



2026 Advocacy Priorities

Introduction

ATRA's advocacy activities focus on federal health, education, community, and social service policies, programs, and legislation that directly impact the profession of recreational therapy and individuals with disabilities and chronic conditions served by recreational therapists.

Approach

ATRA responds to issues in a non-partisan manner to advocate and protect the recreational therapy profession and people served by recreational therapists.

Service Issues

- | Anti-discrimination policies specific to disability and inclusion of disability, accessibility and the term "inclusion"
- | Disability rights issues, such as accessibility, equitable practices, transportation, and education
- | Policy and program changes that affect people with disabilities, specifically in the Departments of Education, Veterans Affairs, and Health and Human Services Impact and use of artificial intelligence in healthcare such as eligibility determinations and practice issues
- | Make America Healthy Again initiatives

Coverage Issues

- | Medicaid – changes at the federal level and impact on state; Issues: waiver programs, Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS), work requirement impact on people with disabilities
- | Medicare – Inpatient settings: Inpatient Rehabilitation Facilities (IRF) and the Level of Intensity of Services rule, Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNF) and potential staffing requirement changes, Inpatient Psychiatric Facilities (IPF) and funding for substance use programs/services, Hospice
- | Private Insurers: Issues: prior authorization impact on RT services, affordability, disclosure of costs specifically RT rates

Professional Issues

- | State licensure
- | University programs
- | Grant funding and federal government support of health/disability research
- | Discipline-specific coding
- | Impact of reclassification of professions (currently related to graduate loans)
- | Social prescribing

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