



January 2020

Questions and concerns regarding the sunset of the National Music Therapy Registry and the subsequent impact on the use of alternate professional designations, particularly in NY and in relation to the Licensed Creative Arts Therapist (LCAT) law, have been brought to the attention of the New York State Task Force on Occupational Regulation (NYSTF). The task force offers the following information in response.

On December 12, 2019, the AMTA Academic Program Approval Committee (APAC) disseminated a memo reminding the music therapy community that as part of the Unification Agreement in 1998, the National Music Therapy Registry (NMTR) was established to provide opportunities for those who chose to maintain alternate professional designations of RMT, CMT, or ACMT to continue practicing music therapy. With the sunset of the NMTR on January 1, 2020, these designations are no longer recognized by AMTA, nor will they be acceptable designations in the marketplace (consumers or employers) for practice, teaching, or supervision. As part of the creation of the NMTR, including the appointment of a Registry Board and establishment of Bylaws, regular newsletters and other correspondence served to keep people on the Registry fully informed from its implementation that at the time the Registry no longer existed, the practice of music therapy in the United States would require the MT-BC credential. In states in which there is additional professional recognition of music therapy through title protection, state registry, or state licensure, the state-based recognition is also required in addition to the MT-BC for legal practice. This includes the following states: California, Connecticut, Georgia, Nevada, North Dakota, Oregon, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, Utah, and Wisconsin.

In contrast, New York does not currently benefit from state recognition of music therapy; since music therapy is not licensed it is not recognized as a profession by the state. Article 163 of the NYS Mental Health Practitioners law, which includes the LCAT, is both a scope of practice and title protection law; it solely regulates the practice of psychotherapy as part of the profession of creative arts therapy (CAT). Definitions of psychotherapy and CAT within the law are as follows (<http://www.op.nysed.gov/prof/mhp/article163.htm>):

§8401. Definitions.

"Psychotherapy" means the treatment of mental, nervous, emotional, behavioral and addictive disorders, and ailments by the use of both verbal and behavioral methods of intervention in interpersonal relationships with the intent of assisting the persons to modify attitudes, thinking, affect, and behavior which are intellectually, socially and emotionally maladaptive.

§8404. Creative arts therapy.

1. *Definition of the practice of creative arts therapy. The practice of the profession of creative arts therapy is defined as:*
 - a. *the assessment, evaluation, and the therapeutic intervention and treatment, which may be either primary, parallel or adjunctive, of mental, emotional, developmental and behavioral disorders through the use of the arts as approved by the department; and*
 - b. *the use of assessment instruments and mental health counseling and psychotherapy to identify, evaluate and treat dysfunctions and disorders for purposes of providing appropriate creative arts therapy services.*

While music therapists who meet certain education, experience, and examination requirements are eligible to pursue the LCAT, **it is not a music therapy credential AND a music therapy credential is not required for LCAT renewal.** Similarly for art therapy, dance therapy, drama therapy, psychodrama therapy, and poetry therapy, the LCAT does not recognize these modalities as professions in the state of New York nor are they identified as part of the LCAT.

While NYSTF was not involved in the APAC clarification, the task force has met with the committee and we support their decision to require all faculty and supervisors to hold and maintain the MT-BC, as it is now the only nationally recognized credential in the United States. Further, the task force wants to emphasize the importance of the MT-BC credential not just for teaching and supervision but for the clinical practice of music therapy. As CBMT states as part of their Vision Statement, board certification serves "to ensure access to safe, effective music therapy services for all."

You can find information on obtaining Board Certification on the Certification Board for Music Therapists website (www.cbmt.org) or by contacting CBMT by email at info@cbmt.org

For information regarding the NYS LCAT and other questions regarding music therapy practice in New York, please contact the New York State Task Force on Occupational Regulation by email at nystate.task.force@gmail.com