

National Conference 2026



Christchurch, known as the Garden City, provides the perfect setting for our 30th National Conference. For many years, we have spoken about growth — growing our profession, growing our skills, and expanding our impact. Growth remains important. But this year, we pause. We choose to stop and smell the roses.

He Māra Tangata — A Garden of People reminds us that Diversional and Recreational Therapy is not only about achieving goals or reaching outcomes. It is about adorning lives. Through creativity, connection, and care, we add colour, dignity, and meaning to everyday moments.

Just as a garden thrives through diversity, our profession celebrates uniqueness — of people, cultures, stories, and strengths. Diversity is not incidental; it is essential. At the heart of our practice remains a deeply person-centred approach, where every individual is valued and nurtured.

In Ōtautahi, we gather not just to grow — but to honour the beauty already present in our garden of people.

NZSDRT National Conference 2026 Christchurch

The next face to face NZSDRT National Conference is confirmed for 13 to 15 August 2026 in Ōtautahi Christchurch.

Venue: Rydges Latimer Christchurch

Days: Thursday to Saturday

We are excited to bring our community together once again for three days of learning, connection, reflection, and inspiration. This conference is an opportunity to reconnect with colleagues from across Aotearoa and beyond, share knowledge, celebrate our mahi, and return to our workplaces re energised for the important work we do.

Across the three days, the conference will offer:

- Learning and professional development
- Meaningful connection with peers and colleagues
- Dedicated space for reflection and inspiration

The conference ticket includes attendance at all sessions and all meals provided as part of the programme.

Early Bird Rates (available until May 2026)

GST inclusive

- Non members: \$1,200
- Members: \$950
- Registered DRTh: \$850

Standard Ticket Prices (after May 2026)

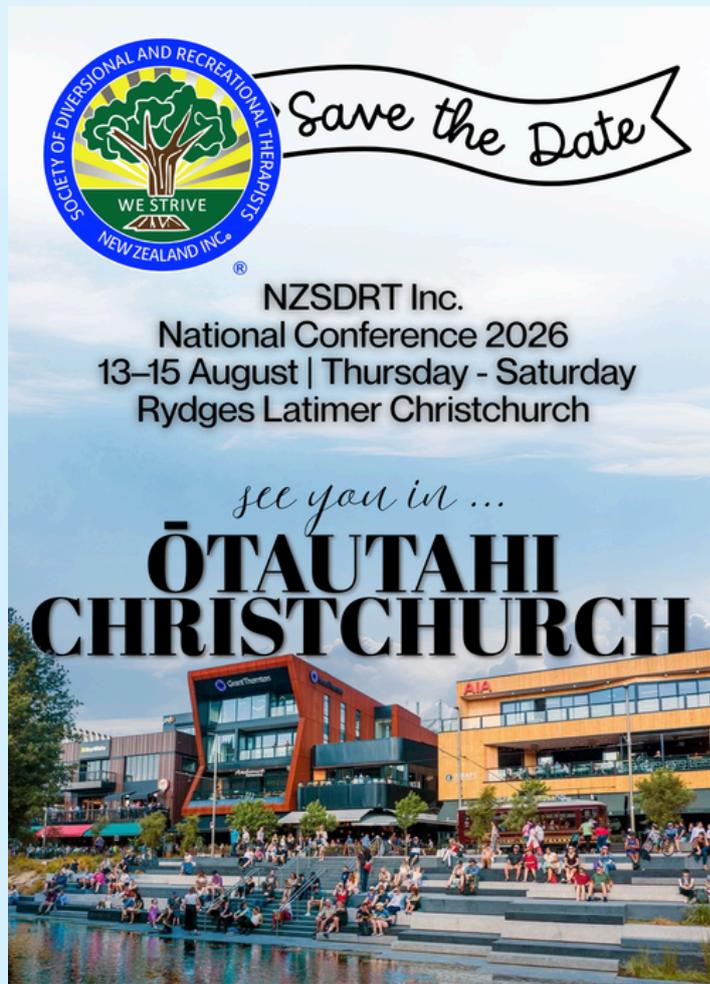
GST inclusive

- Non members: \$1,500
- Members: \$1,200
- Registered DRTh: \$1,000

Please note that accommodation and airfare are not included and must be arranged individually. Flights between Auckland and Christchurch are currently available from approximately \$100 one way, so early booking is recommended.

Accommodation at Rydges Latimer Square and nearby venues can already be booked. A conference discount code will be shared once finalised.

We look forward to welcoming you to Christchurch in 2026. Stay tuned for further updates.



Planning Ahead for Conference 2026

We understand that attending conference requires financial planning, especially in the current climate. We want to make it achievable and worthwhile.

Ways to Seek Workplace Support

When approaching your manager or organisation, consider highlighting:

- The conference aligns directly with your professional development and role expectations
- It is a strong support for maintaining your National DRTh Registration
- It contributes to your organisation's Continuous Improvement initiatives
- Learning gained can support Certification and Audit preparation
- You can provide a post-conference presentation or in-service session to share learning with your team
- Funding may be available through education or training budgets
- Costs can sometimes be split across financial years
- There are conference competitions and showcase opportunities where your facility can participate, helping raise the profile of your organisation nationally

Many managers are supportive when they see clear benefit to residents, compliance, and service quality.

NZSDRT Installment Initiative

To support members during financially tight times, we are offering structured payment options:

> Early Bird Installment Plan

March–July (5 months)

Maintain Early Bird pricing.

Category	Total	Monthly (5 months)
Registered DRTh	\$850	\$170/month
Member	\$950	\$190/month
Non-Member	\$1,200	\$240/month

> Extended Installment Plan

March–December (10 months)

Regular ticket pricing applies.

Category	Total	Monthly (10 months)
Registered DRTh	\$1,000	\$100/month
Member	\$1,200	\$120/month
Non-Member	\$1,500	\$150/month



We hope this initiative makes planning manageable and gives you confidence to start the conversation early.

We look forward to gathering our garden of people in Ōtautahi Christchurch!