

CREATIVE ARTS THERAPIES FACT SHEET

Creative arts therapies are part of Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Recreation Therapy Service and are direct-care programs that include the following disciplines: Music Therapy, Art Therapy, Dance/Movement Therapy and Drama Therapy.



CREATIVE ARTS THERAPISTS

Creative arts therapists are human service professionals who use arts modalities and creative processes to promote wellness, alleviate pain and stress, while offering unique opportunities for interaction.

Each creative arts therapy discipline has its own set of professional standards and requisite qualifications. Creative arts therapists are highly skilled, credentialed professionals having completed extensive coursework and clinical training.



(Photo courtesy of Larry Marchionda)

TREATMENT PLANNING

Qualified creative arts therapists develop treatment goals, provide interventions, document progress, and participate as members of the interdisciplinary team.

Therapists plan and carry out treatment programs that are directed to such goals as sensory integration; ambulation; diminishing emotional stress; community reentry; reality orientation; muscular dysfunction reorientation; treatment of psychosocial dysfunction; providing a sense of achievement and progress; and channeling energies into acceptable forms of behavior.

RESEARCH

Research supports the effectiveness of creative arts therapies interventions in many areas, including overall physical rehabilitation and facilitating movement. Creative arts therapies further help patients to increase motivation to become engaged in treatment, provide emotional support for Veterans and their families, and create an outlet for expression of feelings.

Research results and clinical experiences attest to the viability of creative arts therapies, and often for those who are resistive to other treatment approaches.

CARE STANDARDS

Creative arts therapies are listed in Joint Commission standards, Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities and the National Institutes of Health National Center on Complementary and Alternative Medicine. These therapies are recognized as viable, reimbursable treatment options.

Creative arts therapists utilize a wide range of techniques of clinical interventions in applying the healing potential and influence of the arts on behavior and quality of life.

POPULATIONS SERVED

Creative arts therapists create non-threatening group and individual art experiences for the exploration



of feelings and therapeutic issues, such as self-esteem or personal insight for those with mental health needs. For Alzheimer’s disease, interventions are used to trigger short and long term memory, decrease agitation, and enhance reality orientation.

THERAPEUTIC INTERVENTIONS

Interventions are used for persons with chronic illnesses to distract them from pain and facilitate needed relaxation. Creative Arts Therapists organize groups using art experiences to encourage self-expression, communication and socialization, and to facilitate cognitive retraining for Veterans with traumatic brain injury.

The use of art-based techniques to break through barriers to the recovery process are utilized in substance abuse. For Veterans with physical disabilities, the creative arts therapists design arts experiences to increase motivation and promote rehabilitative goals.

served at VA medical centers nationwide.

This program enhances the physical, social, and emotional well-being of veterans who participate. The event is co-sponsored by VA, Veteran Service Organizations, and civic groups.



(Photo courtesy of VA National Events)

The following are links to creative arts therapy organizations.

- American Music Therapy Association
<http://www.musictherapy.org>,
- American Art Therapy Association, Inc.
<http://www.arttherapy.org>,
- American Dance Therapy Association
<http://www.adta.org>, and
- National Association for Drama Therapy, Inc.
<http://www.nadt.org>.

CREATIVE ARTS FESTIVAL

Each year, VA sponsors the National Creative Arts Festival for U.S. military Veterans who are

CREATIVE ARTS THERAPY ORGANIZATIONS

For more information, visit www.rehab.va.gov/rectherapy/ or call 202.461.7354 January, 2015

