

Recreation Therapy

What is Recreation Therapy?

Recreation Therapy is a process that utilizes functional intervention, education and recreation participation to enable persons with physical, cognitive, emotional and/or social limitations to acquire and/or maintain the skills, knowledge and behaviours that will allow them to enjoy their leisure optimally, function independently with the least amount of assistance and participate as fully as possible in society. Recreation Therapy intervention is provided by trained professionals in clinical and/or community settings.

What do Recreation Therapists Do?

A Recreation Therapist works with persons with disabilities and/or limitations who require assistance to improve their quality of life. They use recreation and leisure to help maximize an individual's independence and make necessary adaptations to recreation and leisure opportunities to allow for full participation. They also educate individuals about the skills and resources required to participate in recreation and leisure.

Recreation Therapists use recreation and leisure to help people to:

- Improve physical and cognitive abilities
- Increase confidence and self-esteem
- Foster greater involvement in the community
- Strengthen interpersonal skills and relationships
- Improve coping and adaptation skills
- Enhance wellbeing
- Encourage a greater sense of accomplishment
- Realize the benefits of a healthy leisure lifestyle

Where do Recreation Therapists Work?

Recreation Therapists work in a variety of settings with a variety of populations. For example:

- In hospitals
- Rehabilitation programs
- Long term care
- Day programs
- Mental health centres
- Children's treatment centres

Education and Preparation

Recreation Therapy is offered at both the University and College level in Ontario. A 4 year honours degree in Recreation, a 4 year Therapeutic Recreation Interdisciplinary degree, a 1 year post-graduate certificate and a 2 year Recreation Therapy Diploma are all available. All education institutions include a field placement of between 280 and 560 hours, depending on whether you are college prepared or university prepared.

Licensure

There is currently no licensure, as Recreation Therapists are not currently regulated.

Through the provincial organization Therapeutic Recreation Ontario (TRO), members can apply for the R/TRO designation which is a voluntary credential that assures the Recreation Therapist is meeting a level of excellence in four areas (education, experience, professional affiliations and professional contributions).

Professional Associations

Therapeutic Recreation Ontario (TRO)

www.trontario.org

Canadian Therapeutic Recreation Association (CTRA)

www.canadian-tr.org