recreation therapy staff in unionized positions

Researchers:

- Guide and inform research activities to advance the field of therapeutic recreation and the practice of recreation therapy

Public:

- Provides the opportunity to learn more about the profession of recreation therapy

FOR VOICES

Recreation Therapy Profession

Recreation Therapy is a health profession which takes a person-centred, strengths-based, evidence-informed approach to practice. Recreation therapists and recreation therapy assistants use recreation and other leisure-based interventions to address the assessed needs of clients with illness and/or disabling conditions to enhance psychological and physical health, recovery, and well-being (CTRA, 2022; NCTRC, 2022). Recreation therapists adhere to provincial and national standards of practice, provincial competency documents, the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification (NCTRC®) Job Analysis Study for CTRS®, and scope of employment, including employer job descriptions, policies, and clinical standards. Recreation therapy assistants practice by provincial and national standards of practice and scope of employment, including employer job descriptions, policies, and clinical standards.

The diverse job titles nationally create confusion and dilution of Recreation Therapy practice nationwide. As such, the following titles and corresponding definitions are recommended to standardize titles and roles in practice and will be used by the Canadian Therapeutic Recreation Association moving forward.

Recreation Therapist (RecT)*

Recreation therapists are integral to the health care team working with diverse populations across varied practice settings including inpatient, outpatient, and community-based services. The clinical role of the recreation therapist includes assessment, client goal setting, intervention planning, utilization of evidence-informed interventions, evaluation, and documentation. Recreation therapists are responsible for service delivery, supervising and working with recreation therapy assistants where applicable, to support successful program implementation.

Recreation Therapy Assistant (RecTA)*

Recreation therapy assistants are integral members of the health care team working with diverse populations across varied practice settings. The recreation therapy assistant works under the direct supervision of a recreation therapist to deliver leisure-based interventions in both one-to-one and group formats. The recreation therapy assistant is essential in program implementation, observation, and reporting. The recreation therapy assistant is not permitted to conduct assessments, develop intervention plans, or evaluate client progress.

**Refer to addendum one for recreation therapist and recreation therapy assistant qualifications*

Summary of the Standards

Standard 1: Comprehensive Program Planning (CPP)

An evidence-informed process which provides the foundation for recreation therapy service delivery for the organization and/or department and population served. This process provides accountability and justification for the delivery of programs and services to address the leisure-related needs of clients. In collaboration with practice and organizational leadership, the recreation therapist utilizes best practice evidence to ensure alignment between the CPP and services offered, with both in-person and virtual care delivery, across the organization and/or department, as part of continuous quality improvement.

Standard 2: Recreation Therapy Clinical Process (APIE-D)

This standard is based on the Recreation Therapy process:

- I) Assessment
- II) Planning
- III) Implementation
- IV) Evaluation
- V) Documentation

Standard 3: Commitment to Clients and Their Well-being

The recreation therapy profession is committed to providing holistic, person-centred, culturally responsive, and strengths-based services with client needs central to service delivery. This includes clients, family, and designated supports as integral members of the care planning process. Services are provided respectfully, fairly, and unbiasedly regardless of race, culture, gender, social status, sexual orientation, age, religion, or ability. The recreation therapist and recreation therapy assistant facilitate recreation therapy interventions that promote health, well-being, meaningful engagement, and quality of life.

Standard 4: Non-Maleficence and Ethical Practice

Recreation therapy is guided by a professional code of ethics and code of conduct, provincially and nationally. The recreation therapist and recreation therapy assistant embody, practice, and promote equity, diversity, and inclusion principles. The recreation therapist and recreation therapy assistant promote bioethical principles, including but not limited to beneficence, and demonstrate competence in clinical judgement and decision-making to ensure ethical and safe practice. The recreation therapist and recreation therapy assistant practice with honesty, integrity, respect, and compassion.

Standard 5: Safety and Risk Management

Risk management is an action-based process that reduces the potential liability in the delivery of recreation therapy services. The recreation therapist and recreation therapy assistant are committed to minimizing potential hazards, preventing accidents, and creating a physically, psychologically, and socially safe and equitable environment to ensure clients can participate in recreation therapy services. The recreation therapist is responsible for understanding the risk of harm to the public in their practice, mitigating risk and adhering to safety and risk management policies, procedures and/or legislation. The recreation therapist and recreation therapy assistant

will operationalize strategies per their respective roles and responsibilities to mitigate risks throughout the Recreation Therapy Clinical Process (APIE-D).

Standard 6: Professional Responsibility and Accountability

The recreation therapist and recreation therapy assistant will act with respect and integrity, follow the scope of employment, be accountable for personal and professional conduct, and demonstrate competent practice consistent with CTRA, NCTRC[®], and provincial professional association standards, as applicable. Disciplinary responsibilities fall under the rights and responsibilities of the employer. In addition, Recreation Therapists who hold the CTRS[®] credential are also accountable to NCTRC[®].

Standard 7: Interprofessional Collaboration

The recreation therapist and recreation therapy assistant utilize an interprofessional, collaborative approach to practice to ensure the highest quality of care. This includes building relationships and collaborating with diverse healthcare professionals in providing comprehensive health services.

Standard 8: Professional Growth and Development

The recreation therapist and recreation therapy assistant embrace life-long learning and professional development to ensure their knowledge, practices, and methods are current and evidence-informed. This acknowledges the importance of translating research into practice, providing and receiving feedback, disseminating knowledge, and seeking support and/or supervision of their practice, regardless of title or status. This also includes the acquisition of additional certifications or credentials related to areas of practice, including but not limited to CPR, first aid, dementia care, falls and/or violence prevention, and specialized skills interventions as related to specific populations. The recreation therapist and recreation therapy assistant will contribute to the growth of the profession through student mentorship and supervision and will promote the values upheld by the standards of practice throughout this process to ensure that learners are supported throughout their applied and experiential learning opportunities.

Standard 1: Comprehensive Program Planning (CPP)

An evidence-informed process which provides the foundation for recreation therapy service delivery for the organization and/or department and population served. This process provides accountability and justification for delivering programs and services to address clients' leisure-related needs. In collaboration with practice and organizational leadership, the recreation therapist utilizes best practice evidence to ensure alignment between the CPP and services offered, both in person and virtual, across the organization and/or department, as part of continuous quality improvement.

ROLE OF THE RECREATION THERAPIST

- Conducts a needs assessment of the population and service setting to inform program design and service delivery framework
- Completes a comprehensive literature review to ensure theoretical foundations and practice models are utilized when designing a service delivery plan
- Uses an evidence-informed approach to establish guiding principles, goals and objectives for the recreation therapy service that aligns with the values of the organization and the goals of service delivery
- Advocates and consults with decision makers on resource allocation to ensure the viability of recreation therapy service
- Incorporates administrative, financial, and human resources into the plan
- Engages in reflective practice and responds to changes in best practice evidence, the needs of the population, organization, or department
- Addresses risk mitigation, adhering to occupational health, safety and risk management strategies
- Revises the CPP, as needed

ROLE OF THE RECREATION THERAPY ASSISTANT

- Demonstrates awareness of CPP and its application to service delivery
- Engages in reflective practice, providing feedback to the recreation therapist which could inform the CPP such as addressing potential gaps in service delivery

Standard 2: Recreation Therapy Clinical Process (APIE-D)

This standard is based on the foundation of recreation therapy practice which includes Assessment, Planning, Implementation, Evaluation and Documentation

I: ASSESSMENT

The recreation therapist uses an individualized, person-centred approach to client assessment in determining the most appropriate standardized and non-standardized assessment tools to administer. This includes gathering relevant information such as medical history, presenting conditions, social history, cultural and environmental context, personal identity, and preferences. The recreation therapist administers selected assessment(s) to identify client leisure interests and determine needs, strengths, leisure function and behaviour, and barriers to participation. The recreation therapist interprets and analyzes the results, communicating findings to stakeholders.

ROLE OF THE RECREATION THERAPIST

- Receives and screens referrals
- Prioritizes clients for assessment and services
- Obtains informed consent for assessment and treatment before and throughout service provision
- Conducts chart reviews and collaborates with the health care team throughout the assessment process to gain a comprehensive understanding of the client
- Gathers and incorporates relevant information from family members, other supports and recreation therapy assistant
- Selects and administers appropriate standardized and/or non-standardized assessments in accordance with organizational policies and procedures
- Integrates the use of observation within the assessment process
- Participates in team-based interprofessional assessments
- Interprets, documents, and communicates assessment results
- Conducts re-assessments when there is a change in clinical status that impacts the intervention plan

ROLE OF THE RECREATION THERAPY ASSISTANT

- Reviews and seeks clarification on assessment information as required
- Reports key observations to the recreation therapist
- Communicates pertinent information such as social or leisure history to the recreation therapist

II: PLANNING INTERVENTION PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Recreation Therapy Intervention Plan:

The recreation therapist will design an evidence-informed intervention plan with the client based on assessment results considering the client's strengths, abilities, health-related needs, leisure interests and preferences, leisure function and behaviour, barriers, cultural context, safety considerations, and identified therapy goals.

ROLE OF THE RECREATION THERAPIST

- Uses a person-centred, strength-based approach to intervention planning and decision making
- Based on assessment results, formulates measurable intervention goals with client, family, and other supports when appropriate
- Integrates best practice evidence in the development of the client intervention plan
- Determines the intervention approach (individual or group), method of delivery (in person or virtual), frequency and duration of services
- Strives for meaningful intervention(s) for the client
- Performs task analysis to ensure proposed interventions align with the needs of the client
- Assigns service delivery and the utilization of support staff
- Collaborates with health care team throughout the intervention planning process to ensure an interprofessional approach to care
- Provides education for the client, family member(s), caregiver(s), or supports on the benefits of the interventions proposed

ROLE OF THE RECREATION THERAPY ASSISTANT

- Reviews client assessment, re-assessment and intervention plans, requesting clarification when needed
- Ensures pre-program preparation to support optimal client engagement
- Provides feedback to recreation therapist regarding client intervention plans
- Identifies and requests any additional education, training, and support required to implement assigned interventions effectively

III: IMPLEMENTATION

A process of facilitating client participation that may include therapeutic, experiential, and psychoeducational interventions as a means of achieving their goals and objectives.

ROLE OF THE RECREATION THERAPIST

- Obtains consent for treatment
- Delivers goal-oriented programs and recreation opportunities that enhance leisure functioning and promote meaningful leisure engagement, assigning specific experiential interventions to an assistant and/or other staff as appropriate
- Facilitates leisure education in both one-to-one and group format
- Delivers psychoeducational groups with appropriate specialized training
- Uses a fair and systematic process to prioritize recreation therapy service delivery
- Collaborates with the health care team to ensure plans are in place to support client participation.
- Ensures services are delivered as outlined in the intervention plan
- Leads programs and interventions in a safe, timely, and effective manner, employing risk management and infection prevention and control strategies
- Modifies the intervention plan in collaboration with the client, recreation therapy assistant and other healthcare team members
- Recommends activity modifications and/or adapted equipment to allow for optimal client engagement
- Monitors the safety and effectiveness of interventions facilitated by recreation therapy assistants and support roles through teaching, supervision, and mentoring
- Provides orientation and leadership to volunteers as needed
- Ensures supports are in place to meet client needs

ROLE OF THE RECREATION THERAPY ASSISTANT

- Delivers goal-oriented programs and recreation opportunities that enhance leisure functioning and promote meaningful leisure engagement
- Accepts assignments from the recreation therapist, seeks clarification, and requests additional training as needed
- Reviews and implements group program plan as outlined
- Ensures programming space is set up appropriately to meet the needs of clients
- Leads programs and interventions in a safe, timely, and effective manner, employing risk management and infection prevention and control strategies
- Uses motivational techniques to encourage client participation while respecting clients' right to decline services
- Meets individual client needs in program settings by integrating appropriate adaptations as indicated by the recreation therapist
- May implement minor accommodations within program delivery for client success and informs the recreation therapist

- Observes and communicates client engagement to the recreation therapist
- Engages family, caregivers and supports as appropriate
- Provides support and direction to volunteers

FOR VOTE

IV: EVALUATION

A process using a person-centred, strengths-based approach to determine effectiveness of interventions on client goal attainment and growth.

ROLE OF THE RECREATION THERAPIST

- Embeds a culture of evaluation into practice
- Implements a variety of evaluation approaches to identify and document trends for client change
- Monitors client goal attainment as outlined in the intervention plan
- Takes an evidence-informed approach to identify and/or design an evaluation measure for programs utilizing summative and formative methods
- Interprets and communicates evaluation results to the client, designated support(s), health care team, and other key stakeholders
- Incorporates evaluation results to inform decision-making related to interventions and program modifications
- Utilizes evaluation results to guide quality improvement initiatives

ROLE OF THE RECREATION THERAPY ASSISTANT

- Supports evaluation processes as identified by the recreation therapist
- Communicates feedback from clients and designated supports to the recreation therapist
- Reflects on program implementation and opportunities for improvement and communicates these to the recreation therapist

V: DOCUMENTATION

The process of recording legal and confidential records of client care in written and electronic formats. Documentation provides accountability for service delivery and must comply with professional standards and organization specific policies and procedures.

ROLE OF THE RECREATION THERAPIST

- Maintains a chronological record of client status, recreation therapy service provision, client response to interventions and client outcomes including:
 1. Informed consent
 2. Assessment and re-assessment
 3. Intervention plan
 4. Progress notes
 5. Assignment of tasks to recreation therapy assistant and/or other staff supporting interventions
 6. Discharge summary and/or transition plan
- Uses the acronym “RecT” when documenting the provision of recreation therapy services in health records
- Uses documentation to promote knowledge sharing and collaborative practice
- Ensures records are legible and prepared in a timely manner to ensure professional accountability for service delivery
- Ensures support staff are trained in documentation procedures
- Participates in chart audits for quality improvement purposes
- Records program statistics, workload, and other service data to demonstrate program accountability, per agency guidelines
- Maintains technology proficiency for electronic documentation, as required
- Completes incident reports and participates in incident report investigations as needed

ROLE OF THE RECREATION THERAPY ASSISTANT

- Documents services provided including client response to interventions, under the guidance of the recreation therapist and in alignment with organizational policies and procedures
- Uses the acronym “RecTA” when documenting the provision of recreation therapy services in health records
- Ensures records are legible and prepared in a timely manner
- Records program statistics, workload, and other service data
- Maintains technology proficiency for electronic documentation
- Completes incident reports and participates in incident report investigations as needed

Standard 3: Commitment to Clients and Their Well-being

The recreation therapy profession is committed to providing holistic, person-centred, culturally responsive, and strengths-based services with client needs central to service delivery. This includes clients, family, and designated supports as integral members of the care planning process. Services are provided respectfully, fairly, and unbiasedly regardless of race, culture, gender, social status, sexual orientation, age, religion, or ability. The recreation therapist and recreation therapy assistant facilitate recreation therapy interventions that promote health, well-being, meaningful engagement, and quality of life.

To support a commitment to clients and their well-being, the recreation therapist and recreation therapy assistant will:

1. Protect the privacy of the client by maintaining confidentiality and the security of client information
2. Establish and maintain therapeutic relationships; terminating upon service completion
3. Respect professional boundaries with clients and their families
4. Facilitate planning required for seamless discharge and transition planning across the health care continuum
5. Respect client autonomy by incorporating their beliefs, opinions, decisions, and preferences into service delivery while ensuring a culturally responsive approach
6. Communicate effectively and respectfully with clients in a timely manner
7. Ensure clients receive the necessary information to make informed choices
8. Adhere to risk management and infection prevention and control strategies that place client safety at the forefront of service delivery

Standard 4: Non-Maleficence and Ethical Practice

Recreation therapy is guided by a professional code of ethics and code of conduct, provincially and nationally. The recreation therapist and recreation therapy assistant embody, practice, and promote equity, diversity, and inclusion principles. The recreation therapist and recreation therapy assistant promote bioethical principles, including but not limited to beneficence, and demonstrate competence in clinical judgement and decision-making to ensure ethical and safe practice. The recreation therapist and recreation therapy assistant practice with honesty, integrity, respect, and compassion.

To support ethical practice the recreation therapist and recreation therapy assistant will:

1. Ensure an equitable process for accessing recreation therapy services, within the bounds established by employers
2. Provide care that preserves client dignity
3. Maintain appropriate boundaries within therapeutic relationships with clients and take appropriate actions when those boundaries are crossed
4. Practice with honesty, integrity, and respect
5. Maintain client privacy and confidentiality in all forms of communication
6. Identify and disclose any potential conflict of interest as per employer processes
7. Follow organizational guidelines about ethical practice
8. Recognize the influence of own values, beliefs, and experiences in carrying out clinical activities that could result in bias
9. Use an evidence-informed approach, such as ethical decision-making frameworks, to address ethical dilemmas
10. Address any potential risk for harm within service delivery in a timely manner

Standard 5: Safety and Risk Management

Risk management is an action-based process that reduces the potential liability in the delivery of recreation therapy services. The recreation therapist and recreation therapy assistant are committed to minimizing potential hazards, preventing accidents, and creating a physically, psychologically, and socially safe and equitable environment to ensure clients can participate in recreation therapy services. The recreation therapist is responsible for mitigating risk and adhering to safety and risk management policies, procedures and/or legislation. The recreation therapist and recreation therapy assistant will operationalize strategies in accordance with their respective roles and responsibilities to ensure the mitigation of risks throughout the Recreation Therapy Clinical Process (APIE-D).

To support safety and risk management the recreation therapist and recreation therapy assistant will:

1. Develop formalized safety and risk management strategies that are informed by client assessment and organization policies, to mitigate negative outcomes associated with recreation therapy services
2. Utilize best practices for interventions, including but not limited to, task and/or activity analysis tools, to identify and manage risk to clients
3. Establish and maintain safety protocols related to equipment, techniques, infection control and/or emergency procedures in accordance with organizational policies and procedures
4. Conduct audits on potential hazards, in accordance with best practice and organizational policies, to ensure the safe and effective delivery of recreation therapy services
5. Educate clients about the risks associated with service, and provide strategies and support for the development of safe and effective participation in recreation therapy services
6. Comply with reporting procedures related to safety and risk management, including hazards identified
7. Ensure adherence to safety and risk management policies, procedures and/or legislation within recreation therapy service delivery
8. Obtains additional certifications or specialized training related to areas of practice, including but not limited to CPR, first aid, dementia care, falls and/or violence prevention, and specialized skills interventions as related to specific populations

Standard 6: Professional Responsibility and Accountability

The recreation therapist and recreation therapy assistant will act with integrity, follow the scope of employment, be accountable for personal and professional conduct, and demonstrate competent practice consistent with CTRA, NCTRC[®], and provincial professional association standards, as applicable. In the absence of regulation, disciplinary responsibilities fall under the rights and obligations of the employer instead of the dual responsibility of the employer and regulatory college. Recreation therapists who hold the CTRS[®] credential are accountable to the NCTRC[®] under the terms of this credential.

To support professional responsibility and accountability, the recreation therapist and recreation therapy assistant will:

1. Follow respective provincial and national guiding documents such as Standards of Practice, Code of Ethics, and certification standards for NCTRC[®] certificants
2. Assume professional responsibility for safe and effective recreation therapy practice
3. Demonstrate a commitment to evidence-informed practice using a holistic, person-centred, and strengths-based approach
4. Participate as an active healthcare team member and demonstrate professionalism within team roles
5. Be accountable for actions and decisions
6. Work within the employer's job description, expectations, policies, and procedures
7. Report unsafe practice, unprofessional conduct, or abusive behaviour to the employer and the NCTRC for CTRS professionals
8. Advance competencies by recognizing current skills, knowledge, and experience through ongoing pursuit of training and mentorship opportunities
9. Advocate on behalf of clients to address unmet needs
10. Provide education and advocacy to advance the recreation therapy profession
11. Pursue student preceptorship and clinical mentorship opportunities
12. Maintain professional boundaries with clients, colleagues, and other stakeholders
13. Practice self-care that supports physical, psychological, and emotional health; seek support when feeling unfit to practice

Standard 7: Interprofessional Collaboration

The recreation therapist and recreation therapy assistant utilize an interprofessional, collaborative approach to practice to ensure the highest quality of care. This includes building relationships and collaborating with diverse healthcare professionals in providing comprehensive health services.

To support interprofessional collaboration, the recreation therapist and recreation therapy assistant will:

1. Value and respect the contribution of others on the healthcare team
2. Understand healthcare team roles and establish role clarity to strengthen professional practice
3. Build effective working relationships with the healthcare team
4. Develop robust communication processes within the healthcare team
5. Strategize and plan with the healthcare team to ensure services are integrated and aligned
6. Utilize a team-based approach to goal setting and intervention planning to ensure a person-centred approach to care
7. Implement conflict resolution strategies to navigate challenging situations within practice
8. Integrate best practice frameworks to enhance client outcomes
9. Support collaborative research opportunities with colleagues and scholars both within and outside of the profession

Standard 8: Professional Growth and Development

The recreation therapist and recreation therapy assistant embrace life-long learning and professional development to ensure their knowledge, practices, and methods are current and evidence-informed. This acknowledges the importance of translating research into practice, providing and receiving feedback, disseminating knowledge, and seeking support and/or supervision of their practice, regardless of title or status. This also includes the acquisition of additional certifications or credentials related to areas of practice, including but not limited to CPR, first aid, dementia care, falls and/or violence prevention, and specialized skills interventions as related to specific populations. The recreation therapist and recreation therapy assistant will contribute to the growth of the profession through student mentorship and supervision and will promote the values upheld by the standards of practice throughout this process to ensure that learners are supported throughout their applied and experiential learning opportunities.

To support professional growth and development, the recreation therapist and recreation therapy assistant will:

1. Engage in reflective practice to identify gaps in practice or new learning opportunities
2. Pursue professional development by reviewing research publications, attending conferences, webinars, and specialty courses to advance practice
3. Ensure continuing education units (CEU's) are met as per NCTRC® and professional association requirements as applicable
4. Engage in communities of practice relevant to population, setting and service delivery
5. Hold professional membership with provincial and national associations, engaging in committees and initiatives to advance the profession
6. Commit to advancing the recreation therapy profession through advocacy initiatives, provincially and nationally
7. Disseminate new knowledge through conference presentations and the authorship of manuscripts relevant to recreation therapy, health care and social service literature

Standards of Practice Task Force

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Special Thanks to:

Jane Crawford, CTRS® Alberta
Dr. Anne-Marie Sullivan, CTRS® Newfoundland
2017-2019 Standards of Practice Committee Volunteers
for their foundational contributions
The Canadian Recreation Therapy Practice Leader Network
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Provincial Associations and CTRA Chapters:
Alberta
British Columbia
CTRA Manitoba/Saskatchewan Chapter
CTRA New Brunswick Chapter
CTRA Quebec Chapter
Newfoundland/Labrador
Nova Scotia
Saskatchewan
Ontario

Glossary of Terms

| Term | Definition |
|--------------------------|--|
| Accredited | Officially recognized, or authorized. |
| Allied Health Profession | A diverse group of clinicians who deliver high-quality care to clients across a wide range of care pathways and in a variety of different settings. |
| Assessment | Assessment is a systematic process for gathering specific information about an individual and their environment for the purpose of identifying aspirations and strengths and collaboratively making decisions about the individual's plans (Anderson & Heyne, 2012) |
| Certification | The action or process of providing someone or something with an official document attesting to a status or level of achievement. |
| Caregivers | <p>A person who provides care to people who need help taking care of themselves.</p> <p>A caregiver is a person who tends to the needs or concerns of a person with short or long-term limitations due to illness, injury, or disability (John Hopkins Medicine, 2023).</p> |
| Client | An person who receives health care from a health care provider |
| Community of Practice | A community of practice (CoP) is a group of people who share a common concern, a set of problems, or an interest in a topic and who come together to fulfill both individual and group goals. Communities of practice often focus on sharing best practices and creating new knowledge to advance a domain of professional practice. |
| CTRS® | The Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist credential (CTRS®) is a protected designation granted by NCTRC after the specific educational and experiential qualifications are met, eligibility to take the exam is established, and testing is successfully completed. |
| Ethical Practice | Applying the core principles of bioethics (ie. autonomy, beneficence, nonmaleficence, justice) to medical and healthcare decisions. |

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| Evidence-informed Practice | The integration of current best research evidence with clinical expertise and patient values to facilitate clinical decision-making. |
| Informal Supports | The assistance that caregivers receive from family and other members of their social network. |
| Interprofessional | Collaborative practice happens when multiple health workers from different professional backgrounds work together with patients, families, carers and communities to deliver the highest quality of care across settings (WHO 2010) |
| NCTRC® | The National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification is a non-profit, international organization dedicated to professional excellence for the protection of consumers through the certification of recreation therapists. Professional recognition is granted by NCTRC to individuals who apply and meet established standards for certification, including education, experience and continuing professional development. The Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS) credential is offered to qualified individuals based on these stringent requirements for certification (NCTRC, 2023). |
| Psychoeducational | Psychoeducation refers to providing education and information to those seeking or receiving mental health services, such as people diagnosed with mental health conditions (or life-threatening/terminal illnesses) and their family members. The goal of psychoeducation is to help people better understand (and become accustomed to living with) mental and physical health conditions and is an essential aspect of all therapy programs in 21 st century healthcare approaches. |
| Person-centred Care | Care approaches and practices that view the person with many levels of needs and goals, with these needs coming from their social determinants of health (WHO, 2010). |
| Professional Responsibility | Being answerable to oneself and others for one's actions. |
| Regulation | A regulated health professional is governed by a scope of practice which protects the public, and their Regulatory College oversees them. Health regulators exist to support your right to competent, safe, and ethical care from regulated health professionals. |

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| Scope of employment | Activities that unregulated care providers and healthcare professionals are authorized to perform, as defined in employer job descriptions, policies, and clinical standards (Saskatchewan Health Authority, 2022). |
| Strength-based approach | <p>The strengths-based approach utilized in Therapeutic Recreation focuses on the pre-existing internal and external capacities that serve to optimize outcomes for well-being and increase quality of life (Anderson & Heyne, 2012).</p> <p>The strengths approach is grounded in the ecological approach, the social model of disability, and therapeutic recreation practice models that emphasize leisure and functional ability with well-being outcomes.</p> |
| Well-being | “A state of successful, satisfying, and productive engagement with one’s life and the realization of one’s full physical, cognitive, and social-emotional potential” (Carruthers & Hood, 2007). |

FOR REVIEW

Addendum: Position Statement on Entry to Practice Qualifications



Canadian Therapeutic Recreation Association
Association Canadienne de Loisir Thérapeutique

February 21, 2023

MEMO

Re: Position Statement on Entry to Practice Qualifications

Since 1996 the Canadian Therapeutic Recreation Association (CTRA) has been promoting the allyship of helping professionals across the country. In fact, this organization was incorporated with the mission of bringing people with different educational backgrounds, from different health-related work settings, together as a collective to resolve common issues. While we continue to promote the value of collaboration nationally and abroad, we also feel it is necessary to shed light on the current landscape of the Recreation Therapy profession.

There remains great variability in the qualifications of a recreation therapist and recreation therapy assistant across the country. In the healthcare arena, we share collegial spaces with several masters-level entries to practice professions and face the consequences of such in opportunities for career advancement and financial compensation. The lack of consistency in educational requirements continues to be a major barrier to the understanding and advancement of our profession. As provincial associations actively pursue regulation and governments focus on continued protection of the public, there is an imminent need for consistency and role clarification between the recreation therapist and assistant roles, with clear educational qualifications.

The following qualifications for Recreation Therapists are reflective of the standards endorsed by CTRA membership in 2009. With 86% of voting members in-favour of the CTRS[®] credential, the 2009 vote promoted a national standard for entry to practice serving under the title of Recreation Therapist in Canada. While this standard was documented more than a decade ago, CTRA would like to formally position this standard in honour of our provincial colleagues in their pursuit for provincial licensure and regulation.

The following qualifications are consistent with the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification[®] NCTRC[®] regarding the qualified provider of Recreation Therapy Services. As such, CTRA recommends that provincial associations and chapters of CTRA require the CTRS[®] credential for entry to practice as a Recreation Therapist, as it provides protection to the public and addresses the necessary components required to pursue regulation. Certification is attained through the NCTRC[®] by meeting the eligibility criteria, voluntarily writing the CTRS[®] entrance to practice examination, and maintaining continuing education and practice hours.

A Recreation Therapist:

- Completion of a baccalaureate degree or higher in Therapeutic Recreation/Recreation Therapy or as accepted by the NCTRC[®].
- Hold the CTRS[®] credential, in good standing, with the NCTRC[®].

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Canadian Therapeutic Recreation Association
Association Canadienne de Loisir Thérapeutique

- Be a professional member, in good standing, with at least one Therapeutic Recreation Association.

A Recreation Therapy Assistant:

- Completion of a diploma in Recreation Therapy or Therapeutic Recreation.
- Professional members, in good standing, with at least one Therapeutic Recreation Association or a therapy assistant association preferred.

While it is our position that differentiation between these two roles is necessary for the advancement of the profession, we would like to emphasize the value of both positions. Finally, CTRA wishes to express gratitude for the contributions of all recreation therapy professionals that contribute to the continued growth of our profession. We are committed to supporting provinces in the adoption of this standard for future Recreation Therapists entering the field and invite inquiries to be directed to executivedirector@canadian-tr.org.

On Behalf of the Board of Directors,

Heather Baker
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