Recreation Therapist

DESCRIPTION OF THE FIELD
Recreational therapy, also known as therapeutic recreation, is a systematic process that utilizes recreation and other activity-based interventions to address the assessed needs of individuals with illnesses and/or disabling conditions, as a means to psychological and physical health, recovery and well-being. A recreational therapist utilizes a wide range of activity and community based interventions and techniques to improve the physical, cognitive, emotional, social, and leisure needs of their clients. Recreational therapists assist clients to develop skills, knowledge, and behaviors for daily living and community involvement. The therapist works with the client and their family to incorporate specific interests and community resources into therapy to achieve optimal outcomes that transfer to their real life situation.

A qualified recreational therapist is someone who is nationally certified as a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS), usually referred to as Recreational Therapists. Qualified professionals are certified through the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification (NCTRC), which requires a bachelor’s degree or higher from an accredited university, a formal internship and the passing of a national certification examination. A CTRS must maintain their credential every five years through the NCTRC recertification process. Academic programs in Therapeutic Recreation or Recreational Therapy emphasize course work in the physical, biological, and behavioral sciences and recreation and leisure theory. (Provided by the American Therapeutic Recreation Association)

CAREERS
Recreation Therapists can work in a variety of settings including:
- Hospitals (state, local, and private)
- Nursing care facilities
- Government
- Ambulatory healthcare services
- Continuing care retirement communities and assisted living facilities for the elderly

RESOURCES
For more information, please visit the following websites:

- Occupational Outlook Handbook

- American Therapeutic Recreation Association
  [http://www.atra-online.com/](http://www.atra-online.com/)

- National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification
  [http://nctrc.org/](http://nctrc.org/)