Recreational Therapy Internship
Rochester, Minnesota
Recreational Therapy Internship

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Mayo School of Health Sciences (MSHS) offers a 16-week Recreational Therapy Internship at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn., that provides comprehensive knowledge and skills which will enable you to perform recreational therapy treatments and clinical activities.

Your education will prepare you to treat adult and pediatric patients with those medical diagnoses commonly seen in the rehabilitative clinical setting including: stroke, spinal cord injury, traumatic brain injury, multiple sclerosis, cancer, cardiac conditions and neurological impairments.

You will learn to utilize adaptive physical activities, specialized equipment, training videos and other resources designed to assist those with physical impairments.

The Recreational Therapy Internship takes place in a hospital-based environment, where you will learn and practice:

• Treatment that utilizes physical activity to promote the individual’s functional skills.

• Skills patients need to successfully live in their communities, including exploration of accessibility to buildings, and return to past leisure and social activities.

• Leisure education as a means to acquire skills and develop knowledge of new activities.

• Recreational activities that promote patient mental and physical well being and independence.

ACCREDITATION

Mayo Foundation is accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools Higher Learning Commission.

Higher Learning Commission
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www.ncacihe.org
FACILITIES

The site for this internship is Saint Marys Hospital, part of Mayo Clinic in Rochester. You will train primarily on the rehabilitation unit, except when you are assisting patients with community-based educational opportunities and activities.

The Mayo Clinic campus in Rochester comprises an extensive outpatient complex, two hospitals and research and education facilities. It is among the largest, most advanced medical centers in the world.

GRADUATION AND CERTIFICATION

Students receive a degree from their college or university commensurate with their didactic and clinical training.

Graduates then must schedule and complete their certification tests through the Education Council on Therapeutic Recreation Certification. You must successfully pass this national certification examination to begin work as an entry-level therapeutic recreation specialist. Recreation therapy graduates must also complete a 480-hour internship.

HOURS

For the majority of the internship, your learning schedule will include eight-hour days, five days per week. While the regular workweek is usually 40 hours, additional projects, patient activities and homework may be assigned.

CLASS SIZE

Each year, Mayo School of Health Sciences admits three students (one each semester: spring, summer and fall) to its Recreational Therapy Internship at Mayo Clinic in Rochester. This ensures you will receive a comprehensive educational experience with one-on-one instruction.

Curriculum

The Mayo School of Health Sciences’ Recreational Therapy Internship prepares individuals for professional practice in hospitals, clinics and private practice. Through your patient care responsibilities and clinical experiences, the Recreational Therapy Internship will enable you to:

• Understand the principles and methods of laboratory testing in the treatment of patients with physical disabilities.

• Establish and maintain rapport with patients with diverse needs and background.
• Function as a dynamic member of the patient care team.
• Communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing.
• Manage and organize time.
• Utilize available resources within the Mayo Clinic medical complex and the surrounding community.
• Participate in routine departmental maintenance and cleanup.
• Practice as an entry-level therapist.

GRADING OR EVALUATION

Mayo School of Health Sciences uses student evaluative tools that include:

• Demonstration of skills
• Self-assessment exercises

Our system of evaluation provides students and faculty with a comprehensive look at individual performance. This allows faculty and administrative staff to direct students who are experiencing academic difficulty to the appropriate support resources, including tutoring programs and counseling opportunities.

Faculty

TEACHING FACULTY

The Mayo School of Health Sciences’ Recreational Therapy Internship draws its faculty from Mayo Clinic’s clinical, scientific and technical staffs. They are chosen for their commitment to teaching as well as clinical practice and/or research.

You will have direct access to these individuals throughout your training. This allows you the opportunity to learn directly from experienced recreational therapist.

VISITING PROFESSORS/LECTURERS

A hallmark of higher education excellence is the breadth and depth of information and experience provided students by the faculty and visiting experts. Many prominent professors visit Mayo Clinic to lecture on their areas of medical and scientific expertise each year. As a student of Mayo School of Health Sciences, you are encouraged to attend all conferences, lectures and seminars prepared for students, residents, fellows and consulting staff.
PREREQUISITES

To be accepted into the Recreational Therapy Internship in Rochester, you must be or have:

• A senior level student in a therapeutic recreation program or recreation program with therapeutic recreation emphasis and have completed all classroom academic course work before applying.

• Completed basic cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training/certification.

• Completed recommended courses in anatomy, physiology and medical terminology.

• A primary interest in rehabilitation in a clinical setting.

POLICIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The following Mayo School of Health Sciences policies affect applications and admissions to its programs:

**English fluency**
Fluency in written and spoken English is essential to succeed in the program and to ensure patient safety. If English is a second language, you must be able to demonstrate fluency. Satisfactory performance on the Test of English as a Foreign Language examination or the Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency must be documented as proof of fluency. Your test results must be less than two years old.

**Immunization record**
For the protection of patients, students and employees, and in compliance with state regulations, Mayo Clinic requires students to be properly immunized. You must show proof of the following immunizations before you begin a program at Mayo School of Health Sciences:

• Tuberculin test in the past six months

• Varicella, rubella and rubeola immunity

• Up-to-date diphtheria and tetanus shots

• Hepatitis B vaccination or signed declaration

Documentation of vaccinations must be provided to Mayo Employee Health Service prior to the start of class.
**Medical insurance**
Students must have medical insurance coverage during their program. Evidence of medical coverage must be provided when your educational program begins.

**Background check**
Prospective students must pass a criminal background check and/or drug screening required by state laws, prior to enrollment to Mayo School of Health Sciences.

**Student responsibilities**
Mayo School of Health Sciences students are expected to attend all scheduled classes, examinations and assigned clinical rotations unless absence is approved.

Students are required to exhibit professional and ethical conduct at all times.

**TECHNICAL STANDARDS**
Mayo School of Health Sciences accepts students who are highly qualified for its programs. To be considered for admittance you should exhibit strong qualifications for the health profession you wish to pursue. Applicants to programs must possess the following general qualities:

- Critical thinking skills
- Sound judgment
- Emotional stability and maturity
- Empathy for others
- Physical and mental stamina
- Ability to learn and function in a variety of settings

In addition to these general standards, recreational therapists should be comfortable working with persons who are ill or have disabilities. Therapists must be patient, tactful and persuasive when working with people who have a variety of special needs. Ingenuity, a sense of humor and imagination are needed to adapt activities to individual needs. Good physical coordination is necessary to demonstrate or participate in recreational activities.

You must be able to perform the essential functions of the profession and meet the standards of the curriculum. Students seeking exceptions to these standards or reasonable accommodations should initiate their request with the program’s director.
Application Process

POSITIONS

Three candidates are selected each year for the Recreational Therapy Internship on competitive basis. The program begins the first week in October.

APPLY

• To apply to the program, please submit:
  1. A completed Mayo School of Health Sciences online application form and goal statement.
  2. A copy of all college and/or university transcripts.
  3. Three letters of recommendation.

• Your application and supporting documentation can be submitted for consideration up to six months before the internship begins.

• Applicants may arrange to visit with recreational therapy faculty to learn more about the Recreational Therapy Program and internship responsibilities.

• No interviews are held for internship positions. However, the Recreational Therapy Program director, along with recreational therapy program staff, review applications and select students from an affiliated university or college based on the following criteria:
  - Academics (i.e., relating to therapeutic recreation core courses, related courses and electives).
  - A completed application with all requested materials (i.e., application, resume, letters of recommendation, person goal statement form, academic records, health information, etc.).
  - An interest primarily in rehabilitation (more so than long-term care or community-based recreational therapy).
  - Volunteer and work-related experiences in therapeutic recreation.
  - Letters of recommendation that document skills helpful in organization, leadership, communication, documentation and recreational therapy.
• When all applicant files are completed, reviewed and ranked, one internship position is offered for each spring, summer and fall semester.

• Mayo School of Health Sciences upholds all federal and state laws that preclude discrimination on the basis of race, sex, age, religion, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, disabilities or veteran’s status.

• Mayo School of Health Sciences is committed to developing and maintaining the very best education programs. Changes may be made to the curriculum and other aspects of this program as necessary to assure the highest-quality training.

Tuition & Financial Aid

PROGRAM COSTS

There is no tuition for the Recreational Therapy Internship.

You are responsible for providing your living accommodations and transportation.

You may hold outside employment during the program, if it does not conflict with your program responsibilities.

FINANCIAL AID

Mayo School of Health Sciences offers financial incentives for students to participate in some of its many health sciences training programs. For example, tuition waivers or employment scholarships may be offered to students who commit to work for Mayo Clinic after graduation. For other programs, scholarships may be available for those who demonstrate financial need.

The Mayo Clinic College of Medicine Student Financial Aid Office can provide more details about the financial aid opportunities offered by MSHS.
Recreational Therapy Career Overview

FIELD DESCRIPTION

Recreational therapists, or therapeutic recreation specialists, provide treatments and recreation activities to individuals with illnesses or disabling conditions to improve or maintain physical, mental and emotional well-being and help reduce depression, stress and anxiety.

Recreational therapies help patients recover basic motor functioning and reasoning abilities, build confidence and socialize more effectively. Treatments may incorporate arts and crafts, animals, sports, games, dance and movement, drama, music and community outings.

Patients are evaluated with information from standardized assessments, observations, medical records, and discussions with medical staff and family members as well as the individual. Recreational therapists may instruct patients in relaxation techniques, stretching and limbering exercises, proper body mechanics for participation in recreation activities, and pacing and energy conservation techniques. Additionally, therapists observe and document patients’ participation, reactions and progress.

Recreational therapists should not be confused with recreation workers, who organize recreational activities primarily for enjoyment.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Overall employment of recreational therapists is expected to grow more slowly than the average for all occupations through the year 2010.

Employment will decline slightly in the two largest sectors employing recreational therapists - hospitals and nursing homes - as services shift to outpatient settings and employers emphasize cost containment. However, significant growth is expected in assisted living, outpatient physical and psychiatric rehabilitation, and services for people with disabilities.

Opportunities should be best for persons with a bachelor’s degree in therapeutic recreation or in recreation with an emphasis in therapeutic recreation.

Recreational therapists held about 29,000 jobs in 2000. Almost 40 percent of salaried jobs for therapists were in nursing and personal care facilities, and more than 30 percent were in hospitals. Others
worked in residential facilities, community mental health centers, adult day care programs, correctional facilities, community programs for people with disabilities and substance abuse centers. A few therapists were self-employed, generally contracting with long-term care facilities or community agencies to develop and oversee programs.

Therapists may advance to supervisory or administrative positions. Some teach, conduct research, or consult for health or social services agencies.

In acute health-care settings, such as hospitals and rehabilitation centers, recreational therapists treat and rehabilitate individuals in collaboration with physicians, nurses, psychologists, social workers and physical and occupational therapists.

In long-term and residential care facilities, recreational therapists use structured group activities to improve and maintain general health and well being. They may also treat clients and provide interventions to prevent further medical problems and secondary complications related to illness and disabilities.

Community-based therapeutic recreation specialists may work in park and recreation departments, special education programs for school districts, or programs for older adults and persons with disabilities (e.g., those in assisted living, adult day care and substance abuse rehabilitation centers). Therapists help clients develop specific skills while providing opportunities for exercise, mental stimulation, creativity and fun.

**EARNING POTENTIAL**

Median annual earnings for recreational therapists in 2000 were $32,520 in hospitals and $23,240 in nursing and personal care facilities. Salaries ranged from $17,010 to $43,810 a year.

**PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

Visit the following Web sites to learn more about recreational therapy:

- American Therapeutic Recreation Association (www.atra-tr.org)
- National Therapeutic Recreation Society (http://www.nrpa.org/content/default.aspx?documentId=530)
- National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification (www.nctrc.org)
Program Contacts

For an application form or more information about the Recreational Therapy Internship Program in Rochester, please contact:

Kate Ray, Enrollment and Student Services Director
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Or

Jon Nordrum, Center Coordinator of Clinical Education and Research
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You can also request more information on education programs offered by Mayo School of Health Sciences.