

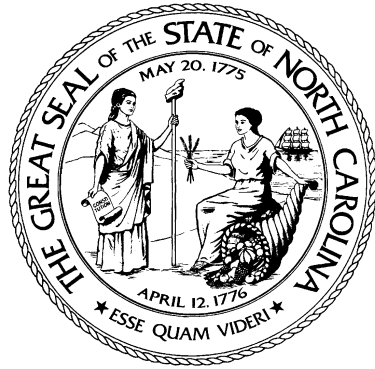
# LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON NEW LICENSING BOARDS

Assessment Report

For

UPDATE CERTIFICATION/LICENSURE/  
RECREATIONAL THERAPY

House Bill 613



## LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON NEW LICENSING BOARDS

July 6, 2005

The Legislative Committee on New Licensing Boards is pleased to release this assessment report on regulation of the practice of recreational therapy. This report constitutes both the preliminary and final assessment report.

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**Representative Drew Saunders**

**LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON NEW LICENSING BOARDS  
(2005-2006)**

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## PREFACE

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The Legislative Committee on New Licensing Boards is a 9-member joint committee of the House and Senate created and governed by statute (Article 18A of Chapter 120 of the General Statutes). The primary purpose of the Committee is to evaluate the need for a new licensing board or the proposed licensing of previously unregulated practitioners by an existing board. The Committee has been in existence since 1985.

The Committee solicits written and oral testimony on each licensing proposal in carrying out its duty to determine whether the proposal meets the following criteria:

- 1) Whether the unregulated practice of the profession can substantially endanger the public health, safety, or welfare, and whether the potential for such harm is recognizable and not remote or dependent upon tenuous argument.
- 2) Whether the profession possesses qualities that distinguish it from ordinary labor.
- 3) Whether practice of the profession requires specialized skill or training.
- 4) Whether a substantial majority of the public has the knowledge or experience to evaluate the practitioner's competence.
- 5) Whether the public can effectively be protected by other means.
- 6) Whether licensure would have a substantial adverse economic impact upon consumers of the practitioner's good or services.

The Committee issues an assessment report on its findings and recommendations. The recommendation in the report is not binding on other committees considering the proposal.

## HOUSE BILL 613

### UPDATE CERTIFICATION/LICENSURE/RECREATIONAL THERAPY

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#### BACKGROUND<sup>1</sup>

##### *Current Standards.*

The State Board of Therapeutic Recreation Certification was established by the General Assembly in 1986 when it enacted the Therapeutic Recreation Personnel Certification Act "to protect the public from misrepresentation of status by persons who hold themselves out to be 'certified therapeutic recreation specialists' or 'certified therapeutic recreation assistants.'"<sup>2</sup> The Scope of Therapeutic Recreation includes all direct client services of consultation, research, planning, design, and implementation of specific programs for either individuals or groups that require specific therapeutic recreation, education, training, and experience as defined in this Chapter.<sup>3</sup> Therapeutic Recreation is the use of recreation services that improve, develop, and/or maintain physical, psychological, emotional, and/or social behaviors that assist individuals in establishing and expressing an independent lifestyle.<sup>4</sup> However, the Board's scope of authority is currently limited to title protection licensure of two Board authorized professional titles: Certified Therapeutic Assistant and Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist. The Board has the authority to investigate complaints about professionals in these two categories who are either certified by the Board or in the process of becoming certified, but it has no authority to investigate or

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<sup>1</sup> **Source:** *Response to Questionnaire for the Legislative Committee for New Licensing Boards.* A copy of the questionnaire is attached to this report.

<sup>2</sup> G.S. § 90C-2

<sup>3</sup> As defined in G.S. § 90C-4(5)

<sup>4</sup> As defined in G.S. § 90C-4(6)

pursue complaints about individuals engaging in recreational therapy treatment oriented services utilizing some other non-regulated occupational title.

Current law authorizes certification as a Therapeutic Recreation Specialist or a Therapeutic Recreation Assistant. The proposed legislation, House Bill 613, changes certification to licensure and changes the titles of licensees, authorizing the licensure of a Recreational Therapist and a Recreational Therapy Assistant and defining a Recreational Therapy Aide as a non-licensed person who aids in providing recreational therapy services under the direct supervision of a licensed Recreational Therapist or licensed Recreational Therapy Assistant.

Since 1981, the national credential standard has been that of Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS), a voluntary national professional certification process administered by the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification (NCTRC). National credentialing in recreational therapy requires a bachelors or masters degree in recreational therapy/therapeutic recreation from an accredited institution with requisite courses in recreational therapy and the social and biological sciences as well as direct service field experience under the supervision of a CTRS or in North Carolina, a state credentialed TRS.

The federal government requires that recreational therapists employed by the Veterans Administration, National Institutes of Health, and the U. S. Department of Defense be nationally certified as Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialists (CTRS).

North Carolina is among the top three producers of nationally credentialed CTRS in the nation, with 12 institutions of higher education preparing recreational therapists. Currently, there are 736 nationally credentialed CTRS in the state of North Carolina. North Carolina has had a state professional certification program for therapeutic recreational

specialists (TRS) since 1987. NCTRC has established a national task force to monitor North Carolina's licensing initiative as a model for national application.

### LICENSING REQUIREMENTS

#### *Who Must Be Licensed.*

Under the proposed legislation, it would be a Class 1 misdemeanor with a maximum fine of \$500 to engage in the practice recreational therapy or therapeutic recreation without being licensed by the North Carolina Recreational Therapy Licensure Board. The Board shall establish reasonable competency requirements for licensure, including the power to adopt or use examination materials, study or training courses, and standards of recognized accrediting and credentialing agencies and professional associations and the power to establish or approve reasonable standards for renewal of licensure, including requirements for continuing recreational therapy or therapeutic recreation education for the following categories:

#### *Licensed Recreational Therapist:*

- Pass an examination as a therapeutic recreation specialist or a recreational therapist by the North Carolina Recreational Therapy Licensure Board or possess current certification as a "Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist" by the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification.
- Meet the minimum education or experience standards, as defined by rules of the Board, inclusive of practice competency standards or guidelines promulgated by professional associations and credentialing and accrediting organizations.
- Meet all required standards published by the Board.

#### *Licensed Recreational Therapy Assistant:*

- Meet the minimum education or experience standards, as defined by rules of the Board, inclusive of practice competency standards or guidelines promulgated by professional associations and credentialing and accrediting organizations as deemed appropriate by the Board.
- Meet all required standards published by the Board.

### *Exemptions from Certification.*

The Board may grant a license, without examination or by special examination, to any person who, at the time of application, is licensed as a recreational therapist or therapeutic recreation specialist by a similar Board of another county, state, or territory whose licensing standards are substantially equivalent to or higher than those required in the proposed legislation. Persons and practices not affected include:

- 1) Any person qualified, registered, certified, or licensed to engage in another profession or occupation or any person working under the supervision of a person registered, certified, or licensed to engage in another profession or occupation in this State from performing work incidental to the practice of that profession or occupation as long as that person does not represent himself or herself as a recreational therapy assistant or recreational therapist or the work to be recreational therapy or therapeutic recreation as defined by Chapter 90C of the General Statutes.
- 2) Any person employed as a therapeutic recreation specialist, therapeutic recreation assistant, or recreational therapist, or a recreational therapy assistant by the government of the United States, if he or she provides therapeutic recreation or recreational therapy solely under the direction and control of the organization by which he or she is employed.
- 3) Any person pursuing a course of study leading to a degree in recreational therapy or therapeutic recreation at an accredited college or university that meets the minimum academic requirements for a major or specialization in recreational therapy as defined by the rules and regulations of the Board.
- 4) Any person fulfilling the supervised fieldwork experience required for a degree and for licensure, as defined by the rules of the Board, if the person is designated by a title that clearly indicates his or her status as a student.

Any current State-certified person working within the scope of recreational therapy before January 30, 2006, may be exempt from all educational, examination, and experience requirements for initial licensure under the proposed legislation. In order to qualify for this exemption, an applicant:

- 1) Must apply to the Board for licensure before January 15, 2008; and
- 2) Must be working within the scope of recreational therapy and previously certified by the Board at the time of application.



**Fees.** Fees are set by the Board and cannot exceed the following amounts:

Purpose of Fee	Fee Amount
Initial Licensure	May not exceed \$200.00
Licensure Renewal Fee	Shall not exceed \$200.00
Record Maintenance Fee (mailing directory and newsletters; maintaining website)	Shall not exceed \$100.00
Inactive Fee	Shall not exceed \$ 50.00
Fees (nonrefundable) for the actual cost of duplication services, materials, and returned bank items	To be established by the Board

**Revocation, suspension, or denial of licensure.** The Board may require remedial education, issue a letter of reprimand, restrict, revoke, or suspend any license issued pursuant to this Chapter or deny any application for licensure if the Board determines that the licensee or applicant has done any of the following:

- 1) Given false information or withheld material information from the Board in procuring or attempting to procure a license pursuant to Chapter 90C of the General Statutes.
- 2) Been convicted of, or pleaded guilty or nolo contendere to, any crime that indicates that the person is unfit or incompetent to be licensed pursuant to 90C of the General Statutes.
- 3) Is unable to perform the functions for which a license has been issued due to impairment of mental or physical faculties.
- 4) Engaged in conduct that endangers the public health.
- 5) Is unfit or incompetent to be licensed pursuant to Chapter 90C of the General Statutes by reason of deliberate or negligent acts or omissions regardless of whether active injury to the patient or client is established.
- 6) Engaged in conduct that deceives, defrauds, or harms the public in the course of claiming licensed status or practicing recreational therapy.
- 7) Willfully violated any provision of Chapter 90C of the General Statutes, rules, or code of ethics enacted by the Board.

- 8) Aided, abetted, or assisted any person in violating the provisions of Chapter 90C of the General Statutes.

### **GOVERNING BOARD**

***North Carolina Board of Recreational Therapy Licensure.*** The 7-member North Carolina State Board of Therapeutic Recreation Certification already exists. The proposed legislation would change its name to the 'North Carolina Board of Recreational Therapy Licensure' and expand its powers and duties to include licensure. One additional member, to be appointed by the Governor and who must be a licensed physician in North Carolina, would increase its membership<sup>5</sup>. The term of membership would remain at three-years.

***Powers of the Board.*** The Board's powers and duties remain similar to the Board's existing powers and duties:

- 1) To administer this Chapter.
- 2) To issue interpretations of this Chapter.
- 3) To adopt, amend, or repeal rules and regulations in the manner prescribed by Chapter 150B of the General Statutes, as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this Chapter.
- 4) To establish qualifications of, employ and set the compensation of the Executive Director who shall not be a member of the Board.
- 5) To employ and fix the compensation of the personnel that the Board determines are necessary to carry out the provisions of this Chapter and to incur other expenses necessary to effectuate this Chapter.
- 6) To determine the qualifications of persons who are licensed pursuant to this Chapter.

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<sup>5</sup> Eight members composed of three (3) practicing recreational therapists, one appointed by the Governor, one appointed by the General Assembly upon recommendation of the President Pro Tempore, and one appointed by the General Assembly upon recommendation of the Speaker of the House of Representatives; one (1) licensed practicing recreational therapy assistant, appointed by the Governor; one (1) licensed practicing recreational therapist who is engaged primarily in providing education or training for recreational therapists or recreational therapy assistants, appointed by the Governor; one (1) licensed physician, appointed by the Governor; two (2) public members, one appointed by the General Assembly upon recommendation of the President Pro Tempore and one appointed by the General Assembly upon recommendation of the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

- 7) To issue, renew, deny, suspend, or revoke licenses and carry out any of the other actions authorized by this Chapter.
- 8) To conduct investigations for the purpose of determining whether violations of this Chapter are grounds for revoking, denying, suspending, or refusing to renew the licenses of persons licensed pursuant to this Chapter.
- 9) To maintain a record of all proceedings and make available to persons who hold a license and other concerned parties an annual report of all Board action.
- 10) To set fees for licensure, license renewal, and other services deemed necessary to carry out the purpose of this Chapter.
- 11) To adopt a seal containing the name of the Board to be used on licenses and official reports it issues.
- 12) To issue annually a list stating the names of persons currently licensed under the privilege of this Chapter.
- 13) To establish or approve, as defined by rule, reasonable competency requirements for licensure, including the power to adopt or use examination materials, study or training courses, and standards of recognized accrediting and credentialing agencies and professional associations and the power to establish or approve, as defined by rule, reasonable standards for renewal of licensure, including requirements for continuing recreational therapy or therapeutic recreation education.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON NEW LICENSING BOARDS

*SPECIFIC FINDINGS REGARDING  
RECREATIONAL THERAPY*

*HOUSE BILL 613*

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- (1) Whether the unregulated practice of the profession or occupation can substantially harm or endanger the public health, safety, or welfare, and whether the potential for such harm is recognizable and not remote or dependent upon tenuous argument;
- (2) Whether the profession or occupation possesses qualities that distinguish it from ordinary labor;
- (3) Whether practice of the profession or occupation requires specialized skill or training;
- (4) Whether a substantial majority of the public has the knowledge or experience to evaluate the practitioner's competence;
- (5) Whether the public can be effectively protected by other means; and
- (6) Whether licensure would have a substantial adverse economic impact upon consumers of the practitioner's goods or services.



## FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### UPDATE CERTIFICATION/LICENSURE/RECREATIONAL THERAPY

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**Findings.** The Legislative Committee on New Licensing Boards finds that the sponsors have met the six criteria by which the Committee judges licensure proposals. Specifically, the Committee finds that:

- 1) The unregulated practice of recreational therapy can substantially harm or endanger the public health, safety, or welfare because there is not a regulatory body in place to investigate and resolve allegations of impropriety by recreational therapy practitioners that are not certified by the existing State Board of Therapeutic Recreation Certification. The greatest potential for harm would be from individuals who lack the appropriate professional credentials but are engaging in the direct delivery of recreational therapy services to persons in need of rehabilitation and other health care services.
- 2) The profession possesses qualities that distinguish it from ordinary labor since professional education and training includes college level degrees as well as supervised direct service field experience.
- 3) The practice of recreational therapy requires specialized skill or training.
- 4) A substantial majority of the public does not have the knowledge or experience to evaluate the competence of recreational therapy professionals.
- 5) The public cannot be effectively protected by other means.
- 6) Licensure would not have a substantial adverse economic impact upon the recipient of the services of a recreational therapy professional.

**Recommendation.** The Legislative Committee on New Licensing Boards recommends the licensing of recreational therapists and recreational therapy assistants. This assessment report constitutes both the preliminary and final assessment report for the licensure of recreational therapists and recreational therapy assistants. The report is based on the proposed licensing of recreational therapists and recreational therapy assistants as set out in House Bill 613, the response to the Committee's questionnaire (Attachment), and testimony before the Committee on July 6, 2005.

# ATTACHMENT

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*Response to Questionnaire for the Legislative  
Committee on New Licensing Boards*

# *Response to Questionnaire*

Response of the North Carolina Therapeutic Recreation Certification Board  
Request for recognition as the North Carolina Recreational Therapy Licensure Board

1. In what ways has the marketplace failed to regulate adequately the profession or occupation?

**Currently, recreational therapy practice is not adequately regulated via the use of the existing language under Chapter 90-C, The Therapeutic Recreation Personnel Certification Act. There are several distinct issues in which the existing system fails to adequately regulate the profession.**

- **The existing law regulates only the titles of Therapeutic Recreation Specialist and Recreational Therapist. Therefore, an individual may engage in recreational therapy treatment oriented services utilizing some other non-regulated occupational title. In turn, the consumer of services may not be receiving appropriate services from a qualified professional.**
- **Secondly, Chapter 90-C law was passed in 1985 utilizing the standards at that time. Since the passage and implementation of the Therapeutic Recreation Personnel Certification Act and the creation of the North Carolina Therapeutic Recreation Certification Board (TRCB), professional preparation standards have dramatically changed. The existing standards are not congruent with current practice and professional preparation standards. Note that North Carolina has 12 professional preparation programs in institutions of higher education within the state.**
- **Finally, in the initial submission of the act in 1985, the original language was changed in such a way that the first two sections of Chapter 65 were not consistent with the remaining body of the law. This has resulted in conflicting messages of authority. The body of Chapter 90C reads as a licensure law however, the first sections only provide authority over title usage. This conflicting language has caused confusion over practice under different job titles. The focus was changed to title legislation versus recreational therapy practice regulation. The TRCB oversight has, therefore, been interpreted differently by varying authorities. Furthermore, Human Resource Departments across the state have developed their own**



**interpretation of the law, causing inconsistency and misinterpretation statewide.**

2. Have there been any complaints about the unregulated profession or occupation? *Please give specific examples including (unless confidentiality must be maintained) complainants' names and addresses.*

**Yes. Since the title of recreational therapist is currently regulated in the state under Chapter 90C, one level of regulation exists. This has not effectively protected the public or employing agencies from misrepresentation of practice. To date, there have been numerous complaints of individuals practicing recreational therapy services under different titles and without appropriate professional preparation or existing state certification. The TRCB established a Professional Conduct Committee to review and respond to these complaints. Historically, there have been 4 or more complaints per year that require review by the Professional Conduct Committee. Some complaints have the potential for causing harm to the consumer and/or agency that has employed the individual (See #3 below.)**

**Most state and private agencies do not report practice complaints since existing law covers title legislation only.**

3. In what ways has the public health, safety, or welfare sustained harm or is in imminent danger of harm because of the lack of state regulation? *Please give specific examples.*

**With the implementation of Chapter 90C, one level of protection was afforded the citizens of North Carolina, that of title regulation. The existing language of Chapter 90C, however, has not kept pace with current practice and does not adequately protect the consumer from inappropriate or potentially harmful practice under some other non-regulated occupational title.**

**Examples of misrepresentation are reflected by the following:**

- **The TRCB receives 4 or more complaints per year of title misuse. These complaints do not, however, address the unregulated application of recreational therapy treatment services by non-professionally credentialed individuals. Chapter 90C does not adequately address this issue.**
- **In 1997, TRCB received a report of an individual, who claimed to be a state credentialed Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (TRS) at a Raleigh Nursing Home. He had conducted a fund raising activity for the residents. Upon completion of the fund**

raising activity, the individual took the money earned through the fund raiser, as well as individual clients' money and left town. This individual had operated under seven different alias names. While the Nursing Supervisor responsible for confirming his credentials was fired for not performing an appropriate check of his credentials, the existing law also does not offer protection and recourse. Under Chapter 90C, as written, the TRCB had no recourse once the individual left town. Furthermore, the existing regulations do not offer adequate recourse to arrest the individual prior to the incident.

4. Is there potential for substantial harm or danger by the profession or occupation to the public health, safety, or welfare? How can this potential for substantial harm or danger be recognized?

**Yes, the potential for substantial harm or danger to the public health, safety, and welfare by non-credentialed individuals engaged in the delivery of recreational therapy services exists. Recreational therapy services are provided to consumers who are in need of rehabilitation and other health care services. The characteristics of the consumer and their need to access competent health care providers, including recreational therapists, place them in a position for potential harm from unqualified and non-credentialed providers. Untrained and non-credentialed individuals may harm the consumer through the application of the poor assessment of consumer needs and the application of inappropriate intervention strategies based on consumer characteristics and needs.**

**The vast majority of therapists are employed in hospital or personal care facilities with a growing number being hired in residential facilities, community mental health centers, adult day care programs, substance abuse centers, hospice care, vocational rehabilitation, community centers and in school systems. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, fast employment growth of therapists is expected in assisted living, outpatient physical and psychiatric rehabilitation and services for individuals with disabling conditions.**

**Recreational therapy is a recognized health care provider by agencies such as the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations, the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. This recognition attests to the role of recreational therapy within health care and the potential for harm to the public by non-licensed individuals.**

**A recreational therapist utilizes a wide range of intervention activities and community based treatment strategies and techniques to improve the physical, cognitive, emotional, and social 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. Potential harm can be recognized through the application of inappropriate assessment, treatment planning and implementation, and evaluation of services. Qualified recreational therapists utilize techniques that respond to the unique needs of the individual with a disabling condition.**

5. Has this potential harm or danger to the public been recognized by other states or the federal government through the licensing or certification process? *Please list the other states and any applicable federal law (including citations).*

- **There currently exists a voluntary national professional certification process under the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification (NCTRC) since 1981. NCTRC is an independent professional credentialing recognized by the National Organization for Competency Assurance (NOCA). The national credential is that of Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist. NCTRC has established a national task force to monitor North Carolina's licensing initiative as a model for national application.**
- **The federal government requires that recreational therapists employed by the Veterans Administration, National Institutes of Health, and the U.S. Department of Defense be nationally certified as Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialists (CTRS).**
- **The State of Utah has a state licensing board for recreational therapy.**
- **The State of North Carolina has had a state professional certification program for therapeutic recreation specialists (TRS) since 1987. Chapter 90C called for the creation of the NC Therapeutic Recreation Certification Board (TRCB) which has been recognized by the State of North Carolina as a licensing board.**

6. What will be the economic advantage of licensing to the public?

**The true economic advantage of licensing of recreational therapists to the public will be in the assurance of appropriate and effective health**

**care and rehabilitation outcomes. Improved health care outcomes by qualified recreational therapy practitioners is a wise use of health care dollars. In addition, statistics indicate that use of recreational therapy services is approximately 30% less than occupational and physical therapy services and 20% less than nursing services. In turn, where appropriate, the use of a licensed recreational therapist may save valuable health care dollars.**

7. What will be the economic disadvantage of licensing to the public?

**To our knowledge, no potential economic disadvantage exists.**

8. What will be the economic advantages of licensing to the practitioners?

**Given that recreational therapists are currently employed throughout the state in both public and private health care and rehabilitation agencies, an economic advantage to the practitioner should not exist. The measure will, however, ensure consistency in both professional preparation and practice of services leading to more productive outcomes for consumers and their families.**

9. What will be the economic disadvantages of licensing to the practitioners?

**While there exists an established fee structure, the process in amending Chapter 90C included the implementation of thirty-six (36) open forums state-wide. Across the state, recreational therapy practitioners were in support of the fee structure and ultimate content of the amendment.**

10. Please give other potential benefits to the public of licensing that outweigh the potential harmful effects of licensure such as a decrease in the availability of practitioners and higher cost to the public.

**It is not anticipated that there will be a decrease in availability of practitioners or a higher cost to the public as a result of this licensing effort. Recreational therapists currently work in agencies across the state and many settings for employment are financed through a prospective payment system such as Medicare and Medicaid. Furthermore, the potential benefits of ensuring consistency of service delivery and professional background and preparation will benefit the individual consumer of services, their family and the facility administrators.**

11. Please detail the specific specialized skills or training that distinguish the occupation or profession from ordinary labor.

**National voluntary credentialing in recreational therapy requires a bachelor's or master's degree in recreational therapy/therapeutic recreation from an accredited institution of higher education. This professional preparation requires substantial course work within recreational therapy as well as supportive course work in the social and biological sciences. Furthermore, pre-professionals are required to complete a field experience (direct service practicum) under the supervision of a CTRS or in North Carolina, a state credentialed TRS. The state of North Carolina is among the top three producers of nationally credentialed CTRS in the nation with 12 institutions of higher education preparing recreational therapists.**

12. What are other qualities of the profession or occupation that distinguish it from ordinary labor?

**Recreational therapists utilize a wide range of therapeutic interventions designed to respond to the unique needs of the individual consumer with a medical or disabling condition. Professionals utilized prescribed interventions to develop or improve functional performance of the individual in social, physical, emotional, and cognitive domains. Recreational therapists are members of interdisciplinary health care teams responding to the holistic health care of the individual in their progress toward functional independence. Recreational therapy is recognized as a rehabilitation therapy service in the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) standards; in addition to the inpatient rehabilitation standards of the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF). The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) include Recreational Therapy in the treatment used to determine federal compliance in skilled nursing, rehabilitation and long-term care facilities.**

13. Will licensing requirements cover all practicing members of the occupation or profession? If any practitioners will be exempt, what is the rationale for the exemption?

**The licensing bill will cover all practicing recreational therapists with the exception of those employed by the federal government (credentialing of these individuals is covered under the voluntary national credentialing process of NCTRC) and students engaged in professional preparation working under the supervision of a licensed recreational therapist. The act will not effect other licensed or state credentialed professions from engaging in their professional practice.**

14. What is the approximate number of persons who will be regulated and the number of persons who are likely to utilize the services of the occupation or profession?

**Currently, there are 736 nationally credentialed CTRS in the state of North Carolina. The number of persons likely to utilize the service include health care consumers within state psychiatric rehabilitation institutions, general hospitals, private psychiatric hospitals and units, rehabilitation facilities and units, vocational rehabilitation, developmental disabilities centers, residential facilities, nursing homes and other long-term care facilities, community mental health providers, school systems and community public and private agencies serving persons with disabling conditions. The number of persons who currently utilize and are likely to continue to utilize recreational therapy services is significant.**

15. What kind of knowledge or experience does the public need to evaluate the services offered by the practitioner?

**The public are able to evaluate services via several mechanisms. Many agencies utilize internal patient care satisfaction surveys. These surveys are designed to assist in the evaluation of services. Furthermore, the promotion of functional outcomes for consumers and their families and the realization of a higher quality of life are measures for service evaluation**

16. Does the occupational group have an established code of ethics, a voluntary certification program, or other measures to ensure a minimum quality of service?

**Recreational therapy, as a profession, does have a code of ethics that is distributed through the American Therapeutic Recreation Association and the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification.**

**As noted, recreational therapists can participate in a national voluntary certification program. This program provides an opportunity to register as a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist for those that meet the minimum standards and qualifications and successfully pass the national certification examination.**

**The State of North Carolina has Chapter 90C, the Therapeutic Recreation Professional Certification Act, enacted in 1987. The North Carolina Therapeutic Recreation Certification Board (TRCB) was established as a result. The proposed amendment to Chapter 90C is**

**intended to make the language and requirements for professional practice of existing law consistent with professional practice and health care demands. In addition, the amendment would rename the existing TRCB as the North Carolina Recreational Therapy Licensure Board.**