

# North Carolina Board of Recreational Therapy Licensure, NCBRTL

## July 1, 2022- June 30, 2022-2023 Year-end Summary Report

### 2022 NCBRTL Members and Officers

Chair: Joan Sutton

Members: 8

Vice Chair/Tres: Rhonda Walton

Term: 3 years

Secretary: Amy Albritton

Cite: GS 90C-5

NCBRTL Executive Director: Becky Garrett LRT/CTRS, e-mail [becky@ncbrtl.org](mailto:becky@ncbrtl.org)

#### **Governor Appointees**

##### LRT Engaged in Training

Joan Sutton, MS, LRT, CTRS (6/30/2022)

Ethics training

University of North Carolina Greensboro

Dept. of Community & Therapeutic Recreation

249 Ferguson Building, 524 Highland Ave.

Greensboro, NC 27412

Wk 336 334-4481

[joanmsutton@gmail.com](mailto:joanmsutton@gmail.com)

##### LRTA

Amy Albritton, LRTA

Vidant Health

P.O. Box 6028 - BH Recreational Therapy

Greenville, NC

Albritton, Amy <[AAAlbritt@vidanthealth.com](mailto:AAAlbritt@vidanthealth.com)>

##### Practicing LRT

Cari Sipe-Owens LRT, CTRS(6/30/2021)

Ethics training

Carol Woods

Weaver Dairy Rd

Chapel Hill, NC 27517

Wk

[trheel15@yahoo.com](mailto:trheel15@yahoo.com)

##### Physician

Augustus "Gus" Parker

Vidant Health

Sports Medicine

Charlotte, NC

<[AGP009@novanthealth.org](mailto:AGP009@novanthealth.org)>

#### **President Pro Tempore Appointees**

##### Practicing LRT

Abena Jones-Owens

Ethics Training

Durham VA Hosital

Durham NC 27715

##### Consumer Member

Michael Atkins 6/30/22-6/30/25

[wheelchairwolf@gmail.com](mailto:wheelchairwolf@gmail.com)

#### **Speaker of the House Appointees**

##### Public Member

Wendy Chavez 6/30/2025

[wchavez0202@outlook.com](mailto:wchavez0202@outlook.com)

828 320 0124

## Practicing LRT

Rhonda Walton, LRT, CTRS(6/30/2023)

P.O. Box 6028 - BH Recreational Therapy

Greenville, NC

rwalton@vidanthealth.com

As of June 30, 2023 There are 951 Licensed Recreational Therapists (LRTs), Licensed Recreational Therapy Assistants (LRTAs) 39, Inactive Status 38. During 2022-2023 NCBRTL saw a decrease in numbers, some due to lack of internship completed during the pandemic. Educators are reporting many RT undergraduates are now pursuing degrees in Occupational Therapy, Social Work and other healthcare professions using their Recreational Therapy(RT) undergraduate degree as entry to graduate programs. Others report RT graduates are taking non-licensed behavioral health positions within the state system where salaries are higher than licensed recreational therapists' positions. NCBRTL continues to receive an increased number of out-of-state applicants.

NCBRTL is focusing on compliance and quality care from their licensees. The Board has secured training for NCBRTL to offer the national RT Standards of Practice training. This was viewed as a positive movement for the best practices within the profession and compliance for students to have practical experiential learning to the professional standards of the APIE(D) process. In accordance with the American Therapeutic Recreation Association (ATRA) Standards Of Practice. NCBRTL continues to receive reports of practice in non- licensed positions. Confusion remains over the provision of activities vs recreational therapy treatment. NCBRTL hopes the training will assist in clarifying the CMS definitions and differences.

The Records Manager continues to receive mail, files and assist with online training sessions. This allows for separation of duties and administrative assistance.

Joan Sutton and Rhonda Walton completed their terms 6/30/2023. Gov Cooper has appointed Dr Brent Hawkins of UNCW to serve as the NCBRTL educator board member. Abena Jones is included in the proposed Appointments Bill appointed by Senator Berger. NCBRTL made recommendations for open LRT appointment to Rep Moore for Claire Salisbury in June 2023.

NCBRTL issued new 100 licenses to applicants in 2022-2023, an increase from last year but still down for pre-pandemic numbers. Thirty-three began applications but did not complete them, they remain open for one year pending completion.

There were 11 "out of state" applicants that were licensed this year. This is a lower number of "out of state" applicants than in recent years. It is uncertain whether their intention is to move and practice in NC or seeking the credential that is not available in their state.

As well, as 24 Inactive Status Requests, 2 LRT returned to active practice from Inactive Status

Issued 3 Reinstatements (expired and returned within 60 days)

Issued 3 Reentries (past Reinstatement period)

Issued 0 Denials (33 remain open with incomplete applications)

Issued no Reciprocity Applicants

No Military Trained licensees were issued, to date, there is still no Military Occupational Specialty (MOS)

Training for recreational therapy in the military, NCBRTL does have a Rule, 21 NCAC65 .0902 Military

Exemption to accept any MOS military applicants if received. There are ten (10) licensees who state they are veterans of military service.

#### Total Licensees as of June 30, 2022

- New issue LRT 95 (26 less than last year)
- New issue LRTA 5 (5 more than last year)
- Inactive Status 40 (22 more than last year)
- Reinstatements 3 (2 less than last year)
- Reissues 3 (1 less than last year)

#### New Licensees by NC School

- ECU 29 (increase from last year)
- UNCG 14 (decrease)
- UNCW 16 (decrease)
- WCU 12 (decrease)
- WSSU 6 (decrease)
- Catawba 4 (increase)
- NCCU 1 (increase)
- Mt Olive 2 (increase)

Out of State Schools 11 (decrease)

#### Two-year NC Schools (Assistant level)

- WPPC 4 (increase)

#### Licenses issued by month

- July 2022 9 (Decrease)
- Aug 2022 13 (Increase)
- Sept 2022 7 (Decrease)
- Oct 2022 11 (Increase)
- Nov 2022 5 (Decrease)
- Dec 2022 9 (Decrease)
- Jan 2023 6 (Decrease)
- Feb 2023 4 (Decrease)
- Mar 2022 6 (Same)
- Apr 2022 4 (Decrease)
- May 2022 12 (Decrease)
- June 2022 14 (Increase)

NCBRTL On average, NCBRTL approved 8 licenses per month, the larger months being, May, August, and Oct viewed as a result due to completion of graduations, completed internships, and exam offering dates. July, Sept. Dec being the next larger months. The least received in Feb and April.

June and July of 2023 are showing increases so looking as a return of increased applications. Catawba College has new Assistant Professor and is showing an increase of graduates applying for their RT license. University of Mt Olive is closing their program due to Associate Professor moving out of state. It is uncertain if the program will reopen.

#### **Disciplinary Actions take in 2022-2023**

**Two reports received:**

-Received report from UNCG that UNCP was offering a RT/TR entitled course not taught by a Licensed Recreational Therapist (education is defined as a part of RT practice in Chapter 90C) RCA 4000 Intro to TR. UNCG received two applications for graduate RT program wanting the RT course offered by UNCP to be accepted toward graduate school. Contact UNCP and they refuse to change the course title or have a LRT teach the course. Stated they would only add statement to the course stating it would not count toward Recreational Therapy license. To date no corrections or statements have been made to online course catalog. Note: is has since been added to 2023-2024 catalog.

-Investigated one LRT and found no issues affecting the LRT's license or RT practice. LRT was dismissed due to HR policy during pandemic. She failed to report she had COVID prior to employment that impacted her health. She had no reports of it affecting her work performance.

**Noncompliance Issues:** NCBRTL investigated two (2) individuals that continued to practice with an expired license and one that allowed license to expire but did not practice. Their license was suspended for the amount of time they practiced with expired license and required to attend NCBRTL Compliance and Ethics Training.

The required NCBRTL Compliance and Ethics Training continues to assist licensees in understanding the Chapter 90C, 21 NCAC 65 Rules, and annual requirements and the professional Code of Ethics. NCBRTL requires the training for first year licensees and offers continuing education credit for any other licensees. Registration for existing licensees is open for continuing education credit and increased knowledge of the law and requirements. The NCBRTL Compliance and Ethics Training was offered virtually via Zoom with 128 participants. NCBRTL will continue to offer Compliance and Ethics Training through Zoom webinars. NCBRTL continues to review how best to educate licensees to compliance. NCBRTL offered Internship Supervisor Training in person, 7 attended while 15 attended virtual training, Board is reviewing a hybrid offering for the future.

### **Goals accomplished for 2021-23**

Offered Internship Training

Improved and updated website

Updated Rules

Began Training Standards Of Practice Trainers to offer SOP Training

### **2023-24 Plans**

A search committee, to locate a replacement for retiring Executive Director, was formed by two Board members (One LRT, one RT consumer board member and two past NCBRTL Chairs). The position was posted June , 2023 and closed July 15, 2023. NCBRTL will formulate the hiring and transition of duties for the upcoming year. The new Board will go through a Strategic Planning Exercise and SWOT Analysis to identify strengths, weaknesses and threats for the upcoming new Board and Executive Director.