



July/August 2010

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National Council For Therapeutic Recreation Certification

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Welcome to NCTRC e-News!

A Message from the NCTRC Chair

Debbie Robinson, CTRS, Chairperson
NCTRC Board of Directors

It is a sincere pleasure to be writing to you as the Chair of the NCTRC Board of Directors. I have to start by expressing my deep appreciation to the NCTRC staff for all that they do to ensure the operational success of our organization. It is because of their dedication and professional efforts that the Board can strategically plan for NCTRC's future and accomplish our stated mission and goals.

This past June witnessed the inauguration of the new Specialty Certification program and I am pleased to report that several applications have already been submitted to the NCTRC office. In fact, an announcement of the first award in one of the five specialty areas appears in this newsletter. Presentations pertaining to Specialty Certification are in big demand at RT conferences throughout the US and Canada and it is exciting to meet people who think that the new program is the right step forward for our profession. Certainly the NCTRC Board feels this is true, and we are proud to see the many years of work come to fruition.

This past June, I had the pleasure of traveling to the Canadian Therapeutic Recreation Association conference in Hamilton, Ontario and met our wonderful neighbors to the north. Canadian RTs could not have been more welcoming, and the traffic at the NCTRC exhibit booth was amazing! The groundwork laid by past NCTRC Chair Andrew Ritcey has certainly paid off in our relationship to Canadian RTs and I foresee a strong partnership for the years to come. We owe a good deal of thanks to Tanea Goncalves, CTRA Past President and look forward to working with the newly elected CTRA President Wayne Bishop, CTRS.

It is also exciting to hear RTs in many states talking about RT licensure and the need for state recognition of our national credential. I am fortunate to live in a state with RT licensure and remain grateful for the assistance NCTRC provided the New Hampshire team in our licensure bid a few years ago. On the NCTRC web page you will find the [NCTRC Legal Recognition Paper](#) under [Standards and Publications](#). This valuable resource is required reading for all groups considering a RT licensure bid in their state. Please call the NCTRC office if you have any questions as you move forward with your planning.

We continue to be on track with strategic planning and meeting the projected benchmarks for revenue, expenses, and exam administration. NCTRC remains a viable and dynamic organization, one that I am especially proud to have been certified by for the past 17 years! Now if I can just find the time to fill out my Specialty Certification application...

Thank you for your continued support of NCTRC and the CTRS credentialing program!

NCTRC Awards First Specialty Certification

NCTRC is proud to announce that we have received several specialty certification applications and have awarded the first Specialty Certification in Behavioral Health to Ms. Molly Snow of North Carolina. Congratulations to Molly!

You can access the Specialty Certification application and information at www.NCTRC.org.

NCTRC Conducts Annual Certificants Meeting

Each year, NCTRC conducts its Annual Meeting at the annual conferences of the American Therapeutic Recreation Association (ATRA) and the National Therapeutic Recreation Society (NTRS). The official meeting this year will be held in Spokane, WA at the 2010 Annual ATRA Conference. The Annual Meeting will be held at the Doubletree Hotel Spokane City Center on Monday, September 13, 2010 at 12:30pm.

The NCTRC Annual Meeting of Certificants is a valuable opportunity for NCTRC to share information regarding current activities and introduce the Board of Directors, Committees, and Staff. NCTRC has several exciting projects underway that we look forward to sharing with you. We hope that you will attend the meeting at ATRA or review a post of the meeting on the NCTRC website. If you are unable to attend, please contact NCTRC with any concerns or suggestions you may have about the CTRS credentialing program.

A Response from a CTRS about Internships

[Note: An article regarding academic internships that appeared in the previous NCTRC e-News prompted the following response from a concerned CTRS]

I was saddened to see the article in your most recent newsletter describing the experience of some Recreation Therapy interns. To have experienced a full internship and not have been exposed to all the standards of practice is not acceptable. I agree with your suggestions that the students must know the standards and ask for assurance they are being met. Schools should also assure each student will be exposed to the standards well before allowing a student to take on an internship. The large majority of the responsibility lies with the agency and the internship supervisor.

The unfortunate reality is that each RT/TR professional has differing employment requirements and many do not report to another RT/TR professional. We must be internally motivated to assure we meet current standards as best we can in our day-to-day practice. Due to time constraints, budget and staffing issues, etc., many practice a percentage of our scope and not 100% in their day to day work. The problem lies with intern supervisors who teach their agencies current day-to-day operational procedures – and not expose the student to “100% correct” practice.

One solution is that each practicing Recreation Therapist should assess any practice gaps within their daily operations and then have an outline for each intern to assure the students practice skills within our scope – not just what is happening at the current agency. I have done this for years at my agency and find it easy. For example: we use a quick “check box” type of form for group notes in our day to day work. When we have interns, we insist that they write “mock” progress notes for group sessions. These are not put in the chart – but are instead reviewed by the intern supervisor to assure the student is developing the skills needed to be able to accurately chart in a long hand format.

Another suggestion for exposing an intern to “management” scope of services would be to explain to the intern that regulations and formal policies and procedures are management driven. Explain how the RT should make it their business to learn and understand regulations, policies, budgeting for their area even if they personally do not have “management” responsibilities during their first job. Learning the culture of how managers and directors make decisions, especially about RT services will be vital to their success in their job role. If possible, allow the RT intern to observe some of the management meetings where decisions are made; review budgets or help “walk them through” a policy being updated.

Finally, a suggestion for exposing an intern to “Public Relations” scope of services includes discussing with the intern that many clients and colleagues do not truly understand the full scope of services that RT/TR provides. Promoting the profession informally will be a lifelong task. Have the intern prepare an in-service for co-workers or families of clients. They could also write a simple fact sheet that can be given to your clients to explain what the role of an RT is and give FAQs of what to expect. If your agency has any sort of new employee orientation, groups of students that come through, etc., try to see if the intern can speak with them for 15 min. or so about what RT/TR is and how the clients are served by our profession. Having the intern do a presentation of the importance of the NCTRC credential (and state license for certain areas) to the RT staff is a wonderful way to educate the intern and give them an opportunity to learn to format a presentation.

Bottom line is that the student needs to leave the agency prepared to practice all of the

standards. If there are gaps in our teaching methods, then we have done a disservice not only to the student, but to our own profession as well.

Carolyn Shoaf, LRT/CTRS
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Application Review and Exam Statistics

NCTRC Exam: NCTRC conducts three exam administrations within a one-year cycle. A review of the October 2009, January 2010 and the May 2010 exams indicate that a total of 1221 individuals participated in the NCTRC exam program. Provided below is a summary table that contains the number of candidates per exam administration and the corresponding pass rate of first-time examinees.

Exam Date	# Tested	Pass Rate
Oct. 2009	489	73%
Jan. 2010	270	70%
May 2010	462	79%

New Applications for Professional Eligibility: For the period July 1, 2009 to March 24, 2010, 687 new applications were reviewed for professional eligibility. The number of candidates that met the NCTRC Professional Eligibility Standards and thus eligible to sit for the NCTRC exam was 642 (93.4%).

CTRS Annual Renewal: For the period November 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010, 8760 (87.1%) individual CTRSs renewed their certification.

Recertification Application: For the period November 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010, 1221 applications for recertification were received by NCTRC. A total of 94.2% of the applications were approved for recertification. Approximately 3.0% of the individuals who applied for recertification used the exam option while the majority (97.0%) used the professional experience and continuing education option.

Did you know ...

- There are four states that require a license to practice TR/RT (UT, NC, NH, and OK)
- NCTRC is accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA)
- The NCTRC practice exam contains sample questions that directly reflect the current NCTRC Job Analysis.

Please contact NCTRC at 845-639-1439 or nctrc@nctrc.org if you have any questions or concerns.

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