

# Recreational Therapy

## ***Nature of the Profession***

*Recreational therapists, also known as therapeutic recreational specialists, help to rehabilitate patients who have chronic physical, psychological or social handicaps. Activities may include sports, games, dance, drama, arts and crafts, music, and field trips. The recreational therapist encourages patients to develop interests and skills which will assist in recovering from and coping with illness or disability.*

*Recreational therapists work in many health care settings including hospitals, rehabilitation centers, nursing homes and community recreation departments. They may work with doctors, nurses and other members of the health care team to treat and rehabilitate individuals with specific medical problems. They may also use group-oriented activities to improve the general health and well-being of individuals in chronic care and residential facilities. Recreational therapists should not be confused with recreational workers who organize leisure activities primarily for enjoyment.*

## **APTITUDES**

- Ability to direct group activities
- Good verbal skills
- Ability to relate to a variety of people and direct and influence others
- Ability to make decisions and change easily from one task to another
- Interest in recreational, musical, or artistic pursuits, depending on the types of therapy

## **EDUCATION**

The minimum educational requirement is a four-year bachelor's degree in recreational therapy, music therapy, art therapy, or dance therapy. In some cases, art therapists are required to have a master's degree. In addition to course work, 360 hours of internship under the supervision of a certified therapeutic recreationist may be required.

## **EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN NEBRASKA**

- University of Nebraska – Omaha (B)

## **LICENSURE/CERTIFICATION**

Certification is voluntary in Nebraska. Optional national certification can be obtained through the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification (NCTRC). Certified therapeutic recreation specialists (CTRSs) are recognized by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act as professionals who are qualified to provide recreation as a therapeutic service.

## **PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS**

***National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification***

Web Address: [www.nctrc.org](http://www.nctrc.org)