



STANDARDS OF PRACTICE FOR DRAMA THERAPISTS

Version 1, October 2020

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Title: North American Drama Therapy Association (NADTA) Standards of Practice for Drama Therapists

Standard 1: Specialized Body of Knowledge

Indicators:

- 1.1 Practices with an approved credential from the NADTA, or as a student under the supervision of a credentialed drama therapist, or as regulation per State/Province requires.
- 1.2 Bases practice on evidence-based drama therapy research, arts and sciences with a foundation of psychology, and on related content from other arts, sciences, and humanities.
- 1.3 Knows how and where to find needed information to support the practice of drama therapy.
- 1.4 Justifies decisions with reference to drama therapy knowledge and theories.
- 1.5 Presents an informed view of the drama therapy profession to others.

Standard 2: Competent Application of Knowledge

Indicators:

- 2.1 Gathers client information from a variety of sources, the primary source being the client, using skills of communication, observation, and assessment. If the client is unable or unwilling to disclose information, corroborative sources can be determined as a source, with the full knowledge and informed consent of the client whenever possible.
- 2.2 Identifies through assessment actual or potential needs and strengths, distinguishes between relevant and irrelevant information, plans interventions, performs planned interventions, and evaluates outcomes.
- 2.3 Establishes that all actions and interventions are subject to the reasonable belief that the client will benefit from the action and will address the client's needs and strengths.
- 2.4 Sets priorities when planning and providing drama therapy.
- 2.5 Practices in a competent manner in accordance with policies, procedures, care standards, NADTA Scope of Practice, and the NADTA Code of Ethics.
- 2.6 Evaluates client's response to interventions and revises them as necessary.

- 2.7 Completes timely and accurate documentation of relevant observations, including conclusions drawn from them.
- 2.8 Initiates, maintains, and concludes a professional relationship with clients, families, caregivers, allied and interdisciplinary professionals, and other drama therapists.

Standard 3: Provision of a Service to the Client

All provisions of drama therapy to the client are in the best interest of the client.

Indicators:

- 3.1 Provides drama therapy services based on assessment of the client.
- 3.2 Recognizes that the client is considered an individual, a family unit member, a community member, and a person with a distinct indigeneity, ancestry, or culture; and that the drama therapist will consider these factors in all decisions regarding the client.
- 3.3 Communicates and consults with other members of the team, if any, about the client's care.
- 3.4 Exercises judgement in assuming or performing responsibilities.
- 3.5 Informs the client that any threat of harm to a person will be revealed to that person, the supervisor, or authorities according to the protocol established by the NADTA or by relevant State/Provincial or regulatory agencies.
- 3.6 Remains conscious of the power differential that exists between drama therapist and client, both real and ascribed, and works to diminish its relevance and significance.
- 3.7 Ensures that all members of a drama therapy group are aware of the likelihood that elements of their private lives may be expressed in the course of group work and require a commitment from all members to respect the confidential nature of the communication that occurs in group work.
- 3.8 Terminates a professional relationship appropriately when it seems reasonably clear that the service is no longer of benefit to the client.

Standard 4: Public and Professional Relationships

Only persons trained in drama therapy from an accredited master's program or having completed an Alternative Training (AT) program recognized by the NADTA shall practice as a credentialed drama therapist.

Indicators:

- 4.1 Advocates for change in the best interest of the client and for the universal benefit of society, the environment, the global community, the profession and the organization itself. This in accordance with the NADTA's culturally

relevant and inclusive standards established by its Cultural Humility, Equity, and Diversity (CHED) Guidelines, includes:

- A. Commitment to Cultural Awareness and Knowledge of Self and Others
 - B. Commitment to Cultural Response/ability in Drama Therapy Practice
 - C. Commitment to Cultural Response/ability in Drama Therapy Training
 - D. Commitment to Cultural Response/ability in Drama Therapy Supervision
 - E. Commitment to Cultural Response/ability in Drama Therapy Research
 - F. Commitment to Cultural Response/ability in Advocacy and Organizational Change
- 4.2 The NADTA, on behalf of its members, advocates for clients and communities by putting out periodic, formal, and public position statements principally guided by the CHED Committee, and takes a culturally responsive stance addressing harmful and oppressive cultural systems in society.
- 4.3 Informs and/or educates clients, staff, organizations, and interested others about the profession of drama therapy, drama therapy training, professional accreditation, and drama therapy services.
- 4.4 Creates, participates in, and encourages activities to improve quality of care in professional settings.
- 4.5 Advocates for the growth and promotion of the drama therapy profession and for its recognized practitioners.
- 4.6 Ensures that outside interests of the individual drama therapist will not:
- A. affect the drama therapist's ability to practice drama therapy in an appropriate manner,
 - B. present to the client or community that the drama therapist's ability to practice drama therapy is negatively affected,
 - C. bring the profession of drama therapy or the NADTA into legal, ethical, or professional disrepute.

Standard 5: Code of Ethics

Indicators:

- 5.1 Complies with the NADTA Code of Ethics and the NADTA Cultural Response/ability Guidelines.
- 5.2 Demonstrates ethical judgment in clinical practice, education, and in the conduct of research activities.
- 5.3 Demonstrates honesty (refraining from lying, cheating or stealing) and integrity (strict adherence to a standard of value or conduct).
- 5.4 Reports unsafe practice or professional misconduct to the Ethics Committee/Chairperson.

- 5.5 Seeks appropriate consultation and supervision when faced with ethical challenges.
- 5.6 Practices cultural humility and demonstrates critical thinking when addressing ethical issues with clients from races/cultures/genders/sexual orientations/religions other than their own.
- 5.7 Acts as an advocate to protect and promote a client's right to autonomy, respect, privacy, dignity, and access to information.

Standard 6: Reflexivity in Practice

Assumes primary responsibility for maintaining competence, fitness to practice, and acquiring new knowledge and skills. Continuing education credits are kept up to date.

Indicators:

- 6.1 Invests time, effort, or other resources in maintaining knowledge and skills required for practice.
- 6.2 Practices within own level of competence.
- 6.3 Maintains current membership in the North American Drama Therapy Association.
- 6.4 Maintains a current file on continuing education credits with the NADTA.
- 6.5 Maintains current membership in other relevant professional associations.
- 6.6 Maintains own physical, mental, and emotional well-being.
- 6.7 Recognizes when challenges for one's own physical, mental and emotional well-being are interfering with clinical judgement and obtains professional consultation or assistance. When necessary, is able to determine whether to limit, suspend, or terminate work-related duties.
- 6.8 Seeks supervision/consultation and follows supervisor's recommendations that assure the safety of clients.
- 6.8 Strives to be aware of their own belief systems, values, needs, and limitations and the effect of these on their work.
- 6.9 Continues to expand clinical competence, knowledge, and skill through professional development.

Standard 7: Responsibility and Accountability

Maintains standards of drama therapy practice and professional behaviour determined by the NADTA.

See these documents:

- NADTA bylaws
- NADTA Code of Ethics
- NADTA Scope of Practice

- NADTA Professional Development and Continuing Education policies
- NADTA Knowledge Competencies for Accredited Drama Therapists
- NADTA Guidelines on Cultural Response/ability in Training, Research, Practice, Supervision, Advocacy & Organizational Change

Indicators:

- 7.1 Will be accountable and takes responsibility for their own actions in accordance with the above documents.
- 7.2 Functions within the recognized scope of practice of drama therapy and contextualizes their practice within any relevant legislation according to where they practice.
- 7.3 Is beholden to policies and practices that respect and protect the confidentiality of client information and is thoughtful and transparent about engaging in supervision and dual relationships.
- 7.4 Follows or helps to develop established facility and/or departmental policies and standards.
- 7.5 Advocates for improvements in drama therapy practice, education, administration, social justice work, and relevant research.