



## 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) and Horticultural Therapy (HT) - Foundations of Profession***

The horticultural therapy professional has awareness of:

- assessment, treatment planning, implementation, and evaluation methods pertinent to therapeutic horticulture (TH) and horticultural therapy (HT)
- CHTA Code of Ethics
- historical foundations and evolution of the horticultural therapy profession in provinces and territories across Canada
- contemporary use of TH and HT in other countries (e.g. United States, United Kingdom, South Korea, Japan, China, Taiwan, and Australia)
- research and evidence base that supports the use of TH, HT, and therapeutic landscape design

### ***Assessment***

The horticultural therapy 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 *pertinent* diagnostic tests and measurements

### ***Program and Treatment Planning***

The horticultural therapy professional has the ability and skills to:

- select appropriate interventions and activities relevant to stated goals and objectives
- construct treatment plans which:

- acknowledge culture, heritage, socio-economic background, skills and abilities of individuals in her/his client group(s)
- adhere to ethical and professional standards of practice
- incorporate safety and risk management procedures
- accommodate individual strengths, skills and preferences of the client group
- prepare and/or comply with a stated budget as pertinent to the facility, client population, and seasonal programming
- write functional outcome measures that include goals, objectives, progress notes, and other forms of documentation related to design and delivery of a therapeutic program and therapeutic sessions
- document a therapeutic session and client's response to an intervention
- ensure adequate work time is provided to grow, cultivate, harvest, or forage for plant material and/or purchase supplies to support a TH or HT program

### ***Evaluation of Therapeutic Horticulture and Horticultural Therapy Programs***

The horticultural therapy professional shall be familiar with:

- quality assurance models (e.g. Cultivating Quality, Thrive, UK)
- 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
- procedures for scheduling and making decisions with reference to a care team

### ***Conditions that Affect Health and Wellness***

The horticultural therapy professional has knowledge of:

- basic concepts, theories and principles related to disabling conditions
- behavioural 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 TH or HT program
- gross and fine motor skills in designing appropriate interventions
- basic human anatomy and physiology
- health, safety, security and privacy protocols for clients served
- protocols relating to infectious disease control, basic first aid, and cardiopulmonary resuscitation procedures (CPR)

### ***Group Dynamics and Leadership***

The horticultural therapy professional demonstrates competencies in:

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

## **Responsibilities as an employee or independent contractor and as a member of a department or service team**

The horticultural therapy professional is aware of:

- differences in wages, benefits, expectations and working conditions for an employee vs. a self-employed contractor
- range of hourly wage rates or professional fees for those working in TH or HT in a specific geographic region and differences that apply with respect to types of qualification (e.g. HTT or HTR)
- appropriate designations and coverage for provincial worker's compensation plans and professional and general liability insurance
- safety and risk management procedures subscribed to by employers (including, but not limited to: infectious disease control, fire safety, WHMIS, criminal record check)
- strategies to promote HT and to advocate for HT principles and practice
- opportunities to promote TH and HT programs at a specific agency or site and to use social media and other tools in an ethical manner
- privacy and confidentiality protocols for work with clients, including requirements to use waivers for photographs and other forms of media
- responsibilities with respect to training and/or managing volunteers
- financial management as pertinent to the facility and for the client population being served by TH or HT programs
- methods to seek out and successfully acquire funding for TH or HT program
- relationship to management and responsibilities as member of a department or team
- professional development opportunities in TH and HT and related areas

## ***Horticulture and therapeutic landscape design***

The horticultural therapy professional has knowledge of:

- basic concepts, theories, and principles related to horticulture
- physiological, psychological, and sociological effects of plants on people
- reference texts and research-based internet resources that provide information about plant toxicity and allergic effects of plants
- adaptations to horticultural equipment and resources pertaining to the client served
- safe, sustainable, and accessible horticulture practices
- a variety of horticulture related subjects such as:
  - plant propagation
  - organic gardening (e.g. composting, polyculture)
  - integrated pest management
  - floriculture
  - taxonomy
  - botany
  - accessible and therapeutic landscape design
  - botanical arts and crafts
  - greenhouse or nursery production techniques
  - soil science
  - entomology
  - plant pathology/physiology
  - harvesting/cooking/nutrition
  - interior plantscaping
  - local habitat and small wildlife common to local landscapes