



To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for the opportunity to relate to you the extensive qualifications of a clinical counsellor/psychotherapist who is registered with the Canadian Professional Counsellors Association (CPCA). This association has been committed to excellence in clinical counselling/psychotherapy since 1990. The CPCA and its members endorse a competency-based model, which encompasses verified education and validated clinical experience. The competency-based model offers inclusion for those who have come to excellence in clinical practice in a variety of ways, traditional and non-traditional. In this regard, the CPCA is the oldest competency-based professional association in Canada. CPCA members have continued to voluntarily participate in regulation and oversight of clinical practice for the protection of the public. This is particularly true today as provinces across Canada adopt/enact legislation to regulate mental health professionals – the standard being adopted by the majority is competency-based registration.

CPCA members holding a registered designation to practice are being accepted into the Regulatory Colleges on an equal standing with members of other credentials'-based associations with the required education. In Alberta, the Association of Counselling Therapists of Alberta (ACTA) is accepting applications for The Alberta College of Counselling Therapists and our members were pre-approved for the expedited entry process. We also have members who are registered with the current provincial regulatory colleges.

There is a Federation of Associations of Counselling Therapists (FACT) in each province that does not yet have a college, and they are continuing their work toward the formation of Regulatory Colleges. The CPCA is proud to have been a founding member. These federations include the following Canadian Associations who are working as equal partners following a consensus model for decision making :Canadian Addiction Counsellor Certification Federation, Canadian Art Therapy Association, Canadian Association of Marriage and Family, Canadian Association for Spiritual Care, Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association, Canadian Professional Counsellors Association, Association of Cooperative Counselling Therapists, Association of Registered Clinical Hypnotherapists, Professional Association of Christian Counsellors and Psychotherapists, Provincial Associations of Art Therapy Child and Youth Care, Music Therapy, Marriage and Family Therapy, Addictions Therapy, Play Therapy, Newfoundland and Labrador Counselling and Psychology Association, BC Association of Clinical Counsellors

Research has clearly demonstrated that credentials alone do not guarantee competence and thus ethical practice. The adoption of a competency-based profile for registration is evidence-based practice, and the CPCA and its members have been ahead of this curve. Therefore, the CPCA is recognized as a professional association of the same legal state and standing as the other associations working toward regulating mental health professionals. Our clinical counsellors meet the same qualifications as counsellors who are currently being recognized and reimbursed for services with many Insurance providers and Employee Assistance Providers across Canada.

All CPCA Registered Professional Counsellors (RPC) and Master Practitioners in Clinical Counselling (MPCC) have been approved with Sunlife across Canada. Although there is no way we can provide an exhaustive list, here are a few companies who have covered the cost of counselling services by our members: Aspiria, some branches of Blue Cross, ComPsych, Great West Life, Green shield, Homewood Health, Lifeworks (formerly known as Ceridian), Manulife, Morneau Shepell, Municipal Fire Departments who provide their own coverage, Optima Global Health, Pacific Blue Cross, Pacific Life, Sunlife, Victim Services and others.

In May of 2019, our association , along with other mental health partners were invited to participate in the first National Conference in Ottawa on PTSD and we are committed to being a part of the drafting of the Federal Framework for PTSD in Canada as the process continues to move forward.



CPCA members are registered as professional clinical counsellors after a rigorous application process which includes a qualifying exam, proof of clinical practice, and letters of recommendation from registered/licensed mental health professionals who have personal knowledge of the applicant's clinical skills. Members agree to abide by the Code of Ethics, Professional Standards of Practice, and to voluntarily cooperate with any investigation into client complaints. The CPCA maintains standing committees for Complaints and Discipline with due process enshrined in the Association bylaws.

The following definition of clinical counselling accurately describes the mental health services provided by each of our registered counsellors.

“Clinical counselling uses established mental health principles, values and techniques to aid you in achieving insight into existing challenges, gaining new skills and capacities, and earning emotional freedom from historical issues.”

The CPCA foundational registration of Registered Professional Counsellor requires a minimum of 600 hours of counselling/psychotherapy practice under clinical supervision by a Qualified Clinical Supervisor following the successful completion of a competency-based qualifying exam. These 600 hours must include a minimum of 150 supervision hours, 250 hours of direct client contact and 200 hours of professional practice hours related to their clients.

In addition to the foundational registration, CPCA members may apply for a master level designation – *Master Practitioner in Clinical Counselling* (MPCC), which represents a significant body of education and experience earned and recognized in clinical practice. This earned designation requires 1250 hours of clinical practice hours which must include a minimum of 250 hours of clinical supervision, 750 hours of direct client contact; 5 years of active clinical practice in the past 8 years, 3 current letters of recommendation from qualified mental health professionals with personal knowledge of the member's clinical practice, and 60 hours of advanced education specific to the practice of therapy. Therefore, the MPCC practicing clinician holds an equivalent to graduate degree education and experience. Most applicants for RPC and MPCC membership exceed these minimum measures by a great margin. These graduate degrees are accepted by other professional associations which are recognized by most insurance underwriters, EAPs, Government agencies, and 3<sup>rd</sup> party benefit policies. The requirements of the RPC designation meet this standard criterion while the requirements of the MPCC designation exceed every graduate degree in Canada.

All CPCA members, in active practice, must complete 12 hours of professional development and 6 hours of clinical supervision per calendar year in order to remain in good standing as practicing clinicians. In the promotion and support of competency in clinical counselling/psychotherapy, we are the first counselling association to make ongoing clinical supervision an annual requirement. We established this in 2015 as an essential step in our commitment to excellence in competence, strengthening a foundation for client safety.

As mental health gains momentum as an undeniable and significant component of health, professionals providing counselling and therapy services, become a vital factor in supporting and restoring psychological and emotional equilibrium in the pursuit of optimum health.

Best Regards,

Eva Kelades RPC, MPCC  
Executive Director  
Office of the Registrar