

Certification Requirements

International Certified Alcohol and Drug Counsellor (I.C.A.D.C.)

Clinical Work Experience

Work experience is for the purpose of acquiring and refining skills needed to be a competent alcohol and drug counsellor. This must be direct experience in counselling based on the "Twelve Core Functions". Such experience is defined as supervised work, paid or voluntary, working directly with clients with a primary diagnosis of alcoholism and/or drug addiction. In order to be eligible for certification, candidates must document that they have obtained qualified clinical work experience in the field.

The candidate must have the equivalent of three (3) years full-time work experience (6000 hours) within the past five (5) years providing direct and regularly supervised counselling services to persons with the primary diagnosis of alcoholism and/or drug addiction.

Education

Education includes university, college, institutes, courses, workshops and seminars. Education must be related to the base of knowledge and skills, associated with the "Twelve Core Functions" of the alcohol and drug counsellor. To be eligible, all education must be documented by means of a transcript, certificate, and letter of attendance or completion, which states the number of classroom hours per course and an outline of the course content. There must be an evaluation component to follow each course.

The applicant must have a minimum of **270 hours** of education in the knowledge and skill areas. Eighty (80) of these hours must be alcohol and drug specific. The following outlines the required knowledge area necessary to meet the I.C.A.D.C. standard and the required minimum hours of study.

Pharmacology: (20 hours)

Knowledge and a basic understanding of the pharmacology of psychoactive drugs. Topics should include: basic principles of pharmacology, pharmacokinetics, tolerance and dependence, dependence liability, therapeutic and toxic effects of specific psychoactive drugs.

Signs & Symptoms: (15 hours)

Alcohol and other drug addiction specific signs and symptoms as indicated by assessment. Topics should include: what influences what we assess, how to assess addictive behaviour and other life areas, what questions to ask and how to ask them, and how to engage clients in treatment planning. Knowledge and practical experience in the use of screening and assessment tools currently in use is essential.

Human Development: (32 hours)

Knowledge of some of the many theories that attempt to explain human development: lifespan (developmental) theory, role theory, self-actualization theory, self-in-reactions theory. An understanding of how these and other theories explain human development and how their concepts can be utilized in working with people affected by addiction.

Counselling: (133 hours)

Consisting of a combination of: a) Individual; b) Group; c) Family, and d) Treatment Approaches/Options.

- a) **Individual** - Effective counselling techniques to establish a therapeutic relationship with the client. This should include skills such as empathetic listening, paraphrasing, reflecting, effective questioning, clarification, challenging, and other communication skills essential for effectively helping the client. Both theory and practical training (role play) should be studied.
- b) **Group** - Counselling techniques to establish a therapeutic relationship in a group setting to facilitate life skills, problem solving, as well as techniques and knowledge regarding group dynamics. Knowledge of group intervention, process and goals as well as the nature of therapeutic, educational, and self-help groups should also be explored.
- c) **Family** - Knowledge of the effects of addiction on the family and family dynamics. As well, appropriate interventions and counselling techniques should be considered.
- d) **Treatment Approaches/Options** - An overview of what treatment is, when it is necessary, the evidence for what works in addiction treatment, and how treatment groups work. Knowledge regarding the development of individualized treatment plans, goal setting, contracting, problem solving, evaluation, and management of treatment and/or services available is required. Approaches such as Brief Solution Focused, Cognitive-Behavioural, and others should be studied.

Special Populations: (12 hours)

Knowledge of cultural values and attitudes as they pertain to alcohol and drug addiction. Some specific education in areas of youth, women, natives, geriatric, dual disorders (mental health and addiction), HIV/Aids, and/or corrections is required; education regarding high risk populations.

Case Management: (17 hours)

Knowledge of the role and function of the case manager, with emphasis on functions, service coordination, liaison with other addiction and non-specific resources. Education in how to follow the client from intake to aftercare, and follow-up is essential. Record keeping and report writing, with reference to communication and legal aspects should be explored.

Professional Ethics: (6 hours)

Education must relate to alcohol and other drugs and touch upon the following areas:

1. Client welfare as primary concern.
2. Boundaries of the therapeutic relationship.
3. Professional competence: supervision & development.
4. Consent and negligence
5. Confidentiality, record keeping, and disclosure.
6. Relationship to other counsellors and institutions.
7. Legal issues/Reporting obligations.
8. Financial issues.
9. Personal wellness.

Any Alcohol and Other Drug Knowledge Area: (35 hours)

Other courses or workshops/seminars with an evaluative component can be slotted into this category, such as specializing in a particular population or treatment approach.

Supervised Clinical Training

The minimal accepted standard is **300 hours**. It is expected that this supervision will be a continuous, on-going part of the counsellor's experience.

A "supervisor" shall be interpreted to mean the person who has responsibility for monitoring and evaluating the performance of alcohol and drug counsellors and students. This individual must be a person with comprehensive knowledge of the treatment of alcoholism and drug dependency, and have reached a supervisory position in a treatment setting. Others, who might be in positions of authority, but with little knowledge of addiction, would not be acceptable.

Supervised clinical training is supervision designed to improve and evaluate a counsellor's knowledge and skill in the "Twelve Core Functions". This training must be part of the eligible clinical work experience and may be completed under more than one supervisor or agency.

All clinical training hours must be documented as to where and with whom they took place, and what material was covered. This documentation must indicate a minimum of ten (10) hours of supervision in each of the "Twelve Core Functions".