

## What is Therapeutic Recreation?

Therapeutic Recreation is a health profession which acknowledges the significance of leisure and recreation as integral components of optimal health and well-being of individuals with illnesses and disabling conditions.



## Why is Therapeutic Recreation important?

Therapeutic Recreation is more than simply play, because it uses the power of creative leisure activities to support the rehabilitation process and promote wellness throughout our lives. It has been documented that people involved in therapeutic recreation in a clinical setting heal faster, adjust better to their illness/injury/disabling condition, have improved motor and cognitive function, and reintegrate into the community more readily.

## What role do Recreation Therapists play in Alberta?

Recreation Therapists are skilled professionals, with post-secondary education in recreation therapy, who bring research-based knowledge and expertise to the patient/client and care team in a variety of settings.



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## Recreation Therapists

- Work with individuals with physical, mental, emotional, cognitive or social limitations that impact their ability, attitude and motivation to engage freely in leisure and to maintain a healthy and balanced leisure lifestyle.
- Collaborate within health service teams which include: Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapists, Speech Language Pathologists, Social Workers, Therapy Assistants, Therapy Aides, Dieticians, Nurses, Physicians, Psychiatrists, and Psychologists.
- Work in urban and rural settings throughout the continuum of health care including acute care, rehabilitation, community, home care, assisted living, day programs, continuing care and private practice.
- Follow established standards of practice including assessment, intervention/care planning, program development and delivery, documentation, evaluation, research, professional development and community practice.



## Physical Benefits of Therapeutic Recreation

- Improves the general physical and perceptual motor function of individuals
- Improves endurance and strength
- Reduces cardiovascular and respiratory risk
- Reduces the risk of physical complications secondary to disability



## Social Benefits of Therapeutic Recreation

- Improves social skills, socialization, cooperation and interpersonal interactions
- Increases self-confidence and personal recreation interests
- Supports community integration



## Cognitive Benefits of Therapeutic Recreation

- Maintains or improves cognitive function
- Maintains or improves memory
- Maintains or improves orientation
- Enhances new learning

## Psychological Benefits of Therapeutic Recreation

- Improves coping behaviour and mental health
- Increases self-esteem, self-concept and adjustment to disability
- Reduces stress, depression and anxiety
- Reduces inappropriate behaviors



## Developmental Benefits of Recreation & Leisure

- Improves independent leisure functioning
- Assists in healthy use of discretionary time
- Provides links to community services
- Advocates for inclusive communities
- Maintains family life



## Recreation Therapy not only benefits the person but can also benefit by:

- Enhancing family relationships
- Help family members develop life-long skills
- Contribute to functional skill development
- Provide respite for caregivers
- Facilitate positive visits and the development of social support