



“Leisure, recreation and play are essential to health and wellness. Focusing on people’s strengths, therapeutic recreation engages people in a systematic process through which leisure is used as a primary tool in achieving health and wellness.”

The Therapeutic Recreation Association of Atlantic Canada (TRAAC) was established in 1999 and represents 92 therapeutic recreation professionals, supporting members and students throughout Atlantic Canada. Our mission is to promote excellence in Therapeutic Recreation through advocacy for our profession and members, the development of resources to further our field and to provide our members with continuing education opportunities.

Therapeutic recreation professionals are multi-faceted and can practice in a variety of settings and populations including but not limited to: rehabilitation facilities, acute care facilities, addictions prevention and mental health, long term care and assisted living facilities, youth at risk, pediatrics, correctional facilities and in community-based health agencies. The primary purpose of Recreation Therapy is to improve an individual’s health and overall quality of life. Therapeutic Recreation professionals strive to prevent, reduce or eliminate any physical, emotional, social and/or behavioural dysfunction our clients may be experiencing to optimize their overall health and well-being by focusing on the individual’s strengths and using leisure or recreation activities.

TRAAC is led by a twelve member board; who volunteer their time to work towards the goals and strategic directions that our membership feels are needed to move the field of Therapeutic Recreation forward. We advocate for our profession by pursuing consistent job hiring practices in Atlantic Canada. In September 2006, we finalized our *“Standards of Practice for Recreation as a Therapy and Service”*. This document advocates that organizations and Therapeutic Recreation professionals understand the minimum core competencies needed for the various levels of Recreation Therapy service delivery and to ensure that professionals are not working in a position outside of their scope of practice. As well, TRAAC is currently pursuing self-regulation for Recreation Therapists in the province of Nova Scotia.

This would ensure that to practice as a Recreation Therapist an individual must be certified through the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification (NCTRC) as a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS).

Each year, TRAAC hosts an annual conference to provide our members with additional continuing education opportunities. At these conferences, there are presentations about assessment, new facilitation techniques, program evaluation, and collaborative teamwork to name just a few. In June 2012, TRAAC will be co-hosting our national conference with Nova Scotia Recreation Professionals in Health (NSRPH) in Halifax, Nova Scotia. This year's conference theme is "*Securing our Future in Health and Wellness*" and we look forward to welcoming Therapeutic Recreation professionals from across Canada and providing them with new insights about the field of Therapeutic Recreation.

For more information or to contact someone at the Therapeutic Recreation Association of Atlantic Canada please visit our website at www.traac.ca.

February is National Therapeutic Recreation month and we encourage everyone to ensure that recreation and leisure is a part of their everyday lives!