



AMERICAN THERAPEUTIC RECREATION ASSOCIATION

FEBRUARY IS INTERNATIONAL RECREATIONAL THERAPY MONTH

The American Therapeutic Recreation Association (ATRA) declares **Friday, February 1st, 2019-Thursday, February 28th, 2019 International Recreational Therapy Month**. From advancements in evidence-based recreational therapy practice to quality standards in recreational therapy education, ATRA supports and empowers all recreational therapists. Please join us in celebrating the contributions of recreational therapists around the world. Tune in all month long to communication from ATRA with ways to celebrate RT.

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. Further, "Recreational Therapy" means a treatment service designed to restore, remediate and rehabilitate a person's level of functioning and independence in life activities, to promote health and wellness as well as reduce or eliminate the activity limitations and restrictions to participation in life situations caused by an illness or disabling condition (ATRA, 2015).

A Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS) is the qualified provider of recreational therapy services. The CTRS credential is granted by NCTRC after specific educational and experiential qualifications are met, eligibility to take the qualifying exam is established, and testing is successfully completed. Licensure, in some states, provides further protections for consumers by increasing qualifying standards to practice.

With society's increase in health disparities and focus on non-pharmacological health interventions, recreational therapists have the expertise to assist individuals in coping with the stress of illness and disability through leisure and recreation-based treatment options. The recreational therapist empowers clients to manage their illness and/or disability so they may achieve and maintain optimal levels of independence, productivity, well-being, and quality of life.