



**THERAPEUTIC
RECREATION
ONTARIO**

2025 Annual Report

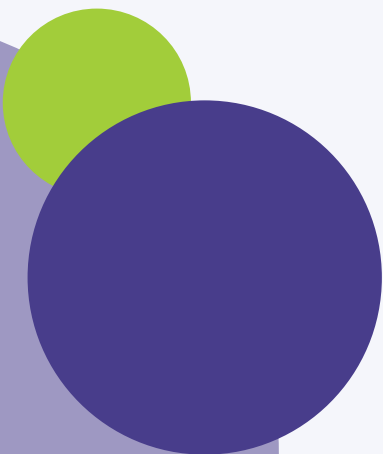


Table of Contents

1. TRO's Mission, Vision & Values
2. President & Executive Director Reports
3. TRO Team
4. Highlights
5. By the numbers
6. Summary statement of financial position



WHO WE ARE

MISSION

Our mission is to empower our TRs and partners through professional development, advocacy and sustainable growth. We offer quality membership services, networking opportunities, evidence-based research and best practices. We set the standard for excellence in the profession through our Designation (R/TRO).



STRATEGIC PILLERS

Advocacy:

- Engage & educate employers about the role of TRs
- Explore title protection
- Continued government partnerships

Professional Development:

- Continue to support & engage with students & educators
- Continued partnerships with Colleges & Universities
- More curriculum-reviewed schools
- Explore additional University TR programs

Sustainable Growth

- Alignment with CTRS, Provincial Orgs & CTRA
- Elevate TRO's profile, & invest in sustainability (financial & members)
- Designation transition

VALUES

Respect, DEIB, Empowerment and Dependability, Integrity, and Transparency.

VISION

Our vision is *Therapeutic Recreation For All.*



President's Report

Dear TRO Members,

It has been both a pleasure and an honour to serve as President of Therapeutic Recreation Ontario for the 2025–2026 year. This past year has been one of significant transition and growth, not only within our Board of Directors, but across the organization as a whole.

This year, we saw the resignation of our Executive Director, Shae Cameron, whose leadership brought forward a new website, refreshed branding, and a strong organizational foundation for TRO. On behalf of the Board, I would like to sincerely thank Shae for her kindness, guidance, and dedicated service throughout her time with the organization.

We are also pleased to welcome our new Executive Director, Lisa Gordon, who brings more than 25 years of experience as a Recreation Therapist. Lisa has already made a tremendous impact, quickly advancing advocacy efforts in the Niagara region during her first month in the role. Her work has fostered important relationships with MPP Jeff Burch and led to meaningful discussions with Marit Stiles.

Over the past year, TRO has continued to strengthen opportunities for professional connection and knowledge exchange. Last year's successful virtual conference welcomed 244 participants from across Ontario and beyond, offering two full days of engagement, learning, and shared passion for Therapeutic Recreation. This year, we were excited to gather in person in Niagara with more than 200 registrants for two inspiring days of educational sessions and collaboration. Advocacy has remained a key priority for the organization.

TRO submitted letters to the Ministry of Long-Term Care regarding changes to LTC RAI-MDS processes, advocating for qualified Recreation Therapists to complete these sections. We also urged the government to consider budget increases for Recreation staff, particularly as wage increases have been implemented in other healthcare positions.

In addition, TRO has partnered with IMPACT Public Affairs to support the development of our 2026–2029 Strategic Plan. These initiatives represent important steps forward in strengthening, evolving, and championing the profession of Therapeutic Recreation across Ontario.



I would also like to extend my sincere gratitude to the 2025–2026 Board of Directors for their dedication, passion, and expertise. This Board has demonstrated remarkable resilience, collaboration, and commitment in helping guide new initiatives and shape the future of our profession.

As we say goodbye to several valued members – Heidi Slotegraaf, Vicki DiGiovanni, and Emma Story – we are equally excited to welcome new voices and perspectives to the Board.

Finally, thank you to our members for your continued support, commitment, and passion as we navigate an ever-changing healthcare landscape together. It is an honour to continue serving this organization, and I look forward to leading the Board and membership forward as I continue in the role of President for the 2026–2027 year.

Kind Regards,

Victoria DePass, CTRS, R/TRO
President



Executive Director Report

Dear Colleagues, Supporters and Friends,

As your Executive Director, I'm as energized today as I was on my very first day in this profession. As I advanced in my career, I watched TRO evolve alongside me.

Seeing our Board of Directors—year after year—embrace the vision and make it grow has been nothing short of inspiring.

TRO continues to prove that growth does not require sacrificing our identity. We can scale without losing our soul. We can expand while staying true to the membership-driven approach that defines us. Together, we are building systems and structures that will help us reach more people, serve them more effectively, and influence how Ontario understands Therapeutic Recreation. The result is an organization that remains deeply rooted in its origins even as it blossoms in ways we once only imagined.

To our members, stakeholders, partners, and supporters who walk this journey with us, I offer my heartfelt thanks. Your belief in us fuels our ambition—empowering us to dream bigger, broaden our advocacy and professional development, strengthen our government engagement, and touch more lives across our field. Every accomplishment in this Annual Report is also yours.

TRO's story is still unfolding, and our potential is enormous. We have more Recreation Therapists to reach, more clients to impact, more creative programs to launch, and even stronger advocacy efforts to champion Therapeutic Recreation for all.

As we step into this next year, I have never felt more confident in our direction. Our organization is strong, our leadership is strong, and our vision is unwavering. We will continue to push forward, continue to innovate, and continue to show that when you invest in Therapeutic Recreation, remarkable things happen. And with complete sincerity, I can say: I have never been more hopeful about what we will achieve next.

Sincerely,
Lisa Gordon, MEd, CTRS, R/TRO
Executive Director



2025-2026 TRO Team

Board of Directors

Victoria DePass, R/TRO, President
Yvonne Ng-Gerritsen, R/TRO, Vice-President
Lisa Gordon, R/TRO, Secretary *
Cindy Marshall, R/TRO, Secretary **
Jenna Davis, R/TRO, Past-President***
Suneel Saini, R/TRO, Director
Heidi Slotegraaf, R/TRO, Director
Amber Hall, R/TRO, Director

Vicki Di Giovanni, R/TRO, Director
Emma Story, R/TRO, Director
Chelsea Lazar, R/TRO, Director
Lauren Waite, R/TRO, Director
Jessica Sue, R/TRO, Director



Left position in January 2026*
Started in January 2026**
Left position in September 2025***



STAFF

Shae Cameron, Executive Director- Resigned in October 2025

Lisa Gordon - Executive Director - As of January 2026

Reina Dingman, Digital Communications & Events Lead

Amy Bennett-Thompson, R/TRO Administrative Support, Contract



Highlights

Conference

The 2025 Annual Virtual Conference, *Unlocking Potential*, hosted 244 attendees and 27 sessions. The conference committee planned and delivered an outstanding lineup of sessions that exceeded expectations.

- Accessibility - offered three Wednesdays in June to allow attendees to attend according to their own schedules.
- Sessions - focused on advancements in the profession, well represented for different populations/areas of expertise, and high-quality sessions
- A/V Company - knowledgeable about conference accessibility, easy to work with, smooth delivery
- Volunteers - Board of Directors and Professional Development Committee were reliable, punctual, and fully prepared for their roles. Presenters appreciated TRO volunteers connecting with them before their presentation started.

Our social committee planned excellent networking opportunities, such as themed rooms and the mentorship panel. Despite being virtual, both fantastic ways to see and spend time together while still growing in our profession

NETWORKING



Themed Rooms

MENTORSHIP PANEL



TRO's New Logo

In 2025, we held a vote on TRO's new logo. The new logo would enhance and modernize our brand. With a close vote, you voted for the purple logo with purple text. All of our material and marketing pieces were changed.

TRO Logo Poll



**THERAPEUTIC
RECREATION
ONTARIO**

OR



**THERAPEUTIC
RECREATION
ONTARIO**

Advocacy

Infographics & posters: Our advocacy materials were updated and redesigned with a fresh new look. These materials have been available to be shared virtually or printed and showcased in the workplace.

THERAPEUTIC RECREATION IN LONG TERM CARE

Benefits of Therapeutic Recreation in Long Term Care:

- TR activities can positively impact a resident's social, physical, emotional, cognitive and spiritual well-being.
- TR activities can be used as strategies and interventions to support individuals experiencing responsive or expressive behaviours.
- Physical activity has a significant and positive impact on cognition, challenging behaviours, and functional ability.
- Social engagement (such as animal-assisted therapy and art programs) can support individuals with dementia and can decrease feelings of loneliness, boredom and depression.
- TR programs can enrich the lives of residents through meaningful connections and relationships.
- A robust TR program can increase resident engagement and result in improved sleep.

Increase Quality of Life
Specialized therapeutic recreation interventions, such as leisure education, can assist older adults in changing their attitudes and improve quality of life.

Maintain Independence
Research evidence suggests leisure education can be effective in promoting a sense of independence among older adults.

Provide Meaning & Purpose
Meaningful recreation can provide a sense of purpose, particularly when residents create something, use skills gained from past occupations, or encourage altruism.

RECREATION THERAPY & COMMUNITY

Recreation therapists can support clients in the community through various means:

- Wellness Programs**
 - Physical Health:** Offer fitness classes, yoga, and outdoor activities to improve physical fitness.
 - Mental Health:** Conduct mindfulness sessions and stress-relief activities to enhance emotional well-being.
- Group Activities**
 - Social Engagement:** Facilitate group programs that encourage interaction, teamwork, and community bonding.
 - Skill Development:** Organize sports, arts, and crafts that promote teamwork and enhance...
- Personalized Activity Plans**
 - Assessment:** Evaluate individual needs and preferences to create tailored therapeutic activities.
 - Goal Setting:** Collaborate with clients to establish achievable goals related to health, socialization, and skills reinforcement.

WHAT AND WHY OF RESEARCH

WHAT MAKES RESEARCH IMPORTANT?

ADVANCING THE FIELD OF PRACTICE
Conducting research supports the advancement of the field by enhancing our ability to support the individuals and communities that we provide services to. Ensuring that research is relevant and up to date supports practitioners in adhering to professional values, while strengthening individual and collective knowledge in the field.

ADDRESS KNOWLEDGE GAPS AND PROPOSE NEW DIRECTIONS
As the field continues to grow and evolve, so will research processes, theories, and practices. A key component of research is committing to ongoing reflection and critique of current literature. At times, reflection and critique leads to the development of new insights that support the ongoing advancement of Therapeutic Recreation research and practice.



Advocacy Letters

In March 2025, TRO sent a letter to 500 Ontario hospitals, promoting the transformative impact of Recreation Therapists and raising awareness and advocating for the value of TR in improving the well-being and quality of life for individuals across the province.

In August 2025, TRO wrote a letter to Premier Doug Ford to address the increased incentives for PSWs and Nurses, but that increase did not include continued investments towards the Recreation Therapy Department within the Long Term Care Sector.

In September 2025, TRO wrote a letter to the Minister of Long Term Care to further push for the proper hiring practices within the Long Term Care (LTC) sector due to the changes in documentation practices from RAI-MDS to LTCF.

In October 2025, TRO held an Advocacy Survey to collect data from our members. Completion of this survey was to guide next steps for TRO's Standards of Practice, Advocacy efforts, and determine how the profession is faring in the current healthcare climate.

TR Month 2025

2025 was the first year in which all the provinces connected and worked together to support a Nationwide TR Month Program.

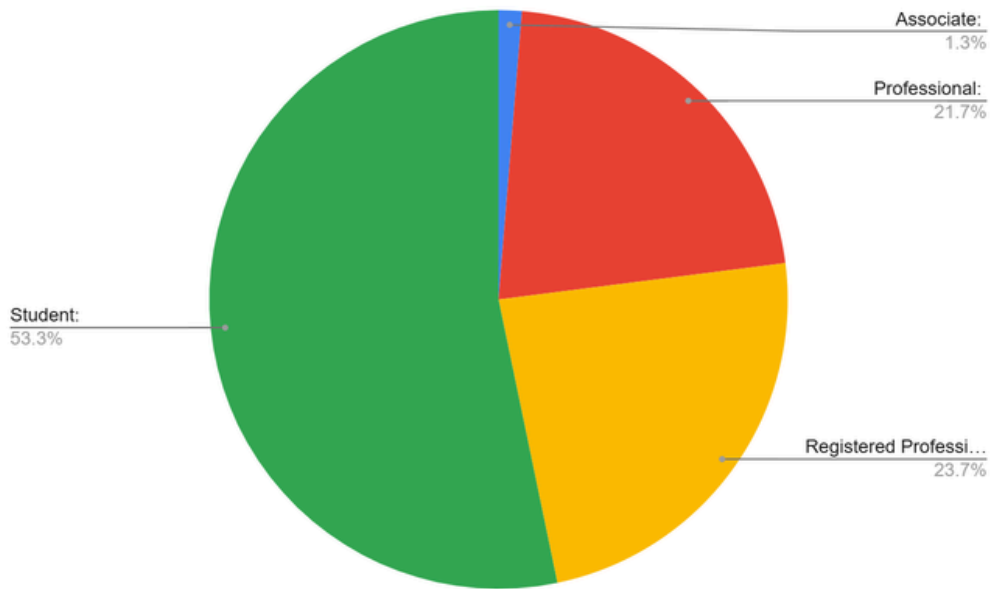
TRO offered two webinars during TR Month: Recreation Therapy in Mental Health Settings and An Introduction to Article Writing and Submission for Therapeutic Recreation Practice and Research. TR meet-ups were organized across the Province to connect, network, and share ideas.

“



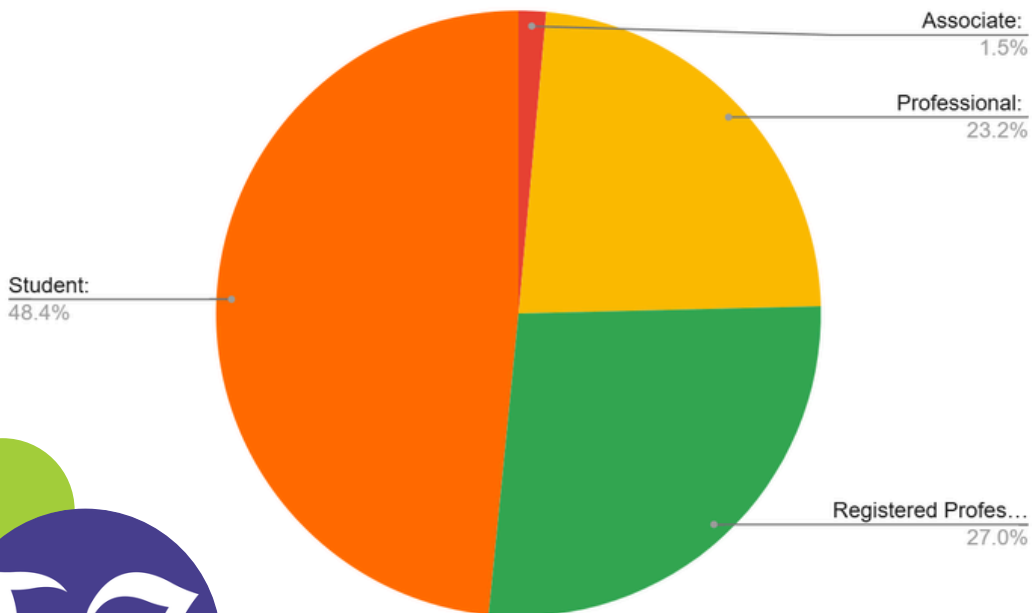
By The Numbers

As of April 2025



The decrease in student membership aligns with the increase in Professional and Registered memberships

As of April 2026



Financials

| Summary Statement of Financial Position and Operations | | | |
|---|----------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| for the period January 1 to December 31, 2025 | | | |
| ASSETS | | | REVENUE |
| Cash & Investments | 181,318 | | Membership Fees & Services 191,092 |
| Accounts Receivable & Prepaid | 15,669 | | Continuing Education 6,579 |
| Net Fixed Assets | 0 | | Conference 38,842 |
| | <u>196,987</u> | | Other Revenue 16,013 |
| | | | TOTAL REVENUE 252,526 |
| LIABILITIES | | | EXPENSES |
| Payables & Deferred Revenue | 14,606 | | Advertising & Promotion 1,659 |
| Accumulated Net Assets | | | Conference/Workshops/Advocay 14,091 |
| Unrestricted Funds | 102,112 | | Consultants/Professional Fees 10,272 |
| R/TRO Fund | 21,614 | | General & Administration 30,463 |
| Current Year Deficit | 58,655 | | Meetings & Travel 1,708 |
| | | | Staff Expenses 135,678 |
| Accumulated Net Assets | 182,381 | | TOTAL EXPENSES 193,871 |
| Total Liabilities & Net Assets | <u>196,987</u> | | NET SURPLUS 58,655 |

