

Professional Development Policy

Contents

1. The Purpose of Professional Development
2. Association Membership Requirements
3. Types of Professional Development
4. Membership if Requirements are not met

1. The Purpose of Professional Development

The AHHCA values highly skilled, multi-modality therapists. Our approved colleges, offering accredited courses set to Australian Education Provider standards, have to meet stringent criteria. The community expects professional health care practitioners who are up to date with the latest approaches, scientific understanding and how it is applicable to the holistic field. On-going profession development is how the association monitors a member's commitment to personal, professional, and business growth.

The aim of professional development is to ensure members continue to grow and develop themselves personally and professionally in the best interest of the practitioner and their clients. For any profession to be taken seriously, professional development is considered a mandatory requirement. Because the AHHCA has a commitment to high quality our standards are high, yet uncomplicated.

2. Association Membership Requirement

There are several levels of membership Full Member, Clinical Member, Approved Trainer, Education Provider, Non-Practicing Member, Student Member, Associate Member and Affiliated Organisation. Of these members only the members who are practicing and insured, ie Full and Clinical members and Approved Trainers and Education Providers, are required to complete a total of 30 hours of professional development in a membership year (July 1 – June 30) to maintain membership.

To do this the Association believes professional development should be accrued across a variety of avenues and a maximum number of hours are set for each area.

3. Types of Professional Development

There are six areas of professional development from which the 30 hours can be accumulated. These include:

- A. Professional Skill Development
- B. Self Development
- C. Gaining Information and Knowledge
- D. Contributing to Professional Knowledge
- E. Supervision
- F. College Principals and Approved Trainers

A. Professional skill development includes the following activities and the full hours spent obtaining **the qualification or certificate of attendance** at a skill based training session must be accrued *in the membership year* it was completed. (There is no limit to the number of hours that can be included from this group in your 30 hours.)

- Studying for or the completion of a qualification in an accredited modality
- Participation in a workshop, attending information sessions, seminars or short courses, etc which will result in a certificate of attendance or completion
- First Aid training

Skills accumulated can be for use **in your practice** OR in the running **of your business**.

Members need to forward proof of new qualifications in an approved modality before it can be added to the Practitioner Locality Guide.

First aid is a mandatory requirement for Clinical Members, Approved Trainers and Education Providers. Proof of First Aid training is required to be forwarded every three years when completed. We would encourage Full Members to complete their first aid certificate, but this is optional.

B. Self-development activities are those that support the mental, emotional, physical or spiritual wellbeing of the practitioner, and include the following activities (clinical members can only use a maximum of 10 hours from this category in their 30 hours of professional development).

- Attending sessions with a counsellor, life coach, holistic healer, massage therapist, allied health practitioner (eg Chiropracter, Osteopath, nutritionist, etc)

- Attending classes/groups led by a professional in yoga, meditation, tai chi, chi gong, martial arts, 5 Rhythms Dance, etc
- Private spiritual practices, eg meditation
- Activities that support sustainability, eg gardening, belonging to a organisation that cleans up local rubbish, etc
- Activities that support community focused organisations, eg Lions Club, Rotary, local sports clubs, multicultural organisations, foodbanks, faith based groups, etc

C. Gaining new information and knowledge includes the following activities (clinical members can only use a maximum of 10 hours from this category in their 30 hours of professional development).

- Watching videos, YouTube clips, films related to health and wellbeing, business development or/and topics relevant to holistic health.
- Participating in online presentations and webinars related to health and wellbeing or business development.
- Reading professional publications e.g. AHHCA Informer
- Reading books, articles, etc, related to holistic health and wellbeing, business, mindset, spiritual development, etc
- Public speaking training eg toastmasters

D. Contributing to professional knowledge includes the following activities (clinical members can only use a maximum of 10 hours from this category in their 30 hours of professional development).

- Conducting workshops, seminars, webinars, information sessions or short courses
- Writing for online or printed magazines e.g.: articles, book reviews
- Writing articles, blog posts, book reviews, newsletters for distribution to your clients or subscribers
- Creating videos, podcasts, etc, to grow your business
- Attending meetings of the AHHCA or other allied organisations.
- Participation as a member of the Board of Management of a Health based organisation

E. Supervision includes the following activities (clinical members can only use a maximum of 10 hours from this category in their 30 hours of professional development).

- Supervised practise for counsellors - This is based on 1 hour of supervision by a suitably qualified supervisor for each 10 hours of clinical client contact

time, up to a maximum of 10 hours per year.

If you do just counselling with clients the full hours of client sessions should be used to calculate clinical contact time and then your supervision requirement. If you practice in conjunction with another modality or other modalities, you only need to include the part of your practice that relates directly to counselling when calculating your supervision requirements. If you do not do any “straight” counselling in your practice, just other modalities, we still recommend that you get some supervision each year.

Initially, you must provide the contact details of your supervisor and a copy of your supervision agreement and then you can submit your completed supervision hours each year.

- Professional Debriefing Sessions
- Coaching – High Performance or Business

F. College Principal and Approved Trainers related tasks (a maximum of 20 hours can be accrued towards your total of 30 hours of professional development)

- Reviewing, reflecting upon the previous years teaching, updating and fine-tuning teaching materials in preparation for the new year of teaching
- Reading, watching and researching material from books, DVD's, CD's and the internet for the purpose of obtaining content for course content
- Teaching accredited courses
- Supervising students in practicing their skills
- Marking student assessments

FULL MEMBERS are the only category of members who do not have to undertake “provable” professional development – their 30 hours can be made up entirely from categories B, C or D.

4. If Membership Requirements are not met

Thirty hours of professional development are required per year to maintain membership at the practicing and insured level. If AHHCA members are also member of other relevant Peak organisations who have professional development requirements these can be included in your AHHCA professional development hours (ie you don't have to do different PD for us).

Members who feel disadvantaged or unable to comply with these requirements due to isolation or distance, or just have general queries, are invited to ask for further information on other appropriate activities, by contacting admin@ahhca.org

The administrator has the discretion to waive some or all of the PD requirements if members make a compelling case in writing. The administrator could also request that extra PD be completed in the following year to make up the shortfall of the previous year. The details of this would be negotiated with the member and kept with the membership details.

If a member is not practicing, e.g. taking a break from their professional life to care for family members, pregnancy and motherhood, or to undertake full time studies, and hence have not undertaken any professional development, they may renew as Non-practicing members. **Members cannot get insurance at this level of membership.**

Once the member is practicing again they must notify the association and upgrade to their previous level of membership i.e. Clinical or Full.

Members can also request that their membership be put on hold for a period of up to three years if they are not practicing due to serious ill health or family difficulties, at the discretion of the administrator.