



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 voluntarily participated 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 adopted by the majority is competency-based registration. As the Federation of Associations of Counselling Therapists (FACT) bodies in the various provinces work toward the formation of Regulatory Colleges, the CPCA is an equal partner association, and in several provinces, a founding member in the FACT process. As the Regulatory Colleges are formed, as most recently in Ontario and New Brunswick, CPCA members are accepted into these colleges on an equal standing with members of the credentials'-based associations. 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.

The Federation of Associations of Counselling Therapists (FACT) 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

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 a standing Complaints & Discipline Committee with due process enshrined in the Association bylaws.

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.



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.

By way of comparison, a graduate student of Athabasca University's Clinical Counselling Program must have 500 hours of clinical experience completed within the degree program but of that 500 hours, only 250 hours must be direct client contact. Yorkville University's Counselling Psychology degree requires 400 hours of clinical experience, of which only 120 hours must be direct client contact. Our own UBC Okanagan's graduate program in Clinical Psychology requires 100 hours direct client contact with 65 hours of clinical supervision. These are graduate degrees 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

*"Working together to support and promote competency in clinical counselling/psychotherapy"*