

# North American Cognitive Stimulation Therapy Training Institute (NACSTTI)

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# North American Cognitive Stimulation Therapy Training Institute (NACSTTI)

Cognitive Stimulation Therapy (CST) is an evidence-based treatment for people with mild to moderate dementia that was developed in the United Kingdom by Aimee Spector and a number of dementia experts at the University of College London following a large Cochrane review of reality orientation and other psychosocial therapies (Spector et al., 2003).

\*\*Please note that throughout this document we will use the term dementia in place of neurocognitive disorder.

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## Introduction

CST treatment involves 14 or more sessions of themed activities, which typically run twice weekly. Sessions aim to actively stimulate and engage people with dementia, while providing an optimal learning environment and the social benefits of a group. Each session follows a general theme, with choices of activities in order to cater to the interests of the group. Members give the group a name. Consistency is created between sessions through the use of a warm-up activity, reality orientation (RO) board and a 'theme song'. Although CST was designed for brief treatment, research demonstrates that people who continue with CST can continue to improve or at least maintain improvements for a longer period of time.

CST treatment can be delivered by trained health care professionals such as social workers, occupational and speech therapists. With supervision and guidance, nonclinical personnel that have experience in working with those with dementia, can be trained to facilitate CST groups in a variety of settings.

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## Evidence Supporting CST

The initial CST randomized control trial conducted by Spector et al. (2003) showed that CST leads to significant benefits measured by a number of validated assessments including cognitive function, quality of life, and depression. These measures investigate not only memory and orientation, but also language and visuospatial abilities. Because these outcome measures were used in analyses of randomized controlled trials (Aguirre, Woods, Spector, & Orrell, 2013; Knapp et al., 2018), direct comparisons were made. Further analysis suggested CST was equally effective as several anti-dementia medications at that time.

Ongoing research shows that CST makes a significant improvement on language skills, quality of life, and depression. Reports from participants and their caregivers about their experiences of CST sessions found several key themes including positive experiences of being in the groups, due to a supportive and non-threatening environment; and improvements in mood, confidence and concentration.

## References

Aguirre, E., Woods, R. T., Spector, A., & Orrell, M. (2013). Cognitive stimulation for dementia: a systematic review of the evidence of effectiveness from randomised controlled trials. *Ageing research reviews*, 12(1), 253-262.

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Spector A, Gardner C & Orrell M (2011). The impact of Cognitive Stimulation Therapy groups on people with dementia: views from participants, their carers and group facilitators. *Ageing & Mental Health*, 15 (8): 945-949.

Woods R, Spector A, Jones C, Orrell M and Davies S (2005). Reminiscence therapy for dementia: A review of the evidence of effectiveness from randomised controlled trials. In The Cochrane Library, 2, 2005. Oxford

## **NORTH AMERICAN CST TRAINING INSTITUTE HISTORY**

A CST education and training team was formed in 2014 at Saint Louis University's Gateway Geriatric Education Center. Since 2015, the team has provided CST training and education to thousands of health care and social service professionals, students, and caregivers; leading to the development of the North American CST Training Institute (NACSTTI).

### **NACSTTI Mission**

To provide high quality training in the delivery of CST for practitioners and trainers.

### **MAIN OBJECTIVES OF NACSTTI**

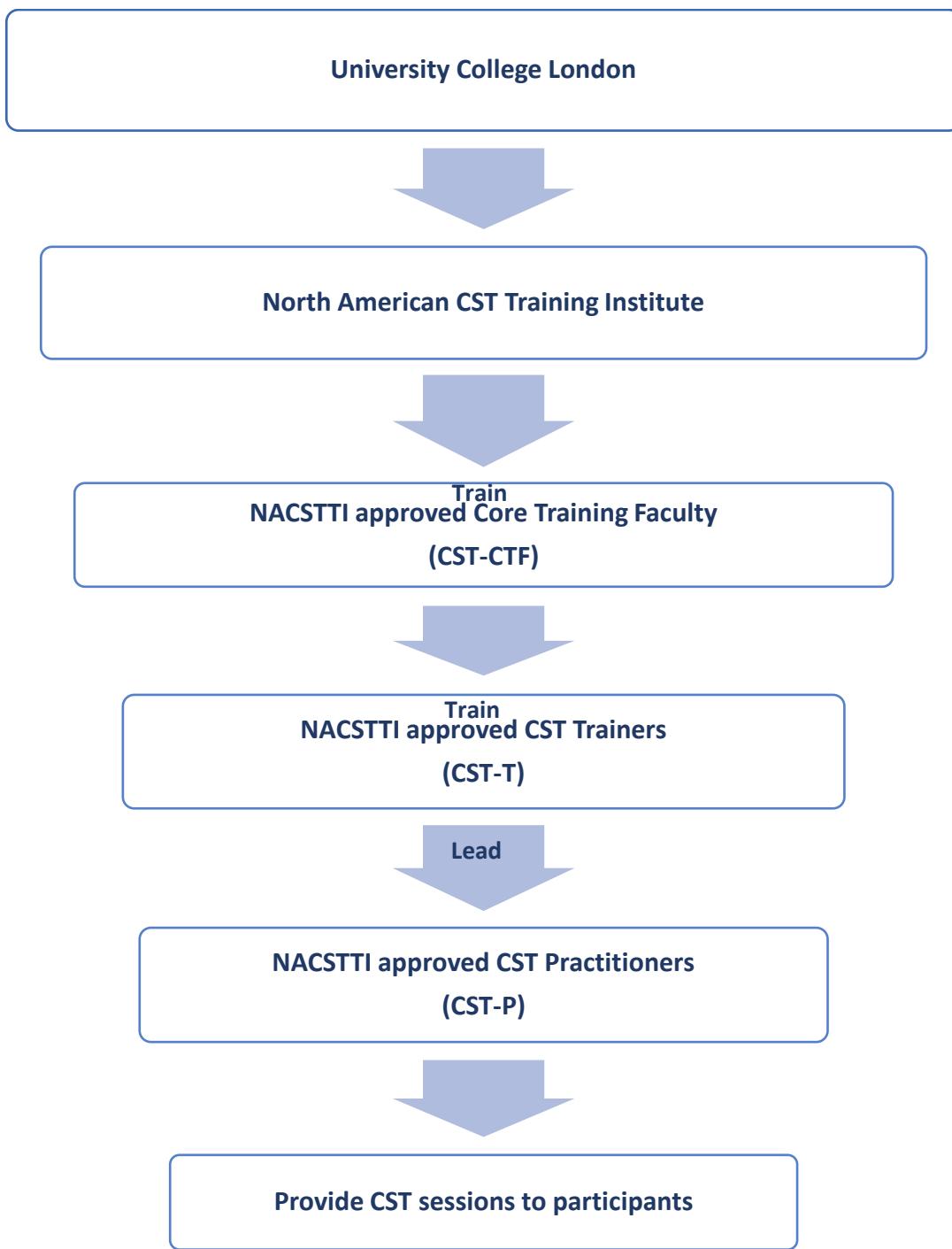
The aim of the NACSTTI is to be the preeminent CST training site in North America. By collaborating with the original CST developers at the University College of London and other international CST partners through research, education, and training to develop training curriculum that contribute to the advancement of CST nationally. The main objectives of the institute are:

- To develop and implement a standard curriculum and evaluation process for training practitioners of CST and trainers of practitioners.
- To establish a leadership structure for CST training in the United States to assure fidelity and quality of program implementation.
- To adapt the CST manuals to:
  - Be culturally competent for North American-based participant groups
  - Include education/direction on implementation -
- To develop and maintain a listing/registry of individuals who have successfully completed and maintained NACSTTI practitioners or trainer certifications. (Are currently approved)
- To provide information on CST educational resources and provision in North America.

### **NACSTTI GOVERNANCE**

- Oversight of the NACSTTI is provided by the core committee from the following institutions: Perry County Memorial Hospital, A.T. Still University and Saint Louis University; in collaboration with the original developers at University College London. The core committee is responsible for, but not limited to the following:
  - Ongoing program development
  - Continuous review of research and current literature
  - Decision-making processes
  - Roles/responsibilities
  - Other activities as necessary

# NACSTTI TRAINING STRUCTURE



## Program Overview & Fee Schedule

Training fees are subject to change

Requirement	Core CST Training Faculty	CST Trainers	CST Practitioners
Scope	Disseminate CST training throughout North America.	Train Practitioners and Co-Facilitate CST groups CST-T's are encouraged to facilitate one CST group annually.	Co-Facilitate CST groups
Education	Bachelor's Degree	Bachelor's Degree	N/A
CST Experience	112 sessions or 8 groups	56 sessions or 4 groups	N/A
Experience working with dementia patients	5 years	2 years	1 year
Experience facilitating small groups/teaching	3 years	Experience and evidence of past teaching, leading group discussion and role play.	N/A
Initial Training Fee	N/A	\$1,500 + completed application Course fee is 75% refundable up to 48-hours from start of the CST-T training.	\$250 virtual + completed application \$350 In person + completed application
Bi-annual Renewal Fee	N/A	\$100	\$50
Continuing Education		Required attendance on one virtual CST-T conference call per year	Recommended review of CST/dementia literature.

Customized onsite training delivered by NACSTTI -CTF is available upon request. Please contact the NACSTTI-CFT through [CST@health.slu.edu](mailto:CST@health.slu.edu) or by calling 314-977-8454.

## **NACSTTI CORE TRAINING FACULTY (CST-CTF)**

NACSTTI Core Training Faculty, were approved by CST creator, Aimee Spector, PhD., while subsequent/future CST-CTF will be determined by the core committee. NACSTTI CST-CTF are responsible for preparing qualified, proficient CST Trainers (CST-T).

### **QUALIFICATIONS**

- Approved CST-T with consistently excellent feedback.
- Experience and evidence of past teaching, leading group discussion and role play.
  - Extensive experience in direct delivery of CST groups (112 sessions=8 groups)
- A minimum of 5 years' experience in a health care related field /profession OR an educator in a learning institution.
- Minimum of 3-years' experience presenting in-services or seminars to healthcare professionals and front-line staff in a geriatric setting OR presenting health care curriculum to students enrolled in a health care profession at a learning institution.
- The names of CST-CTF will be listed in the NACSTTI (online) registry.
- Nominee recommendations will be accepted when open position/s become available and will be based upon qualifying credentials and CST experience. Selection will be made by the NACSTTI Core Faculty Committee.

## **NACSTTI-APPROVED CST TRAINER (CST-T)**

A CST Trainer is responsible for teaching the standardized CST curriculum to CST Practitioners (CST-P) and providing them with guidance and support as they begin their CST group work.

### **PREREQUISITE QUALIFICATIONS**

- Minimum of a Bachelor's degree from an accredited college in their field of expertise.
- Prior completion of the CST-P course and current recognition by NACSTTI as a CST-P.
- Experience implementing CST curriculum as evidenced by documentation of facilitation of a minimum 56 CST sessions (equivalent to four fully completed CST groups).
- Experience in delivering direct professional services to people with dementia for a minimum of 2 years.
- Experience and evidence of past teaching, leading group discussion and role play.

Note: Although these are the standard requirements, all applications are reviewed by the NACSTTI-CTF.

### **PROCESS TO BECOME A CST-T**

The goal of CST-T training is to prepare attendees to confidently provide the standardized CST training only to future CST-Ps.

### **CST-T Certification Process**

- Complete CST-T application form, provide supporting documents, and submit \$250 non-refundable application fee. (NOT applied to registration fee of \$1,250)
- You will receive correspondence from a NACSTTI committee member to confirm receipt of your application and payment.
- Attend and successfully complete the 2-day virtual CST-T training.
- Upon successful completion of the program, you will be designated as a NACSTTI approved CST-T. Your name will be listed on the NACSTTI website.

**COST:** The cost to attend the two-day training is \$1,500 per person. (Enrollment is limited to 20 attendees.)

### **RENEWAL**

The CST-T Certification renewal process includes the following:

- Submission of a \$100 bi-annual renewal fee
- Attend one virtual CST-T Conference call per year