



# American Horticultural Therapy Association®

## A Guide for Internships

### **Purpose**

The internship program is designed to provide a background in the theory and application of horticultural therapy as a treatment modality for diverse populations with disabilities.

### **Goals**

To develop a functional knowledge of Horticultural Therapy; its theory and application, and a perspective of how it fits into the overall rehabilitation process.

To understand how Horticultural Therapy is similar to other disciplines, and how it is unique.

To develop an understanding of the psychology of disability

To develop skill in forming objective assessments regarding client goals, interests and abilities, and to relate these factors to appropriate activities and adaptations.

To develop effective communication and interpersonal skills with clients and staff.

To develop initiative in organization of individual and group programs.

To gain knowledge of administrative requirements affecting function of the department: budgeting, planning, record keeping, use of appropriate channels and public relations.

### **I. Policies**

- A. Horticultural therapy interns must be directly supervised by a registered horticultural therapist at the HTR/HTM level.
- B. If a site has no registered horticultural therapist on staff at the HTR/HTM level, a non-staff horticultural therapist at this level may act as supervisor and provide overall internship oversight through periodic on-site evaluations and routine communications.
- C. Supervisors must evaluate interns on an ongoing basis. At the conclusion of the internship program, the supervisor must meet with the student to evaluate the internship experience. This meeting is an opportunity to evaluate the intern's performance as well as the success of the internship program. Final evaluations must be fully documented and state the following; the number of internship hours served, goals successfully mastered, areas for improvement, and overall student assessment.
- D. Distance supervisors must provide a minimum of 3 on-site visitations/evaluations; an initial visitation/evaluation, at the midpoint of the internship, and at the conclusion of the internship. Visitations must be documented. Interim communications via phone and/or e-mail should be conducted on a weekly basis. Final evaluations must be fully documented and state the following; the number of internship hours served, goals successfully masters, areas for improvement, and overall student assessment.

- E. As a functioning member of a department/facility, interns will be expected to assume the role of a professional. This means they are to have specific responsibilities to the clients, the facility and the department.
- F. Interns will be directly responsible to their supervisor. Information, difficulties or questions relating to function should be directed to that person.
- G. Knowledge of basic etiological data is essential to effective interaction with clients. This information is available in the client's charts and is strictly confidential. Discussion about a client is to take place only among staff and must respect a client's ethical and legal right to privacy.

## **II. Procedures**

### **A. Program Content**

1. Site Orientation
  - a. Review of general policy and procedures.
  - b. Review of specific horticultural therapy policy and procedures.
  - c. Review of general safety procedures
  - d. Review of client confidentiality requirements
  - e. Orientation to clinical disciplines and operations
  - f. Orientation to basic medical terminology needed to facilitate communication with other clinical staff.
2. Horticulture as a Treatment Modality
  - a. Client goals
  - b. Programming activities
  - c. Activity adaptations and modifications to include adaptive garden design, techniques and tools.
  - d. Interdisciplinary collaboration
3. Basic Horticultural Skills
  - a. Basic Plant Processes
  - b. Plant pest and disease management
  - c. Propagation techniques
  - d. Useful plants for HT programs
  - e. Basic floral design
4. Professional Growth and Service
  - a. Orientation to the American Horticultural Therapy Association
  - b. Orientation to the AHTA professional registration process
  - c. Orientation to chapter affiliations of the AHTA
  - d. Orientation for personal growth through workshops, conferences, committee work and networking opportunities.
5. Student Responsibilities
  - a. To attend all departmental meetings
  - b. To be responsible for carrying out programs and activities that are assigned
  - c. To become familiar with the policies and procedures of the hospital and department
  - d. To plan and conduct client activities
  - e. To develop and implement a long term project/program dealing with horticultural therapy and its application to populations served. To keep a personal log to be turned in to the supervising horticultural therapist for review upon completion of the internship.

**B. Projects**

Interns will be required to complete two projects during their internship. The short term project will be client activity which the intern will plan, organize and execute under staff supervision. Included in the plan will be an assessment of materials, time, budget, disability and goals. Other more specific factors will be determined in accordance with the nature of the project. The long term project should benefit the department in some lasting manner. Long term projects generally involve information gathering or research of some nature. Appropriate time should be allocated for this project.

**C. Documentation**

Students are required to record their daily activities, including client diagnosis, goals, activities and treatment outcomes.