

**Guidance for Remote Internship Activities
State of North Carolina Clinical Coordinators and
Professional Leadership
Therapeutic Recreation/ Recreational Therapy Education
Programs**

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Introduction

There have been many discussions and resources committed to the appropriate completion of internships offsite for the spring 2020 therapeutic recreation (TR)/recreational therapy (RT) students across the country. These have included:

1. The provision of Alternative Internship Guidelines provided by the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification (NCTRC)--
<https://www.nctrc.org/update-on-covid-19/>
2. National Meetings through NCTRC and the American Therapeutic Recreation Association (ATRA)
3. Posting of COVID-19 guidance materials (for ATRA members) on the ATRA website

While these materials help reiterate the intent and guidelines for internships, a structure for best practices is needed to move forward with the potential for online internship components. When developing these guidelines, the task force took into consideration several professional documents related to practice in North Carolina:

- a. Purpose of RT Internship (North Carolina Board of Recreational Therapy Licensure Rules - [21 NCAC 65 .0301 MINIMUM LEVEL OF EDUCATION AND COMPETENCY FOR LICENSED RECREATIONAL THERAPIST-](#) section C3 a-d)
- b. [Standards of Practice](#) (ATRA)
- c. [Job Analysis Tasks](#) (NCTRC- page 4, table 2)
- d. [Ethics considerations](#), especially concerning competence, fidelity and non-maleficence (ATRA)

The practice of TR/RT is typically completed in a face-to-face manner with individual or small group interventions being the norm. ***Ideally, the bulk of a student's internship hours should be completed in person, onsite.*** Regardless, students must be gaining the required skills. The student, academic supervisor and agency supervisor should be tracking the hours and weekly job tasks and making sure that these follow the guidelines for NCTRC job tasks to demonstrate skill development. Although students also gain professional knowledge during their internship, this is not the primary goal of an internship experience.

As has been the case in the past, the agency supervisor, academic supervisor, and student must all work collaboratively for the student to meet the intended skill outcomes of a TR/RT internship. The agency supervisor's completion of the Clinical Performance Appraisal [Summary](#) (adapted with permission from the ATRA Standards of Practice Clinical Performance Appraisal Form), and the academic supervisor's submission of a grade indicating the student met the minimum hours and weeks for internship practice, as well as demonstrated each of the ten NCTRC Job Analysis Job Task areas ([CTRS® Job Analysis Report, 2014](#)), is still required.

Interns who complete an internship with integrated remote internship experiences should have similar clinical experiences to those completing a typical face-to-face internship. The intern should demonstrate clinical skills, and the agency supervisor should observe that the intern can complete those skills, eventually independently, in a health care or human service setting.

Many sites are integrating the capability for telehealth into their practices. Telehealth, as defined for this document, means that the student is conducting actual patient care using the APIE process remotely. The student would be able to assess patients, participate in treatment team meetings, complete actual treatment plans and interventions, and evaluate patient progress. Remote internship experiences are an opportunity for the intern to practice the provision and delivery of services virtually. In the same manner that an intern would shadow an agency supervisor in practice, practice a skill with supervision and practice independently with a supervisor in the job tasks face to face, an intern can prepare for practice virtually in a telehealth environment.

Not all sites have access to telehealth to create seamless learning opportunities for their interns. Telehealth may not be permitted by the internship site or their governing bodies. When this is the case, it may be much more difficult for students to complete all their internship tasks remotely. Agency supervisors have the primary responsibility in these situations of coordinating with the academic supervisor to ensure the student is gaining the skills needed for practice.

The following examples are provided as guidance for academic supervisors, agency supervisors, and students when considering remote internship activities.

General Overview of Remote Internship Tasks

Virtual casework: Some agencies will have the capability of conducting true telehealth services, as defined above, where the intern is a virtual part of all aspects of the APIED process. Other agencies will not have this capability, and the student intern- agency supervisor discussions take on even greater importance in the learning process. Discussions conducted through a virtual format with the agency supervisor regarding the intern's daily caseload and clients may be counted towards their internship hours. These activities may include work related to assessments, discussions with agency supervisor and/or other members of the treatment team about the client's progress and treatment, information reported by the client and/or family or discussed during treatment team meetings, and observations and relevant information about the client gained during interactions (face to face or virtual) with the client. In these discussions with the agency supervisor, the intern might share their view of the client's needs, identification of potential goals and objectives for the client based on needs, description of appropriate interventions and facilitation techniques, and means of determining the effectiveness of interventions and attainment of client goals and positive outcomes.

Documentation notes, as well as the intern's written plan for treatment, would also count toward hours as virtual casework. In addition, virtual case management scenarios could be presented by the agency supervisor for the intern to demonstrate their competence related to assessment, implementation, planning, evaluation, and documentation. The hours counted toward virtual casework should be relevant to the development of the intern's skills and abilities as a recreational therapist and include important discussions with the agency supervisor about clients' clinical needs, progress, and outcomes from treatment.

Projects and assignments: Developing projects and presentations is often completed as part of the internship experience. Possible acceptable assignments could be writing case studies, researching a diagnosis and its implications for the patient and family, developing evidence-based protocols, writing/revising policy and procedures, writing periodic reports for the academic institution, compiling community referral and relevant resources for clients as part of discharge planning, and developing in-service presentations. All hours spent presenting these assignments/projects via remote technology may be counted toward the 560 hours. Hours spent preparing these projects or assignments should be counted towards no more than 25% (140 hours of the 560) of the internship experience.

In-services: For purposes of the RT remote internship, in-services are defined as any of the following: an educational training session, a pre-recorded or live lecture, or any informational component provided to or from the RT intern(s). This would not include the online casework/ telehealth services delineated above.

The recommendation is to have a *minimum* of one in-service session per NCTRC job analysis task domain. These sessions can help structure the students' progression through the RT internship and ensure that they are not overloaded with too much information at the same time. An additional suggestion to structure learning is to have the agency supervisor initially provide the in-service, but gradually as the internship progresses, the student would facilitate a series of in-services (to the agency supervisor, colleagues, peers, etc.) to show comfort and mastery of subject matter.

In addition to the 10 task domains, several other ideas for in-service sessions are incorporated in this document, though these do not need to occur in a particular order or in progression. Introduction to the job analysis task domains would not be limited to these in-services, but having a structured in-service/call on each task would ensure that NCTRC guidelines are being comprehensively addressed.

Meetings: Practitioners engage in a variety of meetings during their day. In the context of the NCTRC Job Task Domains, interns may complete some of the following tasks:

- Establish/ maintain effective working relationships
- Participate in agency/ professional committees
- Request/ secure referrals/ orders
- Obtain and review pertinent assessment information

- Establish therapeutic relationships
- Disseminate assessment results
- Provide information to treatment team/ community partners
- Communicate information
- Advocate for rights of the person(s) served
- Provide education to internal/ external stakeholders

These meetings may involve other treatment team members, administration or staff, and individual planning sessions with patients/ clients/ residents. Interns would ordinarily attend and engage in these types of meetings. The learning that occurs with face-to-face involvement is not exactly replaced by moving to remote or virtual meetings. However, some of the same skills are needed, and remote or virtual meetings may make it necessary for the student to acquire or improve some of these skills. For example, students may need to learn how to engage in effective discussions using videoconferencing or document information shared during virtual meetings. Technology skills will be a focus for effective virtual meeting involvement for interns. Supervisors may consider the practice of skills needed for effective virtual meetings and the involvement in virtual meetings for part of the hours needed. A suggested percentage of hours in meetings that count toward a student's internship should parallel the hours the intern would spend onsite meetings if their internship was face-to-face.

Initial Training Considerations for Remote Internships

As with any Recreational Therapy internship, the agency supervisor and recreational therapy intern will be in close contact throughout the internship. This is especially imperative in the remote learning environment, as casual, day-to-day contact and questions are limited. The agency supervisor will want to consider conducting weekly in-services to help the students learn their remote tasks.

Before initiating any remote learning for an intern, the agency supervisor will want to ensure that the intern has a good foundation for learning skills virtually. An initial session to introduce the student to the agency and to make sure they understand their remote learning expectations might entail:

- Welcome and introduction to the agency
- How to be a remote student
 - Examples:
 - Technology training (email/ phone/ video services)
 - Setting up private space for virtual client interactions
 - Maintaining patient confidentiality when providing remote services
- Student and supervisor responsibilities
- Agency Paperwork
- Agency + Population Overview
- Introduction to RT Programs

Examples for Assignments for each of the NCTRC Job Task Domains

As with face-to-face internships, the TR/RT internship should focus on the NCTRC Job Task Domains from the 2014 CTRS® Job Analysis Report. Included in the following pages are suggestions for the agency supervisor and TR/RT intern for completing responsibilities remotely.

Professional Relationships and Responsibilities

Students work to increase their professional relationships and responsibilities throughout the course of their internship. If a student is working remotely, these may vary. A 1:1 meeting between the intern and the agency supervisor may include:

- How to connect with clients and colleagues in the virtual environment
- Skills for remote communication: verbal, non-verbal, video, written; non-verbal communication on video calls is an important skill for students to understand and practice.

Here are some initial considerations for other areas in this NCTRC domain. Several have been combined, as similar skills and learning apply in those subcategories.

1. Establish/ maintain effective working relationships and Participate in Agency/ Professional Committees

Establishing and maintaining relationships with key stakeholders is imperative for the student's internship. These include treatment team staff, administrators, and support staff. Remotely, a student may be able to connect to these individuals through videoconferencing. If a shadow day, for example, is not an option with a vital staff person, an interview with that person to better understand their role at the agency and the way they work with RT may be applicable.

Some of the same skills are needed for remote via face-to-face meetings; however, remote or virtual meetings may necessitate acquiring or improving some skills. For example, some skills needed may be how to engage in effective discussions using videoconferencing or document information shared during virtual meetings. Technology skills will be a focus for effective virtual meeting involvement for interns. Supervisors can consider the practice of skills needed for effective virtual meetings and the involvement in virtual meetings for part of the internship hours needed. A suggested percentage would parallel the hours spent in actual onsite meetings.

2. Create/maintain a safe/therapeutic environment

If working remotely, a student may be able to gain risk management skills in a variety of ways. Learning the ways to safely use technology through staff training and agency supervisor supervision will be an essential first learning component. Then, helping the student to determine ways to identify, minimize, or transfer risk of programming can be completed through student identification and online discussions with the agency supervisor. This can be done through helping the student to practice the risk management techniques that are typically practiced by agency staff.

3. Maintain CTRS/ required state credential(s)

At this point in the student's education, they should understand the steps that they need to take to apply for national certification and state licensure. The agency supervisor,

however, can create learning opportunities for the student and provide a personal model for them to better understand their own CEU acquisition and credentialing maintenance process. In addition, the supervisor can assist the student with applications for national certification and state licensure.

4. Participate in in-service training/ staff development or Enhance professional competence/ additional credentials

Any training that the student would complete in-person that can also be completed remotely can be applied in this area. For example, if the student would complete a suicide intervention training at the agency, having them do so remotely is warranted. The student and agency supervisor should take great care to make sure that the additional training is (a) directly related to the student's current internship experience and (b) has a skill component the student will be expected to demonstrate. The internship should not resort to online training for the sake of training.

5. Maintain knowledge of current RT/TR trends

Students are adept at accessing trend information and helping to bring the latest research and policy to an agency. Students can do this by using their university library resources and sharing pertinent items with their agency.

6. Support the development of evidence-based practices

Student interns are in a unique position to bring evidence-based resources to their agencies. The student has recent knowledge in evidence-based practices and access to university library systems for the latest literature in the profession. The student can work with the agency supervisor to identify literature and create evidence-based protocols for application at the agency. The student should also, however, be integral in applying those developed protocols through implementation, as well as evaluating the efficacy of these protocols. This can be done through a synchronous (telehealth) group or an asynchronous (pre-recorded) session for clients.

7. Adherence to SOP/ Code of Ethics

Agency supervisors can use check-in video or telephone conferences to review the Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics with students to ensure that they are following them while working remotely.

8. Participate in the quality improvement process

Many quality improvement tasks can be completed remotely as well as face-to-face. Making sure that the student has access to QI data and is an integral part of this process is key. Many interns working remotely can also help to assist supervisors to continue to update best practices in remote internship policies. Having a Generation Z student contribute to this process can be very beneficial. For example, most students in this generation like multiple points of daily contact. Developing ways to incorporate these can be part of the student's internship tasks.

Assessment

In most internship settings, students will observe assessments, practice assessments with their supervisor present/ potentially assisting, and then complete assessments independently. If a true telehealth situation has not been established where students can assess patients remotely, this progression may not be feasible.

As with professional relationships and responsibilities, students will need the agency supervisor to help them to learn:

- How to connect with patients in the virtual environment
- Skills for remote communication: verbal, non-verbal, video, written; non-verbal communication on video calls is an important skill for students to understand and practice.

Here are some initial considerations for other areas in this NCTRC domain. Several have been combined, as similar skills and learning apply in these subcategories.

1. Request/ secure referrals/ orders.

Students should either a) have access to the system for requesting a referral or b) be walked through that process with the supervisor. It is possible that requests can be made in treatment team meetings where the intern is virtually present.

2. Obtain/ review pertinent information.

In an ideal situation, the student would be given secure, electronic access to charting information for review and preparation for the assessment. If this is not possible, the supervisor is responsible for reviewing this information with the student prior to conducting assessments.

3. Assessment selection and methods may need to vary in a virtual environment, as well as techniques of establishing a therapeutic relationship and conducting an assessment.

The agency supervisor is responsible for helping the student learn new methods of assessment in this manner. If the student is not able to conduct a virtual assessment, the supervisor should share the results of the assessment with the student so that they may combine this with pertinent review information.

4. Analyze/ interpret results and integrate/ record/ disseminate results.

Students should be fully involved in the assessment analysis and reporting. It is most helpful if the student can report in the virtual treatment team meeting when they are unable to be onsite.

Plan Interventions and/or Programs

Regardless of the setting, students should be integral in the treatment and program planning process.

If the student has not been able to collect initial data on clients independently, students will need the agency supervisor to help them understand the:

- Strengths and needs of the patient(s) being served.
- Facilities/ equipment/ supplies available.
- Risks in the environment.

Some initial considerations for other areas in this NCTRC domain are provided below. Several have been combined, as similar skills and learning apply in those subcategories.

1. Discuss the results of the assessment.

Students can share the results of the assessment with the patient and significant others virtually in a true telehealth situation. Students can share these with the supervisor, who may then pass those on, in other remote learning conditions.

2. Treatment planning – develop/ document intervention plan, develop/ select interventions/ approaches.

Students should be responsible for creating independent treatment plans for clients as they would if they were at the facility. As with a typical progression, students will learn the appropriate treatment planning procedure from the agency supervisor before completing treatment plans more independently. This should include not only goals and objectives but also the types of interventions intended for the resident. Ideally, the student would document these within a secured system for the agency.

3. Develop/ select protocols

When a student has a full grasp of the agency's clientele and RT/TR Program, they then can select, revise, or develop new protocols that would be beneficial to the treatment program. Students should use their access to university library systems and evidence-based practice; interns should be able to develop appropriate and effective protocols for face-to-face or virtual delivery if they have a comprehensive understanding of the needs of their clients and the outcomes of the program.

4. Utilize activity/ task analysis and select adaptations/ modifications/ assistive technology

An intern working remotely may be at a disadvantage when it comes to activity/ task analysis if they have not previously completed the intended intervention in their university training or onsite, or if they do not have access to the intervention and all the equipment/ supplies used therein while working virtually. Video analysis of the

intervention may be possible for the intern if the agency supervisor can supply enough video footage and detail for the student to complete a thorough analysis. This is also true for videos related to adaptations/ modifications/ assistive technology. The agency supervisor would need to provide the student with a thorough understanding of the intervention, the client, and the available modifications to assist with this part of the planning process.

Implement Interventions/ Programs

If face-to-face implementation is not an option, there are technologies that may be available to help in a remote internship situation. With agency supervisor assistance, students may be able to:

- Conduct synchronous (“live”) sessions via telehealth for individual or small groups of patients.
- Create asynchronous (video-recorded) sessions that the agency supervisor can play for individuals or small groups of clients. The supervisor should then respond with feedback to the student based on the response of the participant(s).
- Create interventions (including materials, detailed delivery instructions) that the agency supervisor can use when facilitating individual or group sessions. The supervisor may then respond to the student with feedback regarding the participants’ response to the interventions.
- Create packets of materials individualized for clients or small groups that can then be completed independently by the client(s) or with assistance from staff.

Below are some initial considerations for other areas in this NCTRC domain. Several have been combined, as similar skills and learning apply in those subcategories.

1. Explain purpose/ outcomes of the intervention/ program; implement individual and group sessions

Any of the components noted above would count toward meeting this job task requirement.

1. Use leadership/ facilitation/ adaptation techniques

This can more challenging if the implementation is not being conducted in real-time, whether face to face or virtually. Consistent feedback from the agency supervisor can assist the student intern to revise future implementation sessions regardless of the format of the intervention provided.

2. Monitor/ address safety

Synchronous or video recorded (asynchronous) implementation should address client safety at the beginning of the session and continue throughout the facilitation. Written interventions should include safety and risk management considerations for the participant(s) and leader(s) for each intervention.

3. Observe response to intervention/ program; monitor effectiveness of the intervention/program

If the implementation is not synchronous (live/ telehealth), the agency supervisor is responsible for relaying feedback regarding the participants’ response to the intervention so that the student can incorporate feedback and monitor for effectiveness.

This can be accomplished by using specified measures (e.g., session pre- and post-tests) or providing verbal details of the responses of the participating clientele.

Evaluate Outcomes of the Interventions/ Programs

As noted with components of the APIE process discussed earlier, if a true telehealth situation has not been established where students can evaluate patient progress remotely, the ability to evaluate outcomes will require more consistent and comprehensive communication from the agency supervisor.

Other initial considerations for areas in this NCTRC domain are provided below. Several have been combined, as similar skills and learning apply in those subcategories.

1. Evaluate changes in functioning

If the student has access to the clients' electronic medical record, they can follow the changes in functioning as noted by the treatment team members. If they are unable to access the record, discussions regarding this information may occur in secure and private meetings with the agency supervisor or through observations during the treatment team meetings.

2. Determine effectiveness of individual intervention plan; revise individualized treatment plan; evaluate for additional/ alternative/ discharge of services

As with monitoring the effectiveness of the interventions/ programs, if the actual implementation is not being observed by the intern, it becomes the responsibility of the agency supervisor to discuss clients' progress or decline with the student to assist with treatment plan revision or termination. Interns should have a full understanding of the progress and process of the evaluation of patient progress.

3. Determine effectiveness of protocols/ programs

If the implementation of the intervention is not synchronous (live/ telehealth), the agency supervisor is responsible for relaying feedback regarding the participants' responses to the implemented programs and their demonstrated outcomes. The student should incorporate feedback and monitor for effectiveness. Ideally, this would be conducted with pre-specified formative and summative evaluation measures.

Document Intervention Services

Ideally, the student intern will have access to the typical documentation system used by the agency throughout their practice of the APIED process. Documentation, then, would be conducted in the same manner during a remote internship as the student would if they were in the face-to-face setting. If a student is working remotely, the agency supervisor would also need to:

- Conduct virtual training(s) with the student on the documentation system and ethics.
- Assist the student virtually when completing appropriate documentation until they have demonstrated independence in this task.

Some initial considerations for other areas in this NCTRC domain are noted. Several have been combined, as similar skills and learning apply in those subcategories.

1. Document participation/ adherence to the intervention

If the student is not able to virtually observe the treatment sessions, the agency supervisor can discuss this information with the student and conduct virtual training sessions on the documentation of these elements.

2. Documentation of behavioral observations

If the student is not able to virtually observe the intervention, then video case studies can enhance the student's understanding of the behavioral observation process. If the agency supervisor does not have access to case studies appropriate for student learning at the site, the academic supervisor may be able to suggest pertinent video material (e.g., library resources, potential online sources). The agency supervisor and student should then compare case studies together and discuss how behavioral observations should be documented.

3. Document occurrences related to risk management

The agency supervisor will have the responsibility of training the student intern on risk documentation procedures at the site. The student can review prior risk management documentation, then practice completing the documentation for an intervention session they have viewed live, or a similar video or written case study.

4. Document protocols/ modalities

As with "develop/ select protocols" under planning, students can document the planned progression of the protocol. If they are unable to lead the protocol/ modality or observe it virtually, discussion with the agency supervisor may assist the student intern in gaining necessarily skills related to documenting protocols.

5. Document program effectiveness

The use of formative and summative measures should be documented by the student intern in the format appropriate for the agency. The student should understand the documentation method and target audience for the documentation, and complete the documentation accordingly.

Treatment Teams and/or Service Providers

Initial training for this section is covered under *Professional Relationships and Responsibilities*. Creating relationships with other members of the treatment team is an initial goal during the student's internship. The student intern, if possible, should have remote access to treatment team meetings. While video connection is ideal, conference calling could also help the intern to remain connected during meetings when video technology is not available. If given access, the intern then can:

1. Identify the treatment team or community partners
2. Provide information to team/ community partners during treatment team meetings
3. Communicate relevant information to the team
4. Coordinate/ integrate intervention plans; develop/ provide collaborative services

The agency supervisor can help establish interactions between student interns and other treatment team members by setting up collaborative video conference or teleconference meetings for the student to contribute to a co-treat planning process.

Develop and Maintain Programs

Many of the job tasks in this domain are collaborative tasks between the agency supervisor and the intern whether they occur in face-to-face or virtual situations. Some creativity may be needed to assist students with tasks such as inventory or budgeting, but virtual meetings should allow for this skill development to occur.

1. Maintain equipment/ supply inventory

Without face-to-face access, the intern will not be able to help with equipment maintenance or physical inventory of supplies. However, a virtual tour of equipment and supplies by the agency supervisor, along with an explanation of the equipment/ supply inventory process, can help the intern gain a better understanding of supplies that may be needed in future sessions that they may facilitate with clients.

2. Plan/ coordinate support services

Interns can be integral in helping to support programming by making service requests (e.g., dietary) or with planning of future programs or schedules (e.g., entertainers). Many of these tasks can be done virtually in coordination with the agency supervisor.

3. Maintain program budget/ expense activity

Interns can have responsibilities related to ordering supplies, recording expenses, and maintaining budget records whether working onsite or virtually. Appropriate paperwork and record keeping should be taught by the agency supervisor so that the intern understands the fiscal responsibilities of the RT/TR department.

4. Develop/distribute schedules

Interns should collaborate with the agency supervisor to create appropriate schedules and discuss methods of distribution. The intern may send electronic or paper documents to the supervisor as appropriate. If the schedule is to be distributed electronically to others, and the intern has access to an appropriately secured system (e.g., email, internal web), they may distribute these remotely.

5. Identify funding sources; conduct needs assessment; conduct ongoing program evaluation

Aspects of these can be conducted remotely. Interns can conduct appropriate grant searches, create needs assessments/ program evaluations for distribution, analyze data, and complete documentation all from a remote setting. They may also assist with data collection depending on the distribution method.

6. Follow risk management practices

The agency supervisor will be responsible for ensuring that the intern has a full understanding of risk management in the agency setting. Students should take risk management into consideration in all their virtual job tasks for the agency/ with clients.

Manage RT/RT Services

This is typically one of the more difficult areas for students to achieve face-to-face, so the agency supervisor must make a conscious effort to take the time to help the student practice these job tasks in a remote setting. While it will take vigilance and additional training time on the part of the agency supervisor to make sure the intern is following through with these job tasks, the intern may also be able to contribute to these in unique ways in a remote setting.

1. Comply with standards and regulations

It may be possible to have a student intern conduct an audit of documentation, or compare the standards of the TR/RT department with that of the agency and/ or accrediting body.

2. Prepare/ update written plan of operation

A student brings a new set of eyes to the operation plan. Are there policies that are not understandable to a new employee? Are there items that are outdated (e.g., discussion of paper records when records are now all electronic)?

3. Confirm programs are consistent with agency mission

The student might compare the Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives of the agency with those of the TR/RT department for consistency.

4. Recruit/train/educate/supervise/evaluate staff

It will be ideal if the student can virtually be a part of this process. If this is not possible, the agency supervisor holds the responsibility to virtually train the student on these processes.

5. Provide staff development/ mentorship

Interns are frequently asked to present in-services for staff as part of their learning activities. They can do this virtually, in any of the formats discussed for implementing interventions: synchronous (“live”), asynchronous video, or through other print materials. This may also be considered as another opportunity to shadow staff in various parts of the agency, or to gain additional clinical supervision.

6. Develop/ implement/ maintain internship program

Current student interns are at a unique advantage of being very close to the intern recruitment and training process. Student interns can review internship manuals, marketing materials and methods, and provide suggestions for improvement. Interns can also be a virtual part of the recruitment process for future interns.

7. Prepare/ implement/ evaluate/ monitor annual budget; identify/obtain/manage supplemental funding

Like maintaining program budgets/ expenses, interns can be virtually trained by the agency supervisor in the methods to conduct larger budget audits and inputs. Interns can also be directed to identify supplemental funding opportunities and be a part of the grant writing process.

8. Support research programs/ projects; develop/ conduct quality improvement plan; write summary reports of RT/TR services

As with all evidence-based practice, student interns are at a unique juncture where they have learned the latest research and still have access to university library systems. They are at a unique advantage to contribute to research programs and projects at the agency regardless of the nature of the internship (face-to-face or remote learning). Interns may be at a disadvantage for collecting data if only face-to-face methods/ observations are used, but they can contribute many other parts of the research process. This may be another opportunity for collaboration with the university supervisor as well.

Awareness and Advocacy

Many students are now equipped with skill sets that can help increase awareness and advocacy. They are learning more about social media and online marketing than students in any other generation. The agency supervisor would need to choose the specific targets for advocacy efforts and direct the distribution of developed materials.

Here are some initial considerations for other areas in this NCTRC domain. Several have been combined, as similar skills and learning apply in those subcategories.

1. Establish/ maintain network with organizations/ advocates

Interns can coordinate information, update contacts, and conduct electronic mailings for key constituents with program information/ materials. They may also be able to research potential community partners.

2. Advocate for rights of person(s) served

This may happen naturally in the APIED process. However, it may be appropriate for the intern to conduct larger advocacy efforts. For example, a virtual celebration on 3/21 for Down Syndrome Awareness, or an educational seminar for disability awareness could be developed and/or implemented by interns.

3. Provide education to internal/ external stakeholders; promote marketing/ public relations

RT/TR month (February) provides a clear opportunity for educating stakeholders about the agency department. However, many other electronic and print materials can be created for educating a wide variety of stakeholders throughout the year. The intern can be integral in researching potential avenues to reach stakeholders identified by the agency supervisor and creating a wide variety of educational and marketing materials for distribution.

4. Monitor legislative/ regulatory changes

The agency supervisor can direct the RT intern to the federal/state/local legislation that affects practice within the agency. The intern can also research additional legislation that may be pertinent to the site.