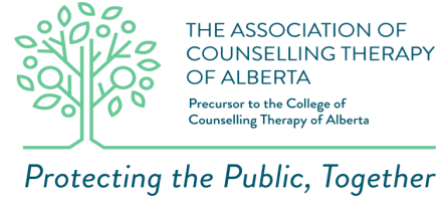


August 4, 2023

**The Honourable Rajan Sawhney**  
**Minister of Advanced Education**  
[Ae.minister@gov.ab.ca](mailto:Ae.minister@gov.ab.ca)



Dear Minister Rajan Sawhney,

Congratulations on your election and appointment as Minister of Advanced Education. As partners with this Government serving the public interest, we want to work with you to support streamlined education paths for Counselling Therapists and increase Alberta's mental health workforce and public protection by completing the last steps to proclaim the College of Counselling Therapy of Alberta (CCTA).

During the Global Public Affairs Stampede event, I spoke with your Chief of Staff, Sarah Amity, to discuss how completing the last steps to proclaim the CCTA will increase post-secondary programs and space for students and streamline auto-credentialing for front-line mental health counsellors. **Alberta needs to increase and retain Alberta's professionally trained counsellors instead of them leaving to work in other regulated jurisdictions.** The solution is readily available—prioritize the final steps to proclaim the CCTA.

At our most recent meeting in April 2023 with the Ministry of Health and Addiction and Health Workforce Planning and Accountability, options were presented on our file for the new Ministers to be briefed on, with a simplified path to an expedited proclamation. We look forward to hearing that the government is prioritizing completing the steps to proclaim the CCTA.

**Alberta is lagging because it is one of the remaining jurisdictions that does not regulate Counselling Therapists.** The government's prolonged delay in finalizing the regulations and proclaiming the CCTA creates uncertainty among current and future students and post-secondary professional counselling education programs. Many are choosing other professions or moving. Counselling Therapist training programs can only be streamlined to the College of Psychotherapists of Ontario (CRPO). Once the CCTA is proclaimed, the CCTA can honour all of CRPO's pre-approved programs due to parallel competency frameworks for Counselling Therapists and Psychotherapists. Further, the CCTA intends to partner with First Nations, Metis and Inuit leaders to co-create a streamlined path to the CCTA for that honours Indigenous ways of learning, knowing, being and healing. **The proclamation of the CCTA would finally authorize the CCTA to work on auto-credentialing and co-creating streamlined education pathways.**

We would like to meet with you to discuss the CCTA and answer your questions. Albertans need widespread government support to coalesce, increasing Alberta's recovery capital and mobilizing the completion of this long-standing issue without disrupting the Alberta's Recovery Oriented System of Care. Regulating professional counsellors interconnects with various ministries and affects all Albertans. Please email Laura Hahn at [registrar@acta-alberta.ca](mailto:registrar@acta-alberta.ca) to advise of a date and time that works best for you.

Sincerely,

Laura Hahn, ACTA Interim CEO and Registrar, [registrar@acta-alberta.ca](mailto:registrar@acta-alberta.ca)

CCd

Chief of Staff, Sarah Amity, [Sarah.Amitry@gov.ab.ca](mailto:Sarah.Amitry@gov.ab.ca)  
Chair of ACTA, Nicole Imgrund, [Chair@acta-alberta.ca](mailto:Chair@acta-alberta.ca)

## Background and FACT Sheet ACTA/CCTA

The **Association of Counselling Therapy of Alberta (ACTA)** is the precursor organization to the **College of Counselling Therapy of Alberta (CCTA)**. ACTA was established at the request of the government to build the CCTA and begin grandfathering the counselling professionals into the College to ensure a **seamless transition for Alberta's workforce**. ACTA has completed this work and has been prepared for the proclamation of the CCTA since 2021. The workforce, stakeholders (including employers and post-secondary programs), and the public are ready for counselling to be regulated in the CCTA. The delay in the proclamation creates unnecessary instability for Alberta's essential mental health workforce.

The Legislative Assembly of Alberta unanimously passed legislation to regulate counselling professions to address public health safety issues, improve mental health funding sources for the public, and increase access to mental health professionals throughout Alberta. Unfortunately, these concerns remain without the proclamation of the CCTA.

### **Regulation of counselling professions with the CCTA will Improve Albertan's Access, Affordability, and Safety of needed Mental Health Counselling:**

- Provide **4000+ additional, safe, professionally trained practitioners** to help meet service demands and **fill vacant positions** throughout Alberta, including rural areas that require being regulated within the *HPA*.
- **Leverage the full scope of Alberta's professional counsellor's** training and competencies within the health care system.
- **Attract and retain the workforce** of mental health counsellors in Alberta, creating diverse education options with **streamlined credentialing to the CCTA**.
- Enhance counselling professionals' **labour mobility to Alberta** from other provinces and countries that regulate Counselling Therapy.
- Increase **Albertan's choice of when, where and how** they receive mental health counselling as many Counselling Therapists are trained in diverse modalities.
- Ensures Albertans receive mental health counselling accountable to **minimum health safety standards in the HPA**.
- Enhance **culturally safe** and competent mental health services for First Nation and Indigenous peoples as collaboratively established with First Nations.
- **Increase funding to Albertans through third-party insurance** plans, which typically only cover health services from regulated professionals.
- **Increases federal funding to First Nation and Indigenous peoples** through the Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) program, which limits coverage for services to regulated health professionals only.