

TRAAC NEWS

Therapeutic Recreation Association of Atlantic Canada

Special Interest Articles:

- In the Field with Kevin Stairs
- Legislation Committee Update
- Annual Conference around the corner

Individual Highlights:

In the Field	2
Exciting News	2
Licensure Committee	3
Conference 2008	4
Words of Wisdom	4

Happy New Year!

First, I want to take this opportunity to send you all compliments of the season. As we are now enthralled into the preparations for the upcoming year, I trust that everyone is taking time to reflect on the importance of the work that we do everyday.

This is a special holiday edition of the TRAAC News as we provide you with a few updates and things to ponder as we

prepare to meet in March 2008. We have included quick highlights and points to consider as we begin the work to **Branching Out and Moving Forward** as a profession.

We invite you to peruse the contents of this newsletter where you will find a feature on one leading TR professional in Cape Breton. The Licensure committee has been diligent in their efforts to solidifying the

action plan for self-regulation.

The Marketing Committee has been working to develop a strategy to increase visibility. Finally, the Education Committee have been organizing what may be the most exciting and diverse conference ever!. So take your time and have a gander at what has been keeping us on TRAAC.

In the Field with Kevin Stairs

Many of our members have been creating new opportunities for current and future Therapeutic Recreation professionals. Most of all, they have been increasing the visibility of the profession around Atlantic Canada. In this issue of TRAAC News we thought we would highlight the work of Kevin Stairs, a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist in Cape Breton. In a casual interview, here is what Kevin had to say about his work in the field and the future of the

profession:

Kevin, (B.Rec.'93, Dal) has been working in the field of recreation since graduating in 1993 initially in community recreation facilitating after school programs with then Dartmouth Parks and Recreation as well as with Dartmouth Boys and girls Club. He admits that he went into TR because Recreation Therapist was listed as one of the jobs on the 'free trade agreement'. So after contacting Drs. Jerome Singleton and Coleen

Hood, he acquired the courses necessary to obtain credentialing through NCTRC. After becoming certified in 1996, he worked with individuals with Brain Injuries at the Florida Institute of Neurological Rehabilitation. Once back in Cape Breton, he worked at Waterford Heights, a Transitional Long term care facility.

See 'In the Field' / Pg.2

In the Field continued from page 1



"Without the TR background, I would not have been able to get this position"

Most recently, he has worked in the area of Mental Health at Crossroads Clubhouse a community based mental health voluntary program, until he was seconded to work with VON as the program coordinator for the Adult Day program.

With expertise in the area of psychosocial rehabilitation, community based programming and older adult programming, it is no wonder Kevin's current position as program coordinator for the VON Adult Day program is a perfect fit!

When asked about the program Kevin commented "this initiative has come about due to increased demand for acute care beds within our hospitals. The district has noticed there is such a long wait for individual waiting to get into LTC programs". Instead of putting alternate level of care funds into acute care, Cape Breton District Health Authority decided

to support an adult day program for persons awaiting long term care placement. As coordinator, Kevin is responsible for the entire program including the supervision of Licensed Practical Nurses and Continuing Care Assistants. At the same time, he is ensuring that clients receive appropriate recreation and leisure based programming that allows participants to develop skills and maintain independence as well. "Without the TR background, I would not have been able to get this position as they wanted a Recreation Therapist to be the coordinator as this is not a medical model day program like some others; without [Kevin's] TR background, the program would have a different look". Kevin noted that the program is based on leisure and developing opportunities for socialization and active participation.

As Kevin continues to

make a path, we asked him his thoughts about the future. "Continuing to let people know who we are and how we are a little different" will move the profession forward according to Kevin. He suggests that we share our knowledge at conferences that are not TR specific and work to acquire licensure "in order for us to gain the respectability we are worthy of".

Kevin says that he is encouraged by the future as he sees the collaborative efforts of Nova Scotia Recreation Professionals in Health and TRAAC, the move by CBDHA mental health services now requiring a CTRS for Recreation Therapist positions and the move by other departments requesting CTRS. He sees TRAAC as a leader in the promotion of the CTRS credential and Recreation Therapists, setting the standard for other provinces.

Exciting News!!!

TRAAC will play host to the Executive Director of the NCTRC, Bob Riley at the 2008 TRAAC Conference in March 2008. Prior to assuming his role as Executive Director at NCTRC, Bob served primarily as a university professor

holding an array of academic positions at various institutions. His presentation will provide an overview of the credentialing process and highlight the argument to utilize both certification and licensure within the professional framework of

therapeutic recreation. Specific information will be presented pertaining to NCTRC's potential role in the advancement of an international model of credentialing for the TR profession.

See Dr. Riley / p. 4



“Breakthrough Year” for Licensure Committee

Dear Members,

On behalf of the TRAAC Licensure Committee, I would like to announce that 2008 is setting up to be a “Breakthrough Year” in our quest for licensure. We were very encouraged by the overwhelming response of support given through the online survey earlier this year, which has driven our desire to get things moving. Since then, the Licensure Committee has been building momentum and we are happy to report that this process is well underway.

Currently, we are completing the following tasks;

1. Compiling a list of contact people in Nova Scotia that will be involved or affected by the licensure process. The list includes members of government, recreation professionals (with or without CTRS), employers (current or potential) and educational facilities that provide recreation courses. This contact page will provide a working list used to communicate the importance of licensure in Recreation Therapy and lobby support for this quest.
2. Identifying the risks of harm the public currently faces by not having licensed recreation therapists providing recreation therapy services. This is an important step needed to support our cause to the legislative assembly.
3. Writing the Act- A small sub-committee is currently drafting the Nova Scotia Recreation Therapist Act. The initial draft was completed in December 2007. Since then, the Licensure Committee has begun revising the document.
4. Developing a brochure that will outline the impact and benefits of having Recreation Therapy as a licensed profession and the role that TRAAC members have in this process.

Where do we go from here?

The Licensure Committee is putting forward a motion to be addressed at the AGM in March 2008 that will give the members an opportunity to show their support in a secret ballot vote to legally allow the Committee and TRAAC to move forward with the licensure process. Until that time, we invite you to bring forward all questions and concerns about the regulation of Recreation Therapy in Nova Scotia to the TRAAC Licensure Committee. We will publicly address these questions and concerns in each newsletter to allow for open communication on this process.

Stay tuned for more updates ahead!

Until then, please feel free to contact any person on the Licensure Committee;

Robert Baird

robert.baird@cdha.nshealth.ca

(902) 464-6042

Diana Bennett

diana.bennett@cdha.nshealth.ca

(902) 473-3735

Chris Rafuse

rafusecb@cdha.nshealth.ca

(902) 463-7389

Dawn MacDonald

macdonalddm@cdha.nshealth.ca

(902) 473-7275

Andrew Ritcey

andrew.ritcey@cdha.nshealth.ca

(902) 473-4221

All the Best for 2008!

Diana Bennett

“...2008 is setting up to be a “Breakthrough Year” in our quest for licensure.”

Therapeutic Recreation Association of Atlantic Canada

Would you like to recommend a member for the In the Field column, please let us know by emailing us at...

E-MAIL:
cwatson@dal.ca

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.traac.ca

TRAAC Conference 2008

Please mark **March 28th & 29th** on your calendar for the annual TRAAC Conference and AGM. This year's conference theme is "Branching Out and Moving Forward." In keeping with that theme we have sixteen exciting educational opportunities lined up. Speakers are coming from Ontario and as far as the United States. This is a great opportunity to network with fellow colleagues, obtain 10 CEU hours and most importantly gain valuable knowledge, which you can utilize in your TR practice. If you are undecided in whether you want to attend the 2008 TRAAC Conference please take a few moments to review some of the topics as follows:

- √*Rehabilitation through Sport*
- √*Risk Management*
- √*Paediatric Rehab*
- √*Programming for fun*
- √*Proving the Value of Therapeutic Recreation Service Delivery*
- √*How RT makes a difference at Addiction Prevention & Treatment Services*
- √*Survivor stories! Reflections on practice-based research*
- √*Making Our House a Home: Using Art as a Medium to Discuss Transition*
- √*VON Adult Day Program*

Please note: registration forms will be forthcoming. Dr. Colleen Hood is our Keynote speaker and she has two exciting presentations lined up. The Keynote will address

the following: *Building a Life of Meaning: The Essential Role of Leisure in Therapeutic Recreation*. If you are interested in learning more about licensure Mr. Bob Riley from NCTRC will be presenting on this topic. On Friday, March 28th following the conference he will also be hosting an informal information session on recertification. For those who enjoy socializing and/or who want to explore the importance of incorporating humour into our practice and/or for those who may want to expand their leisure repertoire we will gather at Yuk Yuk's on March 28th at 7:30 p.m. to enjoy an evening of fun and laughter. So, again please mark March 28th & 29th on your calendar. Hope to see you there...

Words of Wisdom from the field

You need to know why you are doing what you are doing (i.e. programs) so that you can articulate this to individuals who may question your programs. Have a strong

backbone because it is sometimes lonely and there are always those who love to be negative. Constantly strive to be creative and never think that you have gotten to

the top and learned it all. There's always an opportunity to learn more. Kevin Stairs (2007)

Dr. Riley continued from page 2

Dr. Riley also co-authored a paper, entitled *NCTRC Position Paper on the Legal Regulation of the Practice of Recreation Therapy*.

Please feel free to have a look at it online:

http://nctrc.org/documents/NCTRCLegalRecognitionPaper_001.doc

The National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification (NCTRC) is looking for interested CTRS who wish to volunteer for one of the NCTRC committees commencing in April 2008 (Standards Hearing, Standards Review and Exam Management); or run for the Board of Directors for the 2009 election. For details as to the various committees and their function contact Andrew Ritcey at andrew.ritcey@cdha.nshealth.ca or 902-473-4221