

ADVICE TO THE PROFESSION

Use of Titles and Designations



THE ASSOCIATION OF
COUNSELLING THERAPY
OF ALBERTA

The College of Counselling Therapy of Alberta (CCTA) provides advice to the professions (ATTP) to support members in implementing the CCTA Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics within their practice. ATTP documents provide examples and outline the current recommended practices. They are intended to assist professionals in their striving for excellence in their field.

Although this advice aligns with our Standard of Practice, ATTP documents are dynamic and may be edited or updated for clarity at any time. ATTP should not be interpreted as legal advice. Please refer back to these articles regularly to ensure you are aware of the most current advice. Major changes will be communicated to our members; however, minor edits may only be noted within the documents.

Use of Titles

Related Standard:

Standard of Practice

- **2.0 Use of Terms, Titles, and Designations**
 - *2.1 members shall clearly identify themselves as being registered with their regulated professions' designated titles, abbreviations, or initials as outlined in the HPA regulations, when acting in any professional capacity of the profession on all documentation, electronic and printed, including but not limited to:*
 - 2.1.1 business cards;
 - 2.1.2 resumes/CVs;
 - 2.1.3 advertising;
 - 2.1.4 professional publications; 2.1.5 letters and/or reports; 2.1.6 email signatures; and 2.1.7 invoices.
 - *2.2 members regulated within more than one profession shall identify themselves using all of their regulated designated titles that relate to the professional services being practiced.*
- **Education/training credentials**
 - *2.3 members shall only display education and/or training credentials that have been achieved by the member and relate to the practice of the profession, in their practice offices and in their communications related to the profession.*
 - *2.4 A member shall not misrepresent, or knowingly allow misrepresentation of their qualifications such as education, experience, areas of competency and/or specialty.*
- **Doctor Title**

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ACTA April 25, 2021 Approved by the Board

Endorsed by CCTA Council: _____

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- *2.5 members shall be permitted to use the title “doctor” or the abbreviation “Dr.” in connection with the provision of professional services if the member has earned a doctorate degree related to the practice of the profession and is approved by the registrar to use that title or abbreviation in the provision of professional services.*
- **Use of Specialty Titles/Designations**
 - *2.6 members may use a term, title, or designation acknowledging specializations relating to the practice of the profession appropriately only when it is earned by the member, is verified by a recognized certifying body, and the member’s regulated title continues to be clearly identified in compliance with standards 2.1 through 2.5.*

A. Background:

The *Health Professions Act* restricts the use of the following titles for members of the CCTA only:

- Counselling Therapist
- Registered Counselling Therapist
- Addiction Counsellor
- Registered Addiction Counsellor
- Child and Youth Care Counsellor
- Registered Child and Youth Care Counsellor
- Drug and Alcohol Counsellor
- Registered Drug and Alcohol Counsellor

* as well as any variations and abbreviations of these titles

The CCTA has the authority to determine who may use these titles and the manner in which they may be used. The CCTA can also determine the circumstances in which its members may use other terms, titles and designations, including educational credentials.

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It is a provincial offence for an unauthorized person to use a restricted title or hold themselves out as qualified to practice CT, AC, or CYCC in Alberta, unless they are registered with CCTA.

B. Providing Services:

1. **Requirement to use regulated title:** Members are required to use the title conferred by the College when acting in a professional capacity, e.g. in all advertising, professional publications, and on business cards and invoices. This includes all such uses via electronic media.
2. **Education/training credentials:** When acting in a professional capacity, members should display only education/training credentials related to the practice of the profession, specifically, the highest credential earned that is related to the practice of the profession.
3. **Job titles:** Members may identify themselves by using a job title in addition to their professional title. The job title should not replace the professional title. For example, a person may hold a position as manager of a clinic, and also be a Registered Counselling Therapist.
4. **Use of the word specialist:** Use of the word specialist is protected in the *Health Professions Act*. It is not permitted to be used unless the CCTA grants permission. At this time, the CCTA has not established a program to allow members to use the word specialist. Members must not also use other forms of the word specialist, such as “speciality” or “specialization” when referring to their practice or professional services. Using the phrases “practice focus” or “focus area” or “area of practice” would be appropriate.

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- 5. Titles and designations conferred by a third party:** Members may use a term, title or designation conferred by a third party, provided it meets all the following conditions:
- The term, title or designation is earned. “Earned” means that the term, title or designation is not honorary and was not awarded purely through attendance or participation, but that the member demonstrated development of the knowledge and/or competence associated with the term, title or designation. Note: This is not intended as an exhaustive definition.
 - It is conferred by a recognized credentialing body. “Recognized credentialing body” means one that is broadly recognized within the profession as legitimate.
 - It meets established standards. “Established standards” mean standards that are broadly recognized within the profession as legitimate.
 - Prominence is given to the member’s regulated title.
- These conditions enable members to use terms, titles and designations that are meaningful and generally recognized by the profession, while maintaining the distinction between the regulated title and additional qualifications. In considering whether a term, title or designation meets the conditions listed above, the test is whether a panel of one’s peers would view it in this way.
- 6. Examples:** The following are examples of acceptable presentations of one’s respective titles:
- Anne Cook, M.Ed., Registered Child and Youth Care Counsellor
 - Aiguë Fernandez, M.Sc, Registered Addiction Counsellor, Manager, Northwestern Addiction Counselling Clinic
 - Sandra Smith, M.A., Registered Counselling Therapist, Canadian Certified Counsellor, Canadian Certified Marriage and Family Therapist
 - Robert Delaney, Registered Counselling Therapist, Certified Art Therapist
- Note: By placing one’s regulated title immediately after one’s name and educational credential, a member meets the requirement to give the regulated title prominence.



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7. **Use of the title “Doctor” or “Dr.”:** Use of the title “Doctor” or “Dr.” is protected in the *Health Professions Act*. Members of the CCTA may be permitted to use this title in connection with the provision of professional services if the member has earned a doctorate degree related to the practice of their regulated title (CT, AC or CYCC). Members who wish to use the title “Doctor” or “Dr.” must receive permission from the Registrar. Refer to the CCTA Policy - Criteria for Review of Doctoral Credentials for Use of the Title Doctor

SEE ALSO

For further information please see the related areas of the Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics.

Standards of Practice:

To be completed

Code of Ethics:

To be completed