



# 2025

*A vision and plan to guide  
ATRA's growth from 2020 to 2025.*

# **ATRA 2025 Strategic Plan**

## **Executive Summary**

### **BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGIES**

This strategic plan was collectively written by the 2019 ATRA Board of Directors, led by 2019 President Tim Passmore and was facilitated by Sue Kindred of SK Consulting. The work was developed between December 2018 and September 2019 through two in-person strategy sessions (December 8, 2018 and June 14-16, 2019) along with multiple Zoom call sessions with subgroup teams who were assigned to each of the eight areas of strategic focus. The final report was adopted by the Board at its 2019 Board meeting at the ATRA Annual Conference in Reno, NV, on September 13, and was presented to the membership on Sunday, September 15, 2019.

The content of this plan was based on work done by the 2015 ATRA Board who defined new vision, mission and definition statements; guiding principles, and a statement of meaning (which are included below for reference). This earlier work was instrumental in establishing a framework and providing context within which a wholistic perspective on ATRA's (and ATRA member's) expected needs over the next five years could be considered. Additionally, the work was predicated on substantial member input from various surveys and work groups, most notably, the ATRA Higher Education Task Force, the ATRA Delphi and Competency Study and the ATRA Definitions Task Force. Some components of ATRA's previous strategic plan completed in 2013 (encompassing 2013-2018) also informed this most recent plan.

In anticipation of beginning the strategic planning process, the Board gathered in Reston, Virginia (December 2018) and explored answers to the following questions:

- What are our priorities? What should they be?
- Where should we focus our growth?
- How risk-averse is ATRA's Board?
- What does success look like for ATRA? For our members?
- How should the Board feel about developing a new strategic plan?
- How does the Board want its members to feel about the new plan?

By focusing on outcomes, rather than the output (i.e. the plan itself) the Board was able to look beyond the status quo and be aspirational and ambitious in creating a template for organizational growth in all areas of strategic focus which were determined to include:

- Leadership
- Financial
- Messaging and Marketing
- Relationships and Partnerships
- Quality Providers
- Membership Growth
- Advocacy and Legislative
- Professional Development

After identifying the strategic areas of focus and ensuring that all areas of ATRA's vision for growth were accommodated in the plan, subgroups were identified and assigned to each of the goals. They

were tasked with crafting the language of the goals and objectives as well as identifying support strategies. This work was accomplished as previously noted through monthly Zoom calls over the subsequent five-month period.

The final step in this strategic plan was accomplished through another subgroup of the Board, that included immediate past, current and future Presidents, coupled with academic and clinical practitioners to ensure a balanced perspective. They were tasked with identifying and building in the measurement tools that will be used to create accountability for this and future Boards in seeking to meet the goals and objectives of the plan in both the near and long-term.

Throughout the implementation of the plan, each area of focus will be administered under the guidance of a Board liaison. The ongoing work of completing the objectives and strategies of each area of focus will ultimately be handled by ATRA members who express a desire to be involved and help move that work forward. They are further charged with ensuring that the implementation process includes adherence to metrics that include:

- Assigned Responsibility(ies)
- Financial Implications
- Timeline
- Intermediate Deadlines
- Progress/Setbacks
- Work hours
- Progress and Date Completed

## **ATRA'S VISION STATEMENT**

We envision a world where all people have access to Recreational Therapy.

## **ATRA'S MISSION STATEMENT**

We empower Recreational Therapists.

## **DEFINITION STATEMENT**

Recreational therapy, also known as therapeutic recreation, is a systematic process that utilizes recreation and other activity-based interventions to address the assessed needs of individuals with illnesses and/or disabling conditions, as a means to psychological and physical health, recovery and well-being.

## **STATEMENT OF MEANING**

Recreational Therapy means a treatment service designed to restore, remediate, and rehabilitate a person's level of functioning and independence in life activities, to promote health and wellness, as well as reduce or eliminate the activity limitations and restrictions to participation in life situations caused by an illness or disabling condition.

## **ATRA ENDORSES THE FOLLOWING:**

- Therapeutic Recreation is the field
- Recreational Therapy is the practice
- Recreational Therapists are the practitioners
- The CTRS (Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist) is the qualified provider

## **ATRA'S GUIDING PRINCIPLES ARE:**

We Believe...

1. Recreational Therapy is a process provided in diverse settings.
2. Assessment, Planning, Intervention, Evaluation, and Documentation (APIED) are the foundation of Recreational Therapy.
3. In Evidence Based Practice, Professional Credentialing, and Accreditation.
4. In building powerful relationship to strengthen Recreational Therapy.
5. In mentoring and developing professionals.

# LEADERSHIP

## Subgroup Goal, Objectives, and Strategies

*Note: The work of this focus area will be administered under the guidance of a Board liaison. The ongoing work of completing the objectives and strategies listed below will ultimately be handled by ATRA members who express a desire to be involved and help move the work forward.*

### **GOAL:**

Identify, develop, inspire, and support recreational therapists who seek to become leaders within the organization and in the field.

### **OBJECTIVES and STRATEGIES**

The Board will appoint a Task Force to develop a leadership model based on member-based organizational best practices and address matters relative to Leadership in ATRA as noted below for both the organization and the people involved in leading the organization. The Task Force will be charged with addressing the objectives and strategies provided below.

#### **1. Codify the organization's leadership model.**

- a. Define conceptual and theoretical underpinnings of a desirable leadership model, using existing models for guidance (such as Brene Brown's servant leadership model) to help better define an overarching curriculum for the leadership program.
- b. Identify current communications that help members and non-members understand ATRA's leadership needs and structure.
- c. Identify the qualities and attributes that ATRA seeks in strong leaders

#### **2. Create a system for those leading ATRA to recruit future leaders.**

- a. Create recruitment messages that inspire people to get involved
  - i. ATRA Board members ask in person
  - ii. Pre-written e-mail request, phone request
- b. Define a strategy specifically designed to recruit ATRA members to serve on the Board of Directors and determine how Board applicants will be stewarded as future leaders if they are not elected to serve.
- c. At the annual conference registration table help ATRA identify leaders in our profession by utilizing a questionnaire.

*(i.e. Are you a leader or do you know a leader in the profession? Fill out information sheet and put in a box and ATRA will follow up. (Name, Setting, what makes this person a good leader (strengths)?, what leadership role do you think this person would be good in? What is the best way to approach them?)*

### **3. Create a path for members to become strong leaders within the organization.**

- a. Identify members and non-members who have the attributes to become strong ATRA leaders within the organization and the field of recreational therapy.
  - i. Collaborate with the Membership Subgroup to identify an appropriate path to membership and leadership for non-members who are currently leading within the recreational therapy community.
- b. Consider ways to support upcoming leaders:
  - i. Formal scheduled meetings, trainings
  - ii. Informal e-mails, calls to check in
  - iii. Ask how the leader prefers to be supported (different for everyone)

### **4. Create ways to celebrate individuals who choose a path to leadership (They need to be told often that their contributions are needed, valuable and necessary).**

- a. Develop and maintain a database to keep track of ATRA leaders, roles, and years of leadership service.
- b. Recognition could include:
  - i. Pins of service
  - ii. Yearly certificates at the Annual Conference
  - iii. Recognition at the Annual Conference (pictures, contact info., role: perhaps display at the conference near the registration desk?)
  - iv. Quarterly recognition in the ATRA newsletter – identifying leaders, bios, and their leadership role in ATRA
  - v. Pictures on the website along with bio
- c. Create a culture of belonging within the leadership of the organization.
  - i. Have a long-term plan of recognition gifts – (*Examples -1<sup>st</sup> year: certificate; 2<sup>nd</sup> year: certificate, pen, notepad, etc.; 3<sup>rd</sup> year: certificate, pin; 4<sup>th</sup> year: certificate, bag; 5<sup>th</sup> year: plaque, polo shirt*)
  - ii. Special appreciation lunch at the Annual Conference
  - iii. Board Liaisons recognize the efforts of leaders by nominating for an award at the Annual Conference
  - iv. Letters from ATRA to employers thanking them for their employee's time and service
  - v. Encourage leaders to add their ATRA service to their email signature

### **5. Determine criteria for leadership success.**

- a. Evaluations
- b. Involvement and accomplishments
- c. Explore term limits
- d. Procedures for asking leaders to step down when things aren't going well

**6. Develop and provide a system of continuing education programming with a strong focus on advancing leadership qualities.**

- a. Host an online Leadership Conference
  - i. Critical issues (*Example: 24-Hour Online Conference for Music Therapy - <https://onlineconferenceformusictherapy.com/>*)
  - ii. Leadership/RT Advocacy
  - iii. Public Policy Leadership Summit
- b. Webinar Series on Leadership
  - i. *Example – ATRA Section Leadership: Who, Why, What, and How*
- c. Newsletter – Quarterly articles on Leadership/Advancing in the Profession
- d. Special Edition – Journal
- e. Leadership track at the Annual Conference or Pre-Conference Session

**7. Create and implement a Leadership Development Training Program.**

- a. Create a task force to design curriculum specific to ATRA (*maybe partnering with other allied health professions through CAAHEP*).
- b. Utilize the Future Leaders Pipeline (i.e. carryover from Peg Connelly scholars and first-time ATRA attendee scholars) Note: Be careful with verbiage to ensure everyone who has an interest in leadership will apply.
- c. Post applications on the ATRA website in a straightforward and accessible location.
- d. Consider viability of offering the program to both professionals *and* students and determine whether or not the program can and/or should offer CEUs.
- e. Determine recognition of future leaders who complete the curriculum/program. *Note: some recognition options might include: certificate at end of training; recognition at the Annual or other conferences; listings in the newsletter and/or on website.*

**8. Develop and implement a structure for mentorship programming.**

- a. Empower board liaisons to encourage leaders within ATRA to fully optimize their creativity and potential in developing new ideas to effect change or implement the duties of their position including justification of financial requests to the board
- b. Use strategies and components of other organization's mentorship programs; *Note: a mentorship program is starting to be created at the section level.*
- c. Create mentoring opportunities for both members new to the field and new to a particular area of practice.

**9. Develop and implement a leadership training protocol for new and existing Board members.**

- a. Create and implement a robust and inclusive Board orientation for new Board members utilizing the experiences of existing Board members (*i.e. these are things I learned*).
- b. Create and implement a training protocol that would allow Board members to seek a path to become an officer.
- c. Establish a system of annual Board leadership and governance training opportunities.

## **FINANCE**

### **Subgroup Goal, Objectives, and Strategies**

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#### **GOAL**

Ensure the stewardship of ATRA's financial resources; create sustainable and diverse revenue streams that support growth of programming initiatives, staff, and leadership; and increase the ability of ATRA to serve its members.

#### **OBJECTIVES and STRATEGIES:**

- 1. Create a system of financial policies including reserve fund, fiscal responsibility, investment, Finance committee approval limits, and Treasurer's report/content to the Board among others that may be defined.**
  - a. Research components of effective financial policies for nonprofit membership organizations.
  - b. Determine the number and range of policies relevant to ATRA and its scope of practice and work.
  - c. Develop the identified policies for ATRA based on the findings of this research and organizational policy best practices.
  
- 2. Create a multi-year budget that supports ongoing growth focused initiatives.**
  - a. Research and include budget components for Operating budget, Object Classification budget, Capital budget
  - b. Review and consider partners, vendors, sponsors and other allocated funding commitments that may be positively or negatively impacted by a multi-year budget.
  
- 3. Determine the funds necessary for ATRA to explore and support transitioning to whatever organizational model best serves ATRA's needs (management company, staff, or hybrid).**
  - a. Use ATRA's Executive Committee to serve as an ad hoc Task Force to determine a path for creating and implementing an effective organizational management structure for ATRA.

**4. Identify, solicit, and evaluate new and innovative streams of revenue and new opportunities for mission focused expenses.**

- a. Use ATRA's Finance Committee to review appropriate entities or opportunities that would provide additional streams of revenue that are not currently being utilized.
  - Partnerships with CEU providers
  - Create an app for CEU's
  - Create an app for ATRA

**5. Ensure fiscal transparency with the board of directors, leadership, and membership**

- a. Regular publication of financial statements

## **MESSAGING & MARKETING**

### **Subgroup Goal, Objectives, and Strategies**

*Note: The work of this focus area will be administered under the guidance of a Board liaison. The ongoing work of completing the objectives and strategies listed below will ultimately be handled by ATRA members who express a desire to be involved and help move the work forward.*

#### **GOAL:**

Identify ways to educate, raise awareness, and make visible ATRA and the practice of recreational therapy.

#### **OBJECTIVES and STRATEGIES:**

- 1. Identify a marketing plan that includes delivery vehicles, strategies and platforms, including digital marketing (social media, online reviews, website traffic) and implementation timeline. The plan would address both marketing and messaging for both ATRA and the profession.**
  - a. Identify individuals who can serve as members of an active marketing task force to guide the development of consistent messaging and integrated marketing campaign (*See appendix for more info*)
    - i. Build a story library
    - ii. Record video interviews
    - iii. Create ATRA and RT marketing brochures and other collateral and promotional materials and resources
    - iv. Utilize Videos and still photos with a quote and hashtag: #RTmakesLifeWorthLiving, t-shirts with the #. Famous people holding a sign with the #, famous people on video
  - b. While developing the overarching message **about the value and impact of ATRA**, keep in mind the following (*see appendix for additional info*)
    - i. Why be a member of ATRA?
    - ii. How do you get involved with ATRA?
    - iii. What do we do in ATRA?
  - c. While developing the overarching message **about the value and impact of RT**, keep in mind the following (*see appendix for additional info*)
    - i. Why is recreational therapy important?
    - ii. How do we do RT?

- iii. What do we do in RT?
- iv. The five points of Recreation, Leisure, Play, Health & Wellness
- v. Self-advocacy efforts for professionals

**2. Identify industry segments that should be targeted for specific messaging campaigns.**

- a. Consumers, physicians, healthcare administrators, camp directors, university administrators, educators, current college students, high school students, park and recreation departments, hiring entities and corporations, university RT student clubs, interdisciplinary teams, disciplines similar or supportive of RT.
- b. Consider having individuals from each of their segments make videos that tell their story so it would be meaningful for the target audience.
- c. Develop separate messaging strategies as appropriate for each identified segment listed above.

**3. Market the value and impact of ATRA targeted to and for the RT profession and specific industry segments.**

- a. Board member/representative presence and promotion at RT conferences
- b. Create a publication focusing on the value and impact of ATRA
- c. Create an annual special edition ATRA newsletter tailored to non-ATRA members and industry segments about the value and impact of ATRA.

**4. Market the value and impact the practice of recreational therapy targeted to the RT profession and specific industry segments.**

- a. Identify and evaluate appropriate partner groups with which to collaborate (e.g. entities we support financially)
- b. Board member/representative presence and promotion at non-RT conferences
- c. Create a publication focusing on the value and impact of the practice of RT
- d. Create an annual special edition ATRA newsletter tailored to non-ATRA members and industry segments about the value and impact of RT

**5. Develop a marketing evaluation plan (*see appendix for additional info*).**

## **Appendix of details for Messaging and Marketing**

### I. Build a Story Library

1. Identify people who could share why being active in ATRA is important to them and people who could share success stories about why RT “has made life worth living.”
2. Use the Annual Conference as a place to capture stories.
3. Gather pictures from RTs with photo releases to feature RT in action.
4. Share “We are ATRA!” pictures and bios on the ATRA website.
5. Share “Take Over Tuesday” pictures with some background info on the ATRA website (this will feature the diversity of RT in various industry segments).
6. Start a “Future RT!” campaign to feature students who are pursuing a degree in RT (similar to the “We are ATRA!” Campaign) and have them share why they want a career as an RT and have them submit pictures of themselves in front of their university, actively engaging in a hands-on learning activity, etc.
7. Justify our purpose: Have a webpage on the ATRA website featuring articles, EBP, and PP on the benefits of leisure, recreation, and play.

### II. Record video interviews

1. ATRA members asking why is ATRA important to them (e.g., share a success story).
2. RT professionals and consumers asking how RT “has made their life worth living.”

### III. Create ATRA and RT marketing brochures and other collateral and promotional materials and resources

1. Collaborate with persons or groups knowledgeable about RT Month and the Annual Conference.
2. ATRA Online Store.
3. Face-to-Face marketing resources and materials for exhibit tables conferences.
4. Exclusive online resources for members only: downloadable materials and resources on ATRA website.
5. Advertisement templates for ATRA and for RT.

### IV. While developing the overarching message **about the value and impact of ATRA**, keep in mind the following:

1. The reasons to be a member of ATRA: For professional growth by becoming informed professionals and advocates in the field of TR; for the growth of the profession by uniting RT professionals with a common goal of improving RT practice through advocacy; and networking opportunities and collaborative efforts.

2. Ways to get involved with ATRA: Join; attend the Annual Conference; become a presenter (Annual Conference, Webinars); write an article for the newsletter; become a Leader/Member; or contribute resources on a Section Webpage.
3. Within ATRA, we empower Recreational Therapists.

V. While developing the overarching message **about the value and impact of RT**, keep in mind the following:

1. Why recreational therapy is important: Leisure, recreation, and play are what makes life worth living.
2. How we do RT: Use of leisure, recreation and play activities as a modality to improve QOL and targeted outcomes.
3. What we do in RT: APIED process.
4. Include the five points of Recreation, Leisure, Play, Health & Wellness.
5. Self-advocacy efforts for professionals:
  - I. How to market yourself as an RT (*i.e. how to talk to your administrators about RT, how to talk to families/caregivers about RT, how to talk with staff/employees about your role as an RT and RT services*)
  - II. Position statement – *What is RT and how does RT relate with other ancillary professionals.*

VI. Develop a marketing evaluation plan:

1. Monitor progress towards marketing goals
2. Monitor long-term effect of sales based on marketing and messaging strategies - membership enrollment and usage of online learning.
3. Evaluate return on investment - # of inquiries, newsletter subscribers/downloads, website traffic.
4. Member/Consumer Satisfaction - feedback from members/consumers to evaluate effectiveness of messages and marketing strategies.

## **RELATIONSHIPS & PARTNERSHIPS**

### **Subgroup Goal, Objectives, and Strategies**

*Note: The work of this focus area will be administered under the guidance of a Board liaison. The ongoing work of completing the objectives and strategies listed below will ultimately be handled by ATRA members who express a desire to be involved and help move the work forward.*

#### **GOAL:**

Identify, nourish and sustain relationships that benefit and support ATRA and its members in their practice of recreational therapy and enhances its universal acceptance as an effective form of therapy in the field of healthcare.

#### **OBJECTIVES and STRATEGIES:**

- 1. Determine which organizations will relationally augment the universal acceptance of recreational therapy through some measure of affiliation.**
  - a. Identify BOD content experts for areas of practice to focus on identifying any and all pertinent potential affiliations that do not yet exist.
  - b. Send out surveys to membership to identify groups/organizations that would support, enrich, enhance or improve the practice of RT.
  - c. Create a comprehensive list of national and global organizations that support, enrich, enhance or improve the practice of recreational therapy.
  - d. Compile all data into a central location/database and prioritize affiliations we wish to pursue based upon identified priorities moving into the next phase of ATRA's growth.
  
- 2. Codify which organizations are essential to develop reciprocal partnerships to create, manage, implement or support activities or events.**
  - a. Develop a list of characteristics or criteria which are desired in partnership organizations.
  - b. Systematically evaluate organizations based on the list of characteristics or criteria to place them in categories (e.g., relational, business, supportive, etc.) and/or rank order.

- 3. Determine best practices for outreach with those organizations where a relationship or partnership does not already exist.**
  - a. Examine the parameters and best practices that are currently in place for organizations with which ATRA already has an existing relationship or partnership.
  - b. Allocate time to review the best practices and rules of engagement as determined to be appropriate.
  
- 4. Identify individuals, positions or groups that should serve as the primary liaison for organizational affiliations or partnerships.**
  - a. Once affiliations are prioritized, establish the best way to support and nourish relationships between ATRA and the group or organization.
  - b. Develop ways to maintain ongoing inter-organizational relationships.
  - c. Identify individuals who have exhibited leadership in this specific domain (*be it academic or specific areas of practice, for example*) to provide stewardship of the relationships.
  - d. Develop clear expectations and/or rules of engagement with newly established relationships and affiliations.
  
- 5. Determine the best ways to sustain viable relationships (e.g., social media, meetings, calls, etc.) and partnerships and conduct an annual evaluation regarding their viability.**
  - a. Identify schedule of routine interactions that will occur with all partnerships.
  - b. Identify schedule of routine interactions that will occur with specific partnerships.
  - c. Identify what would constitute the need for a non-routine or non-predictable need for interaction or engagement and how would that occur.
  - d. Establish a 360 review of the relationship at the end of the first year and then as deemed appropriate.
  - e. Determine a system for establishing a way to provide updates on existing or new relationships to the Board.
  - f. Determine course of action (via decision tree) for relationships/partnerships that
    - a) continue to serve intended mission, b) exceptionally serving ATRA's interests;
    - c) are stagnant or not developing, d) are negatively impacting ATRA.

## QUALITY PROVIDERS

### **Subgroup Goal, Objectives, and Strategies**

*Note: The work of this focus area will be administered under the guidance of a Board liaison. The ongoing work of completing the objectives and strategies listed below will ultimately be handled by ATRA members who express a desire to be involved and help move the work forward.*

#### **GOAL**

Create, implement and promote a set of standards that will identify parameters that advance excellence within the practice of recreational therapy.

#### **OBJECTIVES and STRATEGIES:**

- 1. Identify guidelines or procedures within which recreational therapists must operate to ensure they are considered to be providing excellence within their provision of services.**
  - a. Create the guidelines and other elements of the objective.
  - b. Review the current ATRA code of ethics and Standards of Practice for clarity and to ensure best practices.
  - c. Secure feedback from colleague professionals and the clients that RT's serve measured against the guidelines.
  
- 2. Ensure that all providing agencies are modeling best practices for the field.**
  - a. Review the current ATRA code of ethics and Standards of Practice for clarity and to ensure best practices.
  - b. Create self-audit guidelines for all aspects of providing agencies within a competency's framework.
  - c. Create a standard audit form for agencies to use that align with the competencies to ensure best practices in the profession
  
- 3. Codify guidelines, procedures or policies that providing agencies must adopt to ensure best practices and to be considered as providing excellence within their provision of services.**
  - a. Some agencies are required to follow their own corporate guidelines, policies, procedures, but ATRA must educate corporations on the necessity of using the profession's standards of practice in developing their internal guidelines and encourage their adoption.

**4. Identify ways for providers and agencies to demonstrate excellence within adopted guidelines.**

- a. Use the American Nurses Credentialing Center's [Magnet program](#) as a model for informing ways to honor and support recreational therapists and agencies who meet the quality provider threshold.
- b. Create award categories at the ATRA conference as a way to recognize providers and agencies that are demonstrating excellence within the adopted guidelines or who have achieved quality provider status.

**5. Seek national recognition and adoption of the identified quality provider standards.**

- a. Create self-audit guidelines for all aspects of providing agencies within a competencies framework and receive some measure of recognition.
- b. Seek certification as a basic standard for all recreational therapists.
- c. Work with other partner agencies such as NCTRC to tie these guidelines into the marketing of the profession.
- d. Work with the Marketing and Messaging subgroup to develop marketing strategies for elevating the quality provider program.

## **Membership Growth**

### **Subgroup Goal, Objectives, and Strategies**

*Note: The work of this focus area will be administered under the guidance of a Board liaison. The ongoing work of completing the objectives and strategies listed below will ultimately be handled by ATRA members who express a desire to be involved and help move the work forward.*

#### **GOAL:**

Exponentially grow the membership so that membership in ATRA is seen as a necessary educational, social and ethical component of service within the practice of recreational therapy.

#### **OBJECTIVES and STRATEGIES:**

##### **1. Set achievable and measurable membership growth goals.**

- a. Work with NCTRC to identify the current number of CTRS's in the United States.
- b. Cross reference the identified CTRS's with the current list of ATRA members and quantify the non-members.
- c. Work with the colleges and universities to identify the number of students graduating over the next 3-5 years in RT.
- d. Develop and administer a membership survey to learn what makes student members transition to full membership; why members stay in ATRA long-term; and why members choose to leave ATRA.

##### **2. Identify strategies that would create a culture of belonging.**

- a. Codify both tangible and intangible benefits of membership.
- b. Explore what other professional associations do to attract and retain members and identify best practices.
- c. Create a Mentor Program that will serve as a "welcome wagon" for new ATRA Members for the first year of membership.
- d. Create a welcome packet for new members.
- e. Work with the Leadership subgroup to create a path to leadership as an incentive for membership and personal and professional growth.
- f. Plan and organize quarterly membership meetings through various social media platforms.
- g. Identify a path that will showcase how members can fully utilize all aspects of their ATRA membership, targeting each entry point into the Association (*i.e. student, professional, educator, etc.*)

**3. Identify target audiences and create solicitation campaigns.**

- a. Work with NCTRC to identify RT's who are not yet certified or are not yet seeking certification and create language that shows how ATRA can support them in that process.
- b. Collaborate with the Workforce Task Force to expand their survey to help identify individuals who are working as RT's either by title or practice.
- c. Create an information packet for solicitation of new members.
- d. Collaborate with the Quality Provider subgroup to market membership to employers/agencies as a benefit to their employees and to help ensure their RT's can provide cutting edge therapies to clients and patients.

**4. Identify the role of sections, chapters, and other organizational groups in creating an ongoing, sustainable path to membership growth.**

- a. Work with each chapter to identify nonmembers and target market to this group of identified professionals with incentives to join.
- b. Work with the sections and chapters to identify paths to leadership in ATRA within each group.
- c. Develop a discounted membership fee structure for chapter members to be both a chapter and an ATRA member.
- d. Consider the role of ATRA in monitoring chapters who do not require ATRA membership.

## **ADVOCACY AND LEGISLATIVE Subgroup Goal, Objectives, and Strategies**

*Note: The work of this focus area will be administered under the guidance of a Board liaison. The ongoing work of completing the objectives and strategies listed below will ultimately be handled by ATRA members who express a desire to be involved and help move the work forward.*

### **GOAL:**

Advocate for legislative actions, policies, and regulations and partner with other advocacy groups to achieve policies that champion and support the practice of recreational therapy and the role within health and wellness models.

### **OBJECTIVES and STRATEGIES:**

- 1. Annually codify Federal legislative actions and policies that require ATRA's attention.**
  - a. Monitor Federal Register for proposed and final rules.
  - b. Identify annual priorities on the ATRA website for members and others to see.
  - c. Develop annual training on key legislation and issues for members to engage with and understand.
  - d. Distribute quarterly legislation updates and as needed legislative action alerts to the ATRA membership and partner organizations.
  
- 2. Define efficiencies among all-stakeholders to ensure a cohesive, collaborative and integrated outcome.**
  - a. Evaluate the overall structure and staffing of all stakeholder entities that support advocacy and legislative initiatives.
  - b. Translate and communicate public policy priorities and benefits to the membership
  - c. Evaluate the efficacy of all advocacy and legislative efforts
  
- 3. Seek to evaluate the best practices of work that will codify State legislative actions and policies that require ATRA's attention.**
  - a. Identify role of chapters and the Joint Task Force on Licensure in state public policy efforts.
  - b. Define best practices to monitor legislative actions within each state.
  - c. Develop Licensure and State Advocate education tool kit.

**4. Identify other relevant advocacy groups for development of possible partnerships.**

- a. Generate a list of possible organizations with which to partner.
- b. Identify and contact key individuals regarding recreational therapy and ATRA.
- c. Develop an information letter to communicate the benefits of ATRA and the practice of recreational therapy
- d. Develop relationships with quarterly contact or updates on ATRA efforts, and exploration of opportunities to work together.
- e. Identify ATRA members to attend key events at advocacy partner events to have an ATRA presence.
- f. Monitor legislation and advocacy efforts to assigned partners.

**5. Define parameters for advocacy relationships.**

- a. If appropriate, MOU to be developed with key components of partnership (such as support for similar legislation/topics, posting link to organization on webpage, etc.).
  - i. Parameters should include an aim to change official policy, legislation or regulations, incorporate best practice on using evidence, research and policy development, involve both lobbying decision-makers and mobilizing citizen audiences and endeavor to implement long-term, sustainable solutions to problems.
  - ii. Liaise with disability coalitions and diagnosis specific organizations for monitor of issues and identifying potential joint advocacy activities.

**6. Define parameters for ATRA's lobbyist's and other advocates' role in advocating on behalf of ATRA and the practice of recreational therapy.**

- a. Identify and standardize responsibilities and expectations for members (i.e., monthly email on issues, conference calls, meetings).
- b. Create a social media communications plan.
- c. Create ATRA Public Policy Summit at least every other year – meeting with continuing education credit in Washington DC.
- d. Develop position statements on a variety of population/disability issues to identify ATRA's stance on legislative issues, such as IDEA, accessibility/ADA, Medicare, Medicaid, etc.

**7. Promote the inclusion of the practice of recreational therapy in key areas of accrediting bodies/regulatory agencies and public policy.**

- a. Define ATRA's position relative to accrediting bodies and public policy initiatives.
- b. Continue efforts to have the practice of recreational therapy recognized as an acceptable form of therapy by third party payers.

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **Subgroup Goal, Objectives, and Strategies**

*Note: The work of this focus area will be administered under the guidance of a Board liaison. The ongoing work of completing the objectives and strategies listed below will ultimately be handled by ATRA members who express a desire to be involved and help move the work forward.*

#### **GOAL:**

Identify, find or develop, and provide professional development opportunities that steward and support the practice of recreational therapy by seeking professional excellence in key areas of strategic personal, professional and organizational growth.

#### **OBJECTIVES and STRATEGIES:**

- 1. Use findings from the recently conducted competency study to prioritize learning opportunities in consultation with partners across all mediums (online, in person, publications).**
  - a. Support chapters in their provision of learning opportunities.
  - b. Look to expand and maximize distribution of on-line learning opportunities.
    - i. Applications for cell phone
    - ii. On-line conferences
    - iii. Develop app for presenting on-line presentations given the limited nature of in-person slots
    - iv. Webinars (*i.e. research institute*)
    - v. Podcasts
  - c. Evaluate current in person opportunities for quality and opportunities/need to expand in-person specialty conferences.
    - i. Continuous quality improvement plan for in person conference
    - ii. Collect, analyze, and use data collected; report to the BOD
    - iii. Explore need for higher education conference, veterans conference, public
    - iv. policy and research
  - d. Evaluate current quality of ATRA publications, distribution, accessibility, exposure and need for more publication opportunities
  - e. Identify leadership resources
  
- 2. Create and support a speaker's bureau on content areas and ATRA.**
  - a. Organize a calendar
  - b. Create a list of speakers
  - c. Consistent ATRA presentation
  - d. Tie into marketing of ATRA

**3. Provide education and training opportunities to enhance, promote, and disseminate research related to recreational therapy.**

- a. Create opportunities for presenting, collaborating, and translating research
  - i. Increase number of research sessions at conference
  - ii. Develop learning opportunities (*e.g., conference session, webinar, etc.*) on how to conduct, interpret, and utilize research
  - iii. Create a research database to match practitioners' programs to researchers who would be willing to study them
  - iv. Create opportunities to match practitioners and researchers (*e.g., speed dating at conference, online opportunities*)
- b. Identify strategic outlets for disseminating RT knowledge
  - i. Codify outlets where RT knowledge could be disseminated
    - o Internal (RT related conferences, journals, educational opportunities, etc.)
    - o External (non-RT related conferences, journals, educational opportunities, etc.)
- c. Identify opportunities for funding (*e.g., website among other areas*)
- d. Utilize the competency study to identify relevant areas of the profession for research
- e. Empower practitioners in fostering connections/communication
- f. Develop a "Current State of the Evidence Series"
  - i. Include systematic reviews on highly rated items to determine current state of the evidence including research recommendations
  - ii. Develop a list of calls for specific systematic reviews
  - iii. Design an application process for systematic review
  - iv. Create a standardized format/outline for manuscripts
  - v. Define the peer review/publication process
- g. Develop a plan for Collecting and Disseminating Future Practice Trends

**4. Define the components of a single academic program accreditation to ensure consistent content and rigor among undergraduate recreational therapy programs.**

- a. Increase and improve fieldwork experiences across RT curricula.
  - i. Encourage all current bachelor's degree programs to improve the structured, outcome-driven fieldwork experiences.
- b. Base all university curricula in RT on knowledge and skills for RT and support the content.

- c. Identify ways that RT curricula can show consistency in learning outcomes that reflect entry-level competencies in the field.
  - i. Support the requirement of programmatic accreditation of a degree with a major, concentration, option, minor in RT.
  - ii. Support a community of educators to strengthen programs and faculty in RT.
  - iii. Strengthen integration of education and practice.
- d. Incorporate new and increasing levels of competencies into bachelor's and master's RT curricula.
  - i. Conduct a collaborative and systematic study to affirm, validate, and explore current and emerging competencies relevant to future practice.
  - ii. Reach out to principal investigators of any competency related studies to triangulate results to design documents defining the ideal level of preparation for entry-level practice.
- e. Improve the infrastructure for a graduated progression of quality fieldwork experiences.
  - i. Develop basic, intermediate, and advanced, outcome-based fieldwork experiences that allow students opportunities to practice with different populations and in different settings.
  - ii. Develop, implement, and evaluate competencies-based internship supervisor training program delivered through a variety of mechanisms (*e.g., pre-cons, webinars, manuals*).
  - iii. Advocate for a standards change/addition for required internship supervisor training with credentialing bodies.
- f. Determine effective models that will ensure quality, consistency, access, and affordability in graduate education to advance practice and the profession.
  - i. Identify advanced competencies and learning outcomes for graduate education at the master's degree level in RT.
  - ii. Study the accelerated master's degree (*e.g., 4+1*) as an option to negotiate constraints to graduate education (*e.g., cost, time, access*).
  - iii. Investigate market feasibility for support of master's prepared practitioners.
  - iv. Form a coalition of RT professional organizations to develop accreditation standards for master's education.
- g. Evaluate the entry level degree for RT every 5 years.
- h. Identify ways for educational institutions to demonstrate excellence.
- i. Enhance ATRA's relationship with the certification board.