



Horticultural Therapy Core Skills & Knowledge

The following list comprises core skills and knowledge that the Canadian Horticultural Therapy Association recommends be included in horticultural therapy (HT) and therapeutic horticulture (TH) education programs.

Therapeutic Horticulture (TH) Foundations of Profession

The therapeutic horticulture professional has awareness of:

- assessment, treatment planning, implementation, and evaluation methods pertinent to TH and HT
- CHTA Code of Ethics
- historical foundations and evolution of the horticultural therapy profession

Assessment

The therapeutic horticulture professional possesses the skills to:

- conduct systematic assessment interview processes
- document assessment findings
- review findings and implications for treatment with client, family, and team members
- incorporate assessment findings to complement and design an individualized healthcare plan
- reference assessment instruments from other health care disciplines relevant to the horticultural therapy treatment process
- understand the function of diagnostic tests and measurements

Program and Treatment Planning

The therapist has the ability and skills to:

- acknowledge culture, heritage, socio-economic background, skills and abilities of individuals
- write functional outcome measures that include goals, objectives, progress notes, and other forms of documentation related to program design and delivery
- construct treatment plans that incorporate individual strengths and skills
- select appropriate interventions and activities relevant to stated goals and objectives
- document client responses to interventions

Evaluation of Therapeutic Horticulture and Horticultural Therapy Programs

The therapist shall be familiar with:

- quality assurance models
- methods for evaluating individual progress
- documentation protocols for program planning and accountability
- use of data to modify interventions
- formulation of treatment recommendations for aftercare
- safety and risk management procedures
- ethical documentation for research purposes
- ethical and professional standards of practice
- procedures for scheduling and making decisions with reference to the care team
- procedures for designing and implementing a comprehensive therapeutic horticulture or horticultural therapy program pertinent to the client population served
- human resource management including responsibilities with respect to volunteers
- financial management as pertinent to the facility and client population being served

Conditions that Affect Health and Wellness

The therapeutic horticulture professional has knowledge of:

- basic concepts, theories and principles related to disabling conditions
- behavioral assessment instruments
- interventions appropriate to the current health and or diagnosis of the individual client
- precautions and individual contraindications for therapeutic horticulture and horticultural therapy services
- complementary and adjunct therapies
- medical vocabulary and acronyms
- standard charting language
- pharmacological implications for an individual placed in a therapeutic horticulture or horticultural therapy program
- gross and fine motor skills in designing appropriate interventions
- basic human anatomy and physiology
- health, safety, security and privacy protocols for clients served
- basic first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation procedures (CPR)
- infectious disease control

Group Dynamics and Leadership

The therapeutic horticulture professional demonstrates competencies in:

- group leadership skills
- group dynamics and process
- use of individual and group treatment interventions

Horticulture

The therapeutic horticulture professional has knowledge of:

- basic concepts, theories, and principles related to horticulture
- physiological, psychological, and sociological effects of plants on people
- adaptations to horticultural equipment and resources pertaining to the client served
- safe and sustainable horticulture practices
- a variety of horticulture related subjects, including but not limited to the following:
 - plant propagation
 - organic gardening (e.g. composting, polyculture)
 - integrated pest management
 - floriculture
 - taxonomy
 - botany
 - therapeutic landscape design
 - botanical arts and crafts
 - greenhouse or nursery production/management
 - soil science
 - entomology
 - plant pathology/physiology
 - harvesting/cooking/nutrition
 - interior plantscaping