

MEDIA RELEASE

BCACC to Adopt and Adapt Ontario and Nova Scotia Entry-to-Practice Competency Frameworks for Clinical Counsellors in BC

Initial Steps Towards a National Standard and improved Inter-provincial Labour Mobility

Victoria, British Columbia (July 25, 2022) - The BC Association of Clinical Counsellors (BCACC) has announced that it is adopting the same Entry to Practice Competency (ETPC) framework used by the College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario (CRPO) and the Nova Scotia College of Counselling Therapists (NSCCT). This framework will form the foundation of a new ETPC competency document for more than 5500 Registered Clinical Counsellors (RCCs) in BC.

After an exhaustive review of the competency frameworks in place for several mental health/health professions both in BC and across Canada, the BCACC made the decision to adopt a proven framework from existing Canadian mental health profession regulatory colleges. Ontario, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island require applicants to have a master's degree in one of the several disciplines that comprise the profession of counselling and psychotherapy. BCACC firmly believes in this as well and requires this of applicants seeking the RCC designation.

“Requiring a master's degree in counselling/psychotherapy education and training that is substantially equivalent to a master's degree is a requirement for PEI. When preparing for regulation in 2021, this was not an easy decision to come to, but we felt it was appropriate given the contemporary landscape of educational opportunities.” shared Kylah Hennessey, PEICA President.

BCACC's ETPC framework will contain the same key competency sections as CRPO's and NSCCT's: Foundations; Collegial and Interprofessional Relationships; Legal, Professional, and Ethical Responsibilities; Therapeutic Process; and Professional Literature and Applied Research. The latter being a set of competencies which are not often seen in other competency frameworks.

“The NSCCT uses the Entry-to-Practice Competency profile as the minimum expectations of safe, ethical, caring and competent counselling therapy. The Competency profile serves us well as a foundation for: 1) academic program evaluation; 2) guiding and evaluating candidates under supervision; 3) assessment of national and international educated applicants; 4) use in professional conduct complaints; and 5) public and employer awareness of the practice expectations of our registrants.” stated John Hubert, Executive Director and Registrar of NSCCT.

Using CRPO's and NSCCT's ETPC framework as the foundation, BCACC has augmented its competency framework by incorporating additional competencies and best practices from other British Columbian regulatory Colleges such as the College of Psychologists of BC (CPBC) and the British Columbia College of Nurses and Midwives (BCCNM). BCACC has paid particular attention to the expanded use of digital technologies in clinical counselling practice, competencies specific to equity, diversity, and inclusion and supporting Indigenous cultural safety, cultural humility, and anti-racism in BC's health care system.

Michael Radano, Executive Director of the BCACC mentioned “We are extremely grateful for the support and collaboration of the established regulatory colleges in BC and nationally. This is yet another step towards securing regulation of Clinical Counsellors under the Health Professions Act while also keeping inter-provincial labour mobility in mind”. BCACC intends to finalize its ETPC document after a broad consultation with key stakeholders both provincially and nationally; the goal is to have an in-effect date sometime in the Summer or Fall of 2023.

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The BC Association of Clinical Counsellors (BCACC) is a non-profit provincial professional association founded in 1988 with more than 5800 members. BCACC advocates for the Counselling profession and for public access to mental health services. Its members (Registered Clinical Counsellors – RCCs) are held to the highest standards of practice and a strict code of ethics in service and protection of the public.

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