



OFFERING A LIFELONG ALLIANCE TO PEOPLE
CROTCHED MOUNTAIN WITH DISABILITIES

Training for Direct Support Professionals

TRAINING OVERVIEW

This program offers formal classroom and practical training and an opportunity to be awarded a Certificate of Completion in the College of Direct Support (CDS) as developed in consultation with the University of Minnesota. Certificate is awarded through partnership with the Moore Center, Manchester, N.H. Participants may also qualify for a Certificate of Completion from Crotched Mountain. It includes a wide selection of formal classes offered on-site, as well as eleven online training courses, each with multiple lessons. The curriculum's focus is on 'best practices' in the design and implementation of individualized programs for young people and adults with specialized needs. The formal classes and online courses prepare participants for on-site instruction and the practice of specific direct support competencies in residential services. The program, as offered at Crotched Mountain, includes observation of multiple disciplines that relate to the rehabilitative and educational services for people with special needs. Participants must successfully test out on all on-site classes and all online lessons and remain in good standing for the program duration in order to qualify for the certificates.

ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEWS

Crotched Mountain - For over 60 years Crotched Mountain has been serving people with disabilities throughout the northeast USA. The satellite programs provide various types of residential services and case management services to a range of communities. Crotched Mountain's 1,400 acre campus in Greenfield, NH is host to dozens of different rehabilitative, educational, medical and therapeutic programs for people of all ages and serves multiple challenges that span cognitive, emotional as well as physical parameters.

The rehabilitation center serves a unique and critically involved population. The range of diagnoses, some of which are quite rare, and the corresponding range of programs and services available are unlikely to be found anywhere else in the world. Residents of all ages, live both on our Greenfield campus and in local residential units. The residential program includes ranch style group homes, more independent apartments, as well as foster and life-sharing arrangements and other alternative settings for specific individuals. Crotched Mountain School provides K-12 educational services for approximately 125 children with multiple disabilities. Crotched Mountain Hospital offers in-patient care to children who are medically fragile, many of whom attend the nearby school. Both young people and adults with Acquired Traumatic Brain Injuries and other medical conditions also reside at the hospital. Crotched Mountain's Outpatient Clinic provides clinical services to the local community. Crotched Mountain has established Centers of Excellence in the fields of 'Autism and Autism Spectrum Disorders' and in 'Acquired Brain Injuries'. Numerous clinical and specialty programs form an integral part of Crotched Mountain's services. These include, among others, Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language Pathology, Psychology, Cognitive Rehabilitative Therapy, Therapeutic Recreational Therapy, Assistive Technology, Art Therapy, Dysphasia Programs, Vocational Services, Seating & Mobility Programs, Driver's Education, Alternative Dance Programs and a Farm Program at our own community farm. Attending consultants provide orthopedic services, physiatrist services and psychiatric evaluations.

Facilities supporting all the above include over 35 buildings on spacious grounds. These include a pool complex that has an Olympic sized pool and the only therapy pool in New England. These also include a vocational skill training center, baseball field, tennis courts. An iso-kinetics center, indoor bowling alley, hiking trails, beachfront facilities and treehouse are all wheelchair accessible. These and many more features enhance our programs and services.

Throughout its existence Crotched Mountain has attracted people from throughout the US and the world who are drawn to the unique opportunity for learning. This uniqueness results from the very large and very diverse populations we serve, by the extensive resources used to provide an unusually wide range of programs and services and by the standards of excellence in those services. Crotched Mountain has hosted hundreds of training program participants from over 35 countries in recent years. (See attached program descriptions)

College of Direct Supports - The College of Direct Support (CDS) is committed to train and celebrate a workforce of direct care professionals nationwide. CDS is a web-based learning management system available 24 hours a day, seven days a week for learners to improve their skills in caring for people across disabilities. CDS now reaches learners in 25 states from coast to coast with approximately 40,000 people making use of the training on a daily basis. CDS trains direct support workers in California, Virginia, Pennsylvania, New York, Minnesota, Mississippi, Kansas, Tennessee, South Dakota, New Hampshire and Missouri, to name a few.

The training curriculum is infused with a set of values and skill standards to train Direct Support Professionals and their supervisors and managers as they support people in community-based settings. Values such as inclusion, honored rights, leading self-determined lives and ethical, values-based treatment, among others, are at the core of CDS training and mission. CDS strives to improve the lives of those with disabilities and thus improve the lives of their families by “Building Careers and Supporting Lives.”

The Research and Training Center on Community Living (RTC) at the University of Minnesota is the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research’s designated national Center on Community Integration of persons with developmental disabilities and it coordinates the writing of the courses. The RTC has extensive experience working with community agencies to understand the needs and experiences of individuals with disabilities. This work has included analyses of the essential training needed by DSPs and development of training programs to prepare DSPs to meet the needs and support the desired experiences of people with disabilities. The RTC serves as primary developer of the content and instructional design of CDS. In its efforts it is supported by CDS’s Board of Editors.

Training and support is provided via telephone and/or online from MC Strategies’ WebInservice® Help Desk for designated administrators during generally accepted business hours. Each customer is provided with a customer service representative whose sole job is to support customers in effectively using the CDS.

SELECTION PROCESS

Participant Qualifications - The program is specifically designed for participants interested in pursuing a career relating to rehabilitation services for persons with special needs. All applicants must be at least eighteen years old. Program applicants furnish documents that permit Crotched Mountain to review their Criminal Record Histories, both in their home countries and in the USA. Applicants also furnish three letters of reference from faculty members or employers, a letter of intent and a completed Application Form. During our involved selection process, applicants must demonstrate a high level of academic performance and a proven interest in pursuing a career with persons with special needs.

Participant Selection - The pool of eligible candidates is first short-listed to those who are most in need of such training for their future academic and/or career paths. Remaining candidates are interviewed by at least two program managers using web-cameras, though some are interviewed in-person during trips to universities worldwide for program presentations. Final selection considers, among other things, academic standing to date, and proven ability to learn from experiences away from home as well as a proven interest in expanding opportunities to learn beyond the norm.

TRAINING FORMATS & SCHEDULES

On-site classes (Pre-orientation and Orientation) - Formal On-Site classes begin upon arrival with seven days of Pre-Orientation & Orientation Classes (Appendix 1).

Other On-site classes - Crotched Mountain offers a calendar of training events, lecture, presentations, course refreshers, etc, most of which are open to all participants at no cost. As participants become familiar with the calendar of classes on offer they may reduce observation hours in the special needs classroom and balance the reduction in hours by attending on-site classes of their choosing. (Appendix 2)

Online CDS courses - The College of Direct Support curriculum is developed by the University of Minnesota’s Institute on Community Integration at the Research and Training Center on Community Living. Participants usually receive online log-in information prior to arrival and they may determine their own schedule for progression through the eleven courses. (Appendix 3) The provision of a computer area in the participant’s own housing area, as well as the provision of wireless internet access throughout all rooms, facilitates participant’s access to these online courses. An average of one-two hours online per week is anticipated. Program trainers will meet with the participant group at least once a month to review progress through the eleven courses and the related practical competencies.

Practical Competencies in Residential Services - Participants are assigned to a residential unit in which they spend 29 hours each week learning from 125 practical competencies related to the material in the CDS curriculum. The competencies are divided into 78 ‘Work Experience’ competencies (Appendix 4) that the participant first observes and then practices, and 47 ‘Related Instructional’ competencies (Appendix 5) which the participant learns through observation and one-to-one instruction by program staff. The participant may document the completion of each competencies and present to supervisor for his/her initials to confirm it’s completion. Participants in a six-month program (approx. 22 weeks training) should complete a minimum of 50 competencies, while those in a 12-month program (approx. 44 weeks training) should complete a minimum of 120 competencies. Supervisor may occasionally assign participant to another residence where there is an opportunity to learn a particular competency. Schedule will be one of the following formats:

Monday:	2:45p.m. – 10:00p.m.	OR	Friday:	2:45p.m. – 8:45p.m.
Tuesday:	2:45p.m. – 10:00p.m.		Saturday:	8:30a.m. – 8:00p.m.
Wednesday:	2:45p.m. – 10:00p.m.		Sunday:	8:30a.m. – 8:00p.m.
Thursday:	2:45p.m. – 10:00p.m.			

Occasionally a schedule may have additional hours to accommodate community based trips, team meetings, etc. No formal classes, online courses or observation requirements may be completed during the practical training schedule.

Observations in Educational, Clinical, or Specialty Areas - The purpose of the observation time is to provide participants with a means to ‘round-out’ their training with personalized experiences tailored to the needs of the individual. Upon arrival participants are assigned to a special needs classroom at Crotched Mountain School where they will observe for nine-ten hours per week to a schedule determined by the classroom teacher. Whenever possible, the classroom assigned will have one or more students from the assigned residence to provide enhanced opportunities for observing direct supports to those students. After a minimum of two weeks adherence to the observation schedule, the participant may request opportunities to observe in other clinical or specialty programs and/or may request opportunities to attend the other on-site classes mentioned above. If the classroom teacher approves requests for alternative observations and/or classes then it is expected that the participant will reduce the number of observation hours in the classroom accordingly. Occasionally, a participant may not be placed in a special education classroom and may instead be offered observation hours in an area that more closely matches their chosen career path. (Appendix 6)

Location and Duration of Specific Training Activities - The format outlined below provides a general view of anticipated locations and durations for specific training activities. However, it must be noted that these will vary somewhat depending upon the actual residence and the population residing there.

Location: School Program Area **Duration:** 30 minutes per day (except Saturday & Sunday)
 Communication with the educational staff regarding ‘Before-School’ and ‘During School’ activities in the Home and Classroom settings and gathering pertinent information relating to the residents day. Assisting staff as they accompany residents from the School Program Areas to the Residential Campus.

Location: Residential Program Areas **Duration:** 29 hours per week
 Observing and assisting residential staff with day-to-day activities in all areas of resident learning and development. These activities will take place throughout Crotched Mountain’s various residential settings and may also include activities in the local region. The following list of activities are all components of this 29 hour per week placement time in Residential Program Areas;

Assigned House Activities **Duration:** Up to 29 hours per week
 Observing and assisting staff with day-to-day activities in all areas of direct support to residents.

Community-Based Trip **Duration:** Up to 3 times per week
 (varies by residence)
 Observing and assisting residential staff with provision of community integration activities.

House Meetings **Duration:** One time every two weeks, two hour duration
 Attendance and participation in House meetings is encouraged to gain an overview of the issues within the Home and School settings relating to the residents. This is held during residential program hours to allow for all staff participation.

All Dept. Meeting

Duration: One time per quarter

Attendance and participation in the All Department Meetings is encouraged to gain knowledge of future endeavors, update on past events and discussion of present developments.

School Vacation Periods - Crotched Mountain closes several programs for five to ten day periods for approximately 35 days of each calendar year. During each school vacation period program participants are released from training and there are usually three to four weeks of such vacation during the timeframe of each training plan. The School Vacation calendar is published on the Crotched Mountain website. The minimum duration of actual training covered by this training plan is 22 weeks and the maximum is 52 weeks.

Cultural Exchange - Each training placement includes time off during the program for participants to travel. The experience is enhanced by participants researching and planning their trips and discussing it with staff and friends at Crotched Mountain as well as sharing their experiences upon their return to CM.

Participants may choose among the examples of possible community service activities such as assisting at the local food bank, presentations to local community groups and schools, assisting at local summer and fall festivals, attending local and/or on-site events such as Boy Scout and Girl Scout meetings, Visiting Artists programs and participation in local church group activities. Participants are notified of invitations to participate in sporting, community and performing arts events through the CM intranet and email.

Participants share their home culture through formal and semi-formal discussions and other activities within the placement settings with other staff, clients and US University and High school students who volunteer or intern.

Restrictions on Training Activities

- a) Participants will not be used for placements that would otherwise be filled by either full-time or part-time employees.
- b) Placements within departments will be limited such that the participant's learning experience will be acquired from Crotched Mountain employees and consultants rather than from other participants.
- c) Activities for all international participants will not include hands-on therapy, client counseling, the administration of treatment or the making of any form of diagnosis.
- d) Participants will not be left totally unsupervised in the company of clients.

PROGRAM STANDARD

Crotched Mountain's training programs have been repeatedly recognized as being of the highest standard and relevancy to program participants. Crotched Mountain has recently been nominated for the President's Choice Award by Granite State College. (Appendix 8) Crotched Mountain has also received many testimonials from institutions that it has collaborated with (Appendix 9) and from individuals that have completed training program there. (Appendix 10) The training programs offered by Crotched Mountain are enhanced by their connection to the wide range of programs and services that Crotched Mountain provides to people with disabilities throughout the northeast USA. (Appendix 11)

The University of Minnesota also conducts a comprehensive evaluation of the College of Direct Support. This evaluation includes case studies of CDS customers, Direct Support Professional surveys on the application and use of skills developed as a result of the CDS. It also includes supervisor surveys about DSP performance and application of their learning to the real work environment. The evaluation also looks at the CDS assessments and tests and ensures that test items are valid and reliable.

SUPERVISION AND ASSESSMENT

This training program will provide three levels of supervision:

Level One – Orientation and Other Formal Class Periods

This pertains to the first six days of orientation at the start of the placement and occasionally thereafter when the participant participates in formal classes or lectures. Each class or lecture is supervised by an instructor (a member of Crotched Mountain's Continuing Education department or a contracted speaker). Many classes and inservices include testing and grading of performance level.

Level One – Daily Transition Periods

This pertains to the 30 minutes shift change period at the beginning of each shift on Monday through Friday. It generally involve activities such as bringing the resident from the school to the residence. During these periods the residential staff and classroom teachers will provide on going, day-to-day feedback regarding participant performance.

Level One – Residential Program Periods

This pertains to the main section of each placement day when residential personnel (and participants) provide services within the residential setting. During these periods the ‘House Lead’ of the residence will provide immediate supervision and feedback directly to the participant. Other program staff are also encouraged to provide direct feedback. The ‘House Lead’ will meet with the participant at least one-time/week for a minimum of 30 minutes to review program events and participant performance. The ‘House Manager’ will meet with the participant at least one-time/month for a minimum of 30 minutes to review program events and participant performance. The ‘House Lead’ and ‘House Manager’ and ‘Intern & Volunteer Services’ (IVS) staff will collaborate in the generation of a final evaluation for the participant. The evaluation will offer the participant a rating on ten performance characteristics. (Appendix 7)

Level Two – Residential Director or designee

This person will have interviewed and accepted the participant to the program and is responsible for selecting a program (residence) that will provide learning opportunities shared during the selection process and in accordance with this training plan. This person will also be available during the internship on an “as-needed” basis.

Level Three – Intern and Volunteer Services (IVS) Staff

IVS staff provide informal supervision during day-to-day interactions with the participant and from IVS’s role as central liaison for all organizational activities relating to the training. IVS staff also conduct formal ‘Touch-Base’ meetings between each participant and the immediate level one supervising ‘House Manager’. In addition, IVS staff will provide input to the participant’s written performance evaluation (see attached).

Kevin Harte
Director, Intern & Volunteer Services

Residential Supervisor

Program Participant

Alternate Supervisor