

Why Certification is Essential...

Today's demanding employment market requires recreation therapists to demonstrate that they are educated and qualified to practice. Within the realm of recreation therapy services, the CTRS is the benchmark of quality.

Among the myriad of vital reasons to become certified as a CTRS there are three general perspectives:

1. *Ethical Perspective:* Certification is the right thing to do... as a professional you are expected to become credentialed in your field. Becoming certified provides a sense of self-empowerment and satisfaction.
2. *Professional Perspective:* Certification provides guidance to employers about your qualifications; it demonstrates you have met the standards generally recognized and accepted by professional peers, colleagues and employers.
3. *Societal Perspective:* Certification elevates the stature of RT services in the eyes of the public, regulators and employment sectors. The certification process may provide a level of protection for the consumers of RT services.

Only those individuals who have met the specific qualifications to become certified by NCTRC® can use the designation of CTRS.

Employers are increasingly utilizing the NCTRC certification and the CTRS credential as a criterion for employment and professional prestige. Several federal and national regulatory and accreditation organizations recognize the CTRS as the entry-level credential for recreation therapists.



NCTRC: Dedicated to Professional Excellence

Established in 1981, the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification (NCTRC) is a non-profit, national organization dedicated to professional excellence for the protection of consumers through the certification of recreation therapists.

Professional recognition is granted by NCTRC to individuals who apply and meet established standards for certification, including education, experience, and continuing professional development. The Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS) credential is offered to qualified individuals based on these stringent requirements.

NCTRC supports quality human service and health care standards and maintains a relationship with the Joint Commission for the Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) and the Commission for Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF). NCTRC provides credential verification services to employers and health care agencies. These services are strongly encouraged by NCTRC to monitor personnel adherence to the standards of the Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist.

NCTRC is a charter member organization of the National Organization for Competency Assurance (NOCA). NCTRC is accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA).

For more information about NCTRC and to review current certification standards refer to our website at:

www.NCTRC.org

NCTRC does not warrant or guarantee the provision of competent services by CTRSs; NCTRC certification helps to demonstrate the certificant has met the entry-level requirements for the profession.

CTRS is a trademark of the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification "NCTRC®", "National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification®", "CTRS®" and "Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist™" are the trademarks of the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification. All rights reserved. 2004.



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Recreation Therapy

Why Become a CTRS®?

**Certified Therapeutic
Recreation Specialists™
Enhance Quality of Life**



**National Council for
Therapeutic Recreation
Certification®**

What is RT?

Recreation therapy, also known as therapeutic recreation, is a systematic process that utilizes recreation and other activity-based interventions based upon the assessed needs of individuals with illnesses and/or disabling conditions. **The purpose of the RT process is to improve or maintain physical, cognitive, social, emotional and spiritual functioning in order to facilitate full participation in life.**

What is a CTRS?

A Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS) has acquired a body of knowledge that includes theory, philosophy, and practice, and that spans a wide range of disabling conditions and illnesses. When that knowledge is applied, the CTRS addresses the total person and the associative life factors that may apply to their specific disability or illness.

Professional recognition is granted by NCTRC to individuals who apply and meet established standards for certification which include education, experience, and continuing professional development. The Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist certification is granted after those specific qualifications are met.

About NCTRC Certification

Certification by NCTRC signifies that the certificant has the skill, ability and knowledge generally recognized as necessary for recreation therapy practice. NCTRC certification serves as the unifying credential for recreation therapists throughout the U.S. and Canada. To date, there are approximately 16,000 Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialists on the NCTRC registry.

NCTRC's trademarks provide a significant degree of legal protection against unauthorized use of the certification marks. "NCTRC®", "National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification®", "CTRS®" and "Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialists™" are the trademarks of the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification. In addition to federal registration of the "CTRS®" credential by the United States Patent and Trademark Office, NCTRC's trademark rights to the credential are also registered in most states.

General requirements for CTRS certification:

Education

Minimum: Bachelor-level degree

Experience

Documented field placement or work experience within recreation therapy

Examination

Successful completion of the NCTRC Certification Exam

How to Become a CTRS®

1 Academic Path

The Academic Path is designed for the traditional academic graduate. The steps include:

1. Completion of Bachelor degree or higher with a major concentration in Recreation Therapy
2. Completion of a minimum 12 week/480 hour internship supervised by a CTRS
3. Successful completion of the NCTRC Certification Exam

–OR–

2 Equivalency Paths

Equivalent paths are designed for applicants who have accomplished extensive work in RT in combination with designated coursework to meet the NCTRC Certification Eligibility Standards.

PATH A

1. Completion of a Bachelor degree or higher
2. Completion of specific coursework in Recreation Therapy and related areas
3. Five (5) years full-time paid experience in recreation therapy
4. Successful completion of the NCTRC Certification Exam

–OR–

PATH B

1. Completion of Bachelor degree or higher
2. Completion of specific coursework in Recreation Therapy and related areas
3. One (1) year full-time paid work experience in recreation therapy under the supervision of a CTRS
4. Successful completion of the NCTRC Certification Exam

