

2021 CTRS®

Job Analysis Study

NCTRC Report on the International Job Analysis of
Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialists

CTRS®—The Qualified Provider

Effective January 2023



National Council for Therapeutic
Recreation Certification®

Protecting and Promoting Since 1981

2021 CTRS® JOB ANALYSIS REPORT

This report outlines the purpose, procedures, and results of the 2021 NCTRC Job Analysis Study. The job analysis study was conducted by NCTRC with technical assistance from Alpine Testing Solutions, Inc. Alpine provides test development, validation, psychometric analysis, examinee data management services and related policy consultation for education, licensure, and professional certification testing programs in a range of sectors.

The purpose of the job analysis study was to identify the knowledge and tasks that are important for the necessary level of competence for entry into the profession as a qualified provider of recreational therapy services. The findings of the job analysis study serve as the basis of the NCTRC Certification Exam and inform the CTRS about content required for recertification.

Procedures

STEP 1

The first step was to convene a meeting of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs).

NCTRC selected the SMEs participating in the virtual meetings to represent the diverse disciplines, geographies, and job roles representative of the therapeutic recreation profession. All members of this panel held active status as a CTRS (**Table 1**).

The panel of twelve SMEs began with a review of the Test Design Document (TDD). The TDD identifies the structure of the certification, description of the certification domain, intended interpretation and uses of test scores, and expectations of the entry-level candidate.

During the meetings, the facilitator guided the panel through a review of the information within the TDD and description of the entry-level candidate. The panel completed a series of task analysis activities to create a document that identified the major domains, tasks and supporting knowledge and skills deemed necessary for entry into the profession as a qualified provider of recreational therapy services. Through this process, the SMEs identified six (6) domains and 12 tasks.

TABLE 1: NCTRC JOB ANALYSIS STUDY COMMITTEE PARTICIPANTS

Name	Job Title	State/Province, Country
Janet Crealock, CTRS	Recreation Therapist	New Brunswick, Canada
Jim Huffman, CTRS	Director of Community Services	Missouri, USA
Thera Johnson, CTRS	Recreation Therapist	Florida, USA
Jenna Johnstone, CTRS	TR Supervisor	British Columbia, Canada
Myisha Jones, CTRS	TR Supervisor	California, USA
Sabrei Marriott, CTRS	Recreation Therapist	New Jersey, USA
Barbara Penning, CTRS	Recreation Therapist	Iowa, USA
Anne Peterson, CTRS	Recreation Therapist	Washington, USA
Scott Shields, CTRS	TR Supervisor	California, USA
Aurora Verlin, CTRS	Educator	Pennsylvania, USA
Marc Weingrad, CTRS	TR Supervisor	Virginia, USA
Ann Dolloff, CTRS	NCTRC Exam Management Committee	Pennsylvania, USA
Rachelle Forster, CTRS	NCTRC Exam Management Committee	Alberta, Canada
Trevor Miller, CTRS	NCTRC Exam Management Committee	Oregon, USA
Anne Richard, CTRS	NCTRC Executive Director	New City, NY
Noelle Molloy, CTRS	NCTRC Test Development Specialist	New City, NY

STEP 2

The second step was to distribute an online survey via Survey Monkey.

NCTRC sent the survey link to an email list of 14,506 individuals who held active status as a CTRS. The completed response rate for the survey was 12.2% (1,774/14,506). A review of the respondents' demographic profile indicates alignment with the representation of the overall CTRS population.

The survey collected data on the proposed six (6) domains and 12 tasks, and corresponding weightings for the CTRS exam.

Results from the survey were analyzed with the purpose of developing the CTRS exam blueprint, knowledge domains for continuing education, and job tasks for internship and professional experience.

STEP 3

The third step was to reconvene the Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) to discuss the survey results.

The SMEs were presented with the exam weightings based on the online survey data with the weightings based on the group's initial input from the first step. The purpose of this meeting was to compare the results, discuss differences, and provide a final recommendation to NCTRC for the CTRS exam blueprint. The recommended CTRS exam blueprint can be found in [Table 2](#).

TABLE 2: CTRS EXAM BLUEPRINT

Content Areas	Percentage of Exam
Professionalism	12%
Assessment	19%
Planning	18%
Implementation	25%
Evaluation and Documentation	16%
Administration	10%
Total	100%

Results

Table 3 displays the task mean ratings for both frequency and criticality from the survey responses.

The tasks with higher frequency ratings indicate that respondents reported doing the task most often. The highest frequency ratings were for tasks *1.01 Develop Professional Relationships* and *4.02 Adhere to risk management protocols* with both having a mean rating = 4.47. These were followed closely by tasks *4.01 Deliver program services* (mean rating = 4.46) and *5.01 Document client progress* (mean rating = 4.43). The tasks with lower frequency ratings indicate that respondents reported doing the task less often. The lowest frequency ratings were for tasks *6.02 Assign and monitor personnel* (mean rating = 2.80) and *5.02 Document program and client incident* (mean rating = 3.18).

The tasks with higher criticality ratings indicate that respondents reported an increased risk of a negative consequence if the task was performed incorrectly. The highest criticality ratings were for tasks *4.02 Adhere to risk management protocols* (mean rating = 3.80) and *5.02 Document program and client incident* (mean rating = 3.46).

The tasks with lower criticality ratings indicate that respondents reported a decreased risk of a negative consequence if the task was performed incorrectly. The lowest criticality ratings were for tasks *6.02 Assign and monitor personnel* (mean rating = 2.63) and *1.01 Develop Professional Relationships* (mean rating = 2.99).

TABLE 3: TASK RATINGS

Domain and Task	Frequency Mean	Criticality Mean
Domain 1 – Professionalism		
Task 1.01 Develop Professional Relationships	4.47	2.99
Task 1.02 Maintain Professional Competency	4.23	3.35
Domain 2 – Assessment		
Task 2.01 Conduct the assessment process	4.32	3.39
Task 2.02 Analyze assessment data to plan care	4.16	3.22
Domain 3 – Planning		
Task 3.01 Develop individualized plan of care	4.07	3.07
Task 3.02 Design program services	4.25	3.26
Domain 4 – Implementation		
Task 4.01 Deliver program services	4.46	3.24
Task 4.02 Adhere to risk management protocols	4.47	3.80
Domain 5 – Evaluation and Documentation		
Task 5.01 Document client progress	4.43	3.06
Task 5.02 Document program and client incident	3.18	3.46
Domain 6 – Administration		
Task 6.01 Maintain department documentation	4.06	3.08
Task 6.02 Assign and monitor personnel	2.80	2.63

Summary

The 2021 Job Analysis Study reflects an overall pattern consistent with previously conducted studies regarding important aspects of therapeutic recreation practice.

The knowledge domains and task areas identified will serve as the basis of the NCTRC exam blueprint and inform the CTRS about content for continuing education and job tasks for internship and professional experience (**Table 4**).

The 2021 NCTRC Job Analysis Study point to a well-defined and consistently applied profession. Based on the results of the survey, the professional knowledge and job tasks for the CTRS continue to underscore the importance of the core therapeutic recreation process (i.e., assessment, planning, implementation, evaluation, and documentation).

TABLE 4: PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND JOB TASKS FOR THE CTRS

Knowledge Domain 1: Professionalism	Knowledge Domain 2: Assessment
Job Task Area 1.01. Develop professional relationships	Job Task Area 2.01. Conduct the assessment process
<i>Including, but not limited to:</i>	<i>Including, but not limited to:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communicate with interdisciplinary teams (e.g., team meetings, care/treatment planning, client reviews, etc.)• Educate internal/external stakeholders about the scope of RT/TR practice (e.g., administration, board of directors, third party payers, funders, interdisciplinary team, service providers, families, etc.)• Advocate for client’s rights with interdisciplinary team, clients, and families	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish a therapeutic relationship with clients (e.g., explain characteristics, professional vs personal boundaries, etc.)• Apply knowledge of diagnostic and developmental characteristics (e.g., cognitive/developmental impairments, physical disabilities, psychiatric impairments, etc.)• Determine assessment tools to establish outcomes (e.g., standardized, interprofessional, FIM, MDS, etc.)• Gather primary data across functional domains (e.g., sensory, cognitive, social, physical, affective, leisure, etc.)• Gather secondary data (e.g., support system, charts, medical records, etc.)• Use findings from data gathered to determine strengths and limitations, including barriers to leisure participation (e.g., social, environmental, physical, etc.)
Job Task Area 1.02. Maintain professional competency	Job Task Area 2.02. Apply assessment data to plan care
<i>Including, but not limited to:</i>	<i>Including, but not limited to:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand trends in RT/TR practice (e.g., evidence-based practice, etc.)• Apply concepts of cultural competence/intelligence (e.g., implicit bias, cultural differences, diversity and inclusion, etc.)• Maintain professional qualifications (e.g., continuing education, staff development, credentials, licensure, additional credentials, etc.)• Participate in internal/external committees (e.g., quality improvement teams, professional organizations, etc.)• Comply with professional Code of Ethics• Comply with professional Standards of Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prioritize client needs and strengths• Create goals and objectives (e.g., outcomes) based on assessment data• Communicate assessment data to interdisciplinary team/ other service providers and client

Knowledge Domain 3: Planning

Job Task Area 3.01. Develop individualized plan of care

Including, but not limited to:

- Utilize RT/TR service delivery models (e.g., Leisure Ability, Health Protection/Health Promotion, Health and Well-Being Model, etc.)
- Utilize theories of practice (e.g., person-centered, medical model, social model, positive psychology, etc.)
- Align goals and/or objectives to support service delivery (e.g., one-to-one, group interventions, types of modalities, facilitation techniques, etc.)

Job Task Area 3.02. Design program services

Including, but not limited to:

- Design programs based on client needs, interests, and abilities
- Engage in logistical program planning (e.g., transportation, space, supplies, accessibility, etc.)
- Select intervention techniques, approaches, and modalities (e.g., social skill training, community reintegration, palliative care, behavior management, etc.)
- Determine activity modifications (e.g., assistive technology, adaptive devices, and adaptive techniques, etc.)
- Use Activity/Task analysis to provide quality services
- Identify formative evaluation techniques to determine effectiveness of specific programs (e.g., client survey, debriefing, etc.)

Knowledge Domain 4: Implementation

Job Task Area 4.01. Deliver program services

Including, but not limited to:

- Explain purpose of intervention/program
- Determine the steps needed to implement program services (e.g., room arrangements conducive to respective intervention, staffing ratios, environmental and programming accessibility, barriers to participation, etc.)
- Establish facilitation structure and leadership approach
- Implement program plan (e.g., using adaptive recreational equipment, strategic partnering, group dynamics, adapt in the moment, conduct co-treatments with team members, etc.)
- Monitor effectiveness of intervention/program

Job Task Area 4.02. Adhere to risk management protocols

Including, but not limited to:

- Utilize components of safety protocols (e.g., client consent, process for gathering consent, right to live at risk, falls prevention, MSDS logs, etc.)
- Identify relevant precautions to provide a safe environment (e.g., isolation, environmental concerns, or contraindications, etc.)

Knowledge Domain 5: Evaluation and Documentation

Job Task Area 5.01. Document client progress

Including, but not limited to:

- Complete progress notes (e.g., electronic, narrative, SOAP, DARP, etc.)
- Develop discharge/transition plans
- Communicate with interdisciplinary team/service providers on client progress
- Conduct summative evaluation of program effectiveness (e.g., revision of goals and objectives, revision of modalities, interventions, and facilitation techniques, etc.)

Job Task Area 5.02. Document program and client incident

Including, but not limited to:

- Identify policies and procedures for reporting specific incidents
- Document specific details of incidents

Knowledge Domain 6: Administration

Job Task Area 6.01. Maintain department documentation

Including, but not limited to:

- Follow service plan of operation (e.g., program schedules, support services, RT/TR interventions, policy, and procedure development, etc.)
- Adhere to agency policies regarding program and client documentation (e.g., timeliness, incident reports, formative and summative evaluations, quality improvement plans, etc.)
- Adhere to agency fiscal management (e.g., budgeting requirements, external/internal funding sources, etc.)
- Identify state/provincial, regional, federal regulations pertaining to RT/TR services

Job Task Area 6.02. Assign and monitor personnel

Including, but not limited to:

- Contribute to staff performance appraisals
- Assist with education and supervision of staff, students, and volunteers (e.g., provide training opportunities, etc.)
- Maintain internship program

National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification®

Protecting and Promoting Since 1981

845 639 1439

nctrc.org

NCTRC is a member of the Institute for Credentialing Excellence (I.C.E.) and the CTRS Credentialing Program is accredited by National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA). "NCTRC", "National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification", "CTRS", and "Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist" are the registered trademarks of the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification. Unauthorized use of any NCTRC trademark or confusingly similar mark is strictly prohibited. NCTRC does not warrant or guarantee the provision of competent services by certificants; NCTRC certification helps to demonstrate the certificant has met the requirements for the profession.

©2026 National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification® All rights reserved. Copying and distribution in any medium is strictly prohibited without prior NCTRC® written consent.

