

October 28, 2019

Mr. Michael Sherar
Mr. Ralph Ganter
Co-Chairs, Ontario Palliative Care Network (OPCN) Executive Oversight

Via email: Michael.Sherar@cancercare.on.ca, ralph.ganter@lhins.on.ca

Dear Mr. Sherar and Mr. Ganter:

On behalf of Therapeutic Recreation Ontario's 1,800 members, I am writing to thank you for emailing the Ontario Palliative Care network's [Palliative Care Health Services Delivery Framework](#) to our association. We recognize the significant effort and time it took to develop and produce the framework documents. Therapeutic Recreation Ontario (TRO) supports the creation of the framework which outlines a model of care for adults with a life-limiting illness who are living at home or in community settings and their families/caregivers, and have circulated it to our membership.

We acknowledge that Recreation Therapists are mentioned in the Palliative Care Health Services Delivery Framework as members of the Extended Services Team. We were, however, disappointed that Recreation Therapists were not acknowledged in the Ontario Palliative Care Competency Framework. We believe that Recreation Therapists have an integral role in addressing the psychosocial needs of individuals and their families and should be key members of the Palliative Care Interdisciplinary Team. Recreation Therapists in palliative care strive towards an overall goal of improving the quality of life of our patients. This involves dream fulfillment, memory making, in addition to addressing the psychosocial needs of palliative patients, as mentioned above.

We also believe that children in a palliative care setting are a population that benefits fully from Recreation Therapy in hospice care. We are sharing a link below to a recent article about Katt Brooks, a Recreation Therapist at [Roger Neilson House](#), a residential hospice supporting newborns, children, youth and their families which highlights the role and impact of recreation therapy:

<https://newsinteractives.cbc.ca/longform/palliative-care-kids-recreation-therapy>

Vidal, Gonclaves, Pavoeiro, et al. (2018) describe the aims of Palliative Care to provide whole-person care by relieving pain and other distressing symptoms, integrating psychological and spiritual aspects of patient care, which enhance an individual's quality of life. Therapeutic Recreation is highlighted as an integral, specialized part of the interdisciplinary team of staff that support end of life care for patients with Huntington's disease by offering meaningful social interaction, comfort,

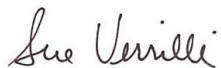
and support to individuals to experience enjoyment, entertainment, and well-being (Klager, Duckett, Sandler et al., 2008). A systematic mixed studies review examined patients' preferences in palliative care, where "the theme 'Living a meaningful life' illustrated what patients strived for" (Sandsdalen, Hov, Hoyer et al., 2015, p. 416). In relation, the purpose of Therapeutic Recreation as outlined by TRO is to enable all individuals to achieve quality of life and optimal health through meaningful participation in recreation and leisure.

Although Recreation Therapists working in palliative care are more widely found in hospitals and long-term care homes, we believe that there is also a significant role for Recreation Therapists in adult and pediatric community-based care as well. By offering Therapeutic Recreation services within a palliative care environment, there is increased opportunity for the client to experience positive emotions, lowered levels of stress, and increased hope; allowing for enhanced quality of life (Rutenberg, 2008).

Therapeutic Recreation Ontario would welcome the opportunity to engage in a dialogue with members of the Ontario Palliative Care Network about Therapeutic Recreation and its role in hospice and palliative care, and ways that it could be further incorporated into community-based care to support individuals and their families/caregivers.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



[Sue Verrilli, R/TRO](#)

President

cc: [Rozalyn Werner-Arcé](#), Executive Director

About TRO:

Established in 1999, [Therapeutic Recreation Ontario \(TRO\)](#) is the only professional association that represents Therapeutic Recreation practitioners in the province. Our membership of more than 1,800 includes practitioners, educators and students. Our mission is to lead the TR profession through growth, advocacy and innovation. We do this by offering quality membership services including professional development, information, networking, advocacy, and evidence-based research and best practices. We set the standard for excellence in the profession through our registration designations (R/TRO and R/TRO DIP).