



HORTICULTURAL THERAPY CERTIFICATE – Vancouver Island, BC

HT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM – 2025, Ann Kent HTM

Explore the field of horticultural therapy in an engaging and challenging inter-disciplinary program. Courses appeal to healthcare professionals, educators, horticulturists, landscape designers, and others wishing to learn about connecting people and plants; and to those considering career opportunities in horticultural therapy (HT) and therapeutic horticulture (TH).

Since 2006, this program led by registered horticultural therapist, Ann Kent HTM, has offered studies at facilities and gardens in Vancouver and on Vancouver Island. In 2020, Ann moved to a five-acre woodland farm near Qualicum Beach where facilities include an indoor classroom, a covered outdoor terrace, several distinct garden spaces, serene forest trails, and a comprehensive classroom library.

The HT Certificate courses provide up to 160 hours of study: 120 classroom and tutorial hours plus supervised written assignments. The Canadian Horticultural Therapy Association recognizes this HT Certificate for 2.0 points toward professional registration as a horticultural therapist. Several other professional associations recognize the courses for continuing education credits.

The fee for each of the four courses in the 2025 series is \$650.00. This includes instruction, course materials, and plant and activity supplies for on-site study. There is no GST. Students purchase two textbooks separately. Registration opens on January 13, 2025, for the spring session and closes on March 24, sooner if a course is full. Supervised independent study units are scheduled mid-February through March for the two foundation courses and during July and August for the senior courses.

I. Horticultural Therapy – Programming for All Seasons - for new students, 2025 cohort

Distance learning units begin on Monday, February 17 for early registrants

On-site sessions – Friday, Saturday, April 4 and 5, and Friday, Saturday, April 11 and 12

Explore TH/HT and their year-round potential using four program streams: indoor and outdoor gardening, nature activities, floristry, and botanical crafts. This keystone course addresses skill sets required by the TH or HT activity leader, development of seasonal program plans, and adaptations for various populations. Current definitions for TH, HT, and nature-based therapies and considerations for scope of practice, in BC and beyond, are introduced.

HT - Programming is a popular stand-alone course for those who work in community centres, complex care facilities, schools, and community gardens. It provides an excellent overview of the skill sets and resources required to deliver wellness-based plant and nature-focused activity programs.

II. Creating Therapeutic Gardens – for new and returning students

Distance learning units begin on Monday, March 17

On-site sessions – Friday, Saturday, April 25 and 26, and Friday, Saturday, May 2 and 3.

Explore attributes of accessible and healing garden spaces, plant choices suitable for therapeutic gardens and habitat gardens, and safe garden practices for TH and HT programs through guided walks and hands-on activities. Students apply evidence-based audit tools to various gardens.

III. Horticultural Therapy Techniques – Session Planning for students continuing in 2025

Focus is on the use of horticulture and nature-based activities in the context of small group and one-to-one therapy sessions. Students generate specific objectives and measurable outcomes for participants in a variety of contexts and further explore the use of assessment tools. *Prerequisite: I. Programming. This is a blended study program. On-site sessions on Monday, Tuesday, September 15 and 16, 2025.*

IV. The Practice of Horticultural Therapy – for students continuing in 2025

Students consider special populations, elements of HT practice such as the horticultural therapist's role in a healthcare or educational team, professional ethics, cultural contexts, TH/HT program evaluation, and differences between self-employment and salaried work. *Prerequisite: III. HT Techniques. This is a blended study program. On-site sessions on Friday, Saturday, September 19 and 20, 2025.*

To request a detailed syllabus and/or a registration form, please contact ann@catkinggardens.ca.