



July/August 2012

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**National Council For Therapeutic Recreation Certification**

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## Welcome to NCTRC e-News!

### NCTRC to Conduct Annual Certificants Meeting

NCTRC conducts its Annual Meeting for CTRs at the annual professional conference of the American Therapeutic Recreation Association (ATRA). The official meeting this year will be held in Phoenix, AZ at the 2012 Annual ATRA Conference. The Annual Meeting will be held at the Pointe Hilton Squaw Peak Resort on Saturday, October 13 from 12:30pm-1:30pm.

The NCTRC Annual Meeting of Certificants is a valuable opportunity for NCTRC to share information regarding current activities and to 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.

### Application Review and Exam Statistics

**NCTRC Exam:** NCTRC conducts three exam administrations within a one-year cycle. A review of the October 2011, January 2012, and the May 2012 exams indicate that a total of 1528 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. 2011	558	74%
Jan. 2012	279	72%
May 2012	691	76%

**New Applications for Professional Eligibility:** For the period March 22, 2011 to March 26, 2012, 1157 new applications were reviewed for professional eligibility. The number of candidates that met the NCTRC Professional Eligibility Standards and thus became eligible to sit for the NCTRC exam was 1030 (89.0%).

**CTRS Annual Renewal:** For the period November 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012, 8222 (85.3%) individual CTRs renewed their certification.

**Recertification Application:** For the period November 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012, 1791 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.

### November Recertification Exam Option

NCTRC would like to remind you that if you are coming to the end of your five year recertification cycle you can take the NCTRC exam to meet the requirements for recertification. The October 2012 exam is the only exam one can take to meet the November Recertification cycle requirements. The recertification registration deadline for the October 2012 exam is August 10, 2012. Visit the NCTRC website [www.nctrc.org](http://www.nctrc.org) to access the exam registration form. From the home page, click on "exam" or use your log-in information to access the form. There are two options for submission. You can fill out the registration form online and submit it with a

credit card payment or print off the registration form, fill it out, and mail it directly to NCTRC with a check or credit card number. The dates for the October 2012 exam are October 1-5, 2012.

## **CTRS Specialty Certification Testimonials**

NCTRC introduced the Specialty Certification Program in January 2010. Since its inception NCTRC has received many applications and has been able to award Specialty Certification to several successful CTRs. Provided below are a variety of personal testimonials from CTRs who have achieved CTRS Specialty Certification status.

"Obtaining the Specialty Certification has afforded me an even greater respect from my professional colleagues. The psychiatrists and psychologists at my facility have commented positively on the importance of this Certification. Dr. Fred Dyer, CADC and a Consultant, has stated -"The Specialty Certification as attained by Ms. Judge represents outstanding achievement in the Behavioral Health Field. It is so very important as we go about our business of helping patients with mental health issues. Congratulations to Ms. Judge on receiving this Certification. And thanks so much to her credentialing body-- NCTRC ."

***Martha Judge, CTRS-Specialization in Behavioral Health***

"I applied and completed the requirement for the Specialty Certification in Behavioral Health July 2011, I was asked to speak at our State conference (Arkansas Therapeutic Recreation Society), in October 2011, regarding the application process, my experience, and the maintenance of the Specialty Certification. I currently provide Recreation Therapy services for Veterans with co-occurring disorders at the Central Arkansas Veterans Healthcare, North Little Rock, AR. As a result of the Specialty Certification in Behavioral Health, I have begun working toward my certification as a Certified Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counselor (CADC). I expect to complete the CADC in 2013-14. Thank you."

***Mark Douglas, CTRS-Specialization in Behavioral Health***

"The Specialty Certification in Behavioral Services has allowed me to expand in the field in many different ways. I was promoted to Director of Rehabilitation. I find that agencies feel secure knowing that they have a therapist who holds all the possible credentials. With hospital accreditation standards, a therapist with a specialty certification is knowledgeable to develop standards of practice to meet the needs of the patients and develop cost effective systems to drive Therapeutic Recreation to its highest potential involving the public and educators in the community. New programs that are trendy and offered in the community such as Latin Jam, Zumba, radio talk, art support group, circuit training have been adapted to meet the needs of individuals suffering from mental illness. This helps promote normalization and community inclusion for this population. We are driven to utilize the highest form of computer technology to create quality, innovative programs to allow patients to choose our hospital vs. another to maintain a high patient census. Therefore, a strong Therapeutic Recreation program can assist in bringing more profits into the hospital by maintaining a high census. A Therapist with a specialty certification helps provide the agency the quality and skills necessary to meet the hospital's mission."

***Laura DiFusco, MS, CTRS-Specialization in Behavioral Health, RTC, RC***

"I had included completion of the Specialty Certification as one of my professional goals for this year. I feel that obtaining that credential is evidence of my commitment to the population that I serve."

***Anne Richard, MS, LRT/CTRS-Specialization in Geriatrics***

"I was awarded Specialty Certification in Behavioral Health in November 2011. I had been talking with colleagues about the application process (I was denied once due to lack of sufficient content specific CEUs). My colleagues are aware of the significance of national certification and specialty certification in particular. They were appropriately impressed when I was awarded Specialty Certification in Behavioral Health. From discipline to discipline, PhD to LCSW to MD, I receive congratulatory comments. Managers at the highest level of the agency congratulated me on this accomplishment including sending out a Division-wide email with congratulations. My work with patients on a day-to-day basis has taken on greater appreciation from referents. I have received more hallway "Thanks for the work you are doing with my patient" than prior to receiving Specialty Certification in November 2011. The number of referrals of more complex patients has also increased since the Specialty Certification has been made known to

colleagues, as referents are more aware of my skill and ability. I am honored to be awarded this Specialty Certification and glad I pursued this advanced professional recognition.”

***Nancy McFarlane, CTRS-Specialization in Behavioral Health***

“I am grateful for the opportunity to have a credential and governing body recognize my contributions and ongoing training in advanced practices in therapeutic recreation. I am currently working in a position as a psychotherapist and though I completed psychology coursework that pertained to advanced clinical practices my master’s degree stated Masters in Health and Recreation rather than therapeutic recreation studies. I graduated from Indiana University graduate program in therapeutic recreation and when I received my diploma I was disappointed that my profession and studies were not acknowledged on my degree. Now that I have this speciality certification in behavioural health it provides me with that recognition of what I studied in my graduate program and the ongoing training I have participated in over the years of clinical practice. I think that this acknowledgement from a governing body and credential institution provides certified members with the professional support they need in the Canadian mental health sector. Therapeutic Recreation Specialists with experience in mental health who embark on further studies can continue to present themselves professionally with a credential governing body which is required in our work force in Canada to indicate competency and standards are being met by a professional in our field.”

***Anonymous, CTRS-Specialization in Behavioral Health***

“I have found that my specialty certification in Behavioral Health has increased my knowledge and enhanced my skills related to working with adults and geriatrics in the acute care Behavioral Health field. Receiving education on the most current research and proven treatment interventions in the Behavioral Health field allows me to bring innovative programming to the patients I serve. Providing education to caregivers regarding activity implementation that they may provide to their family members has been well received, appreciated, and personally rewarding. Being told that I make a positive difference in the lives of others is the highest compliment a CTRS can receive, and the foundation for my dedication. My specialty certification is an additional way to promote the field of therapeutic recreation and maintain the highest certification available in the profession. I am very proud to be a CTRS with this advanced certification, and find that it is highly regarded in the healthcare field.”

***Rebecca Pierson, CTRS-Specialization in Behavioral Health***

“I have been a CTRS for almost 11 years now. The training and certification has served me well. I have been the Activities Director at Virginia Tech Adult Day Services (ADS) for more than nine of those years. When I came to ADS, I was hired to a part-time wage position. Shortly after I was hired, the position became full time. About 1 ½ years later, I completed a Master’s Degree in Theological Studies. Within five years, from my initial hire date, the position had evolved and developed into an active field site for service-learning, field study, and interns. This is when the department transitioned the position from staff to Faculty Instructor. I attribute the evolution of my position to the skills I have developed as a CTRS which has been empowered by our Director to enhance the experiential learning opportunities available through our Center. The qualities and skills associated with being a CTRS coupled with the Director’s ability to see the potential for the position have been of great benefit to the center.

Last year the Director announced her retirement for this year. At the time I was preparing for recertification and applying for specialization in geriatrics. Having the specialty certification adds a layer of professionalism that designates my expertise. After a 5 hour interview process, including a presentation to faculty, staff, and college students I was chosen as the new Director for Adult Day Services. I believe that acquiring the specialty certification significantly contributed to my knowledge and professionalism in ways that better prepared me for this position.”

***Ila Schepisi, MTS, CTRS-Specialization in Geriatrics***

### **Did you know ...**

- NCTRC uses email notifications for reminders about recertification and annual maintenance applications. For an application, please contact the office.
- NCTRC has a recertification extension policy if you have experienced extenuating circumstances or an emergency beyond your control.
- Recertification applications may be submitted up to 1 year prior to your expiration date.

Please contact NCTRC at 845-639-1439 or [nctrc@nctrc.org](mailto:nctrc@nctrc.org) if you have any questions or concerns.

**Thank you for your continued support of NCTRC and the CTRS credential.**