



HORTICULTURAL THERAPY CERTIFICATE – Vancouver Island, BC

HT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM – 2026, 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: 130 classroom and tutorial hours plus an independent, supervised study unit that precedes each course. 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 2026 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 12, 2026, for the spring session and closes on March 12, sooner if a course is full. Independent study units are scheduled mid-February through March for the two foundation courses and during July and August for the senior courses. Registration for the two senior courses (HT III and IV) opens on May 4, 2026.

I. Horticultural Therapy – Programming for All Seasons – for new students, 2026 cohort

Explore TH/HT and their year-round potential using four program streams: indoor/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, nature-based therapies, and scope of practice are discussed.

Distance learning unit begins on Monday, February 16 for early registrants

On-site sessions – Wednesday through Saturday, April 15, 16, 17, 18, 2026.

HT - Programming is a popular stand-alone course for those working in community centres, complex care facilities, schools, and community gardens. Hands-on, land-based studies provide an excellent overview of skill sets and resources required to deliver plant and nature-focused activity programs.

II. Creating Therapeutic Gardens – for new and returning students

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.

Distance learning unit begins on Monday, March 16

On-site sessions – Wednesday through Saturday, April 22, 23, 24, 25, 2026.

III. Horticultural Therapy Techniques – Session Planning for continuing/returning students

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 explore the use of various assessment tools. *Prerequisite: I. Programming for All Seasons.*

Distance learning unit begins on Monday, July 6

On-site sessions – Wednesday through Saturday, September 16, 17, 18, 19, 2026.

IV. The Practice of Horticultural Therapy – for continuing/returning students

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, methods for TH/HT program evaluation, and differences between self-employment and salaried work. *Prerequisite: III. HT Techniques.*

Distance learning unit begins on Monday, August 10

On-site sessions – Wednesday through Saturday, September 23, 24, 25, 26, 2026.

For further information or to request a detailed syllabus, please contact ann@catkinggardens.ca.