

Therapeutic Recreation Journal

Call for Papers Mental Health in Therapeutic Recreation

The logo for the Therapeutic Recreation Journal, featuring the text "Therapeutic Recreation Journal" in white on a dark red background with a pattern of hands.

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We all have mental health. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, mental health includes “our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act.... Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood” ([www.https://www.mentalhealth.gov/basics/what-is-mental-health](https://www.mentalhealth.gov/basics/what-is-mental-health)). While positive mental health enables people to realize their full potential, cope with life stresses, and make meaningful contributions to their communities (USDHHS), all people are at risk of developing poor mental health (e.g., in response to challenging life circumstances). Factors that make some people at greater risk for poor mental health include chronic illness (whether physical or mental), trauma, or living in poverty, alone or with acute or persistent life stressors.

In the United States, as part of a national prevention strategy related to mental health, the Surgeon General (2014) released a number of recommendations for action, including as one example, “facilitat[ing] social connectedness and community engagement across the lifespan” (www.surgeongeneral.gov). Therapeutic recreation (TR) is ideally positioned to assume a leadership role in health promotion and prevention efforts related to mental health (Shank & Coyle, 2002). However, although there is abundant research on the benefits of recreation and leisure for enhancing mental health for all populations, most of the focus of TR research and practice has been on addressing the recovery needs of persons living with mental illness or addiction issues.

While this focus is important, there is a need to expand our evidence-base (and impact) in TR to understand how and why (and to what end) therapeutic recreation is or could be utilized as a resource for promoting optimal mental health or reducing the risk of poor mental health. For this special issue, we particularly invite manuscripts with a focus on:

- TR services and supports provided in community-oriented settings, with a specific focus on mental health promotion or risk prevention
- TR services and/or supports (with a mental health lens) to vulnerable or marginalized populations living in the community or who may live (and receive care/support) outside medical health care systems (e.g., persons who are homeless, living alone, experiencing chronic stress, PTSD, addictions, experiencing disruptive life transitions, children and youth in school or community contexts, etc.)
- Innovative interventions that involve TR practitioners in collaboration with peer supporters/advocates
- Collaborative/interdisciplinary models of practice

We also welcome case studies (of work with an individual, group, or community) including first voice perspectives on their participation in TR services.

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If you are interested in submitting a manuscript for consideration you are welcome to contact the guest editors for this special issue:

Anne-Marie Sullivan, PhD (CTRS)
Memorial University
School of Human Kinetics & Recreation
Email: asulliva@mun.ca

Susan Hutchinson, PhD
Dalhousie University
School of Health and Human Performance
Email: Susan.Hutchinson@dal.ca

References

Shank, J., & Coyle, C. (2002). *Therapeutic recreation in health promotion and rehabilitation*. State College, PA: Venture.

The following are the timelines proposed for this special issue:

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| Manuscript submissions due | May 1, 2019 |
| Out for review | June 1, 2019 |
| Receive reviews | August 31, 2019 |
| Back out to authors | September 30, 2019 |
| Back for final review | October 31, 2019 |
| Final manuscripts | December 1, 2019 |
| Anticipated publication | First Issue, 2020 |

Submissions

Submissions are due May 1, 2019. All TRJ content is managed by Sagamore-Venture through a data management system that can be accessed at <https://js.sagamorepub.com/trj/about/submissions>. Electronic submissions must adhere to the preparation guidelines (APA—6th edition) and must be sent in Microsoft Word format.