Quick Guides to the Health Professions
Recreation Therapists

What is a recreation therapist?

Recreation therapy is a health profession that acknowledges the significance of leisure and recreation as integral components of optimal health and wellbeing of individuals with illness, aging, and disabling conditions. Recreation therapists work with individuals with physical, mental, emotional, cognitive, or social limitations that restrict their leisure engagement. They work with patients to address barriers to meaningful and independent community participation. Recreation therapists work collaboratively on healthcare teams.

What do recreation therapists do?

Recreation therapists work with patients and healthcare providers to assess patient skills, needs, interests and values related to recreation and leisure. Registered members of the professional association follow standards of practice including assessment, intervention and care planning, program protocol development and implementation to provide evidence based practice, documentation, evaluation, research, and adhere to continued competence requirements.

Where do recreation therapists work?

Recreation therapists work throughout the continuum of healthcare including acute care, rehabilitation, community, assisted living, day programs, long term care, home care and private business.

Education and preparation

Current entry to practice standards require degree or diploma with a major in therapeutic recreation and a practicum or internship. The association is in transition to a degree level of education requirement.

Licensure

The Alberta Therapeutic Recreation Association is currently in application with Alberta Health to regulate this occupation.

Professional organizations

Alberta Therapeutic Recreation Association website
http://www.alberta-tr.org

Contributors to this guide

Alberta Therapeutic Recreation Association
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Office of Interprofessional Education and Practice, Western University Canada
https://www.uwo.ca/fhs/education/ipe/index.html