

**FIRST NATIONS WELLNESS/ADDICTIONS COUNSELLOR
CERTIFICATION BOARD**



CERTIFICATION STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES MANUAL



FNWACCB CERTIFICATION
STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

For more information (forms, testing dates):

Contact the Registrar

Our Email: admin@fnwaccb.ca

Phone: 604-874-7425 or toll free 1-877-974-7425

Registrar address: #104 – 1037 West Broadway, Vancouver, BC. V6H 1E3

Our Web Address: www.fnwaccb.ca

INTRODUCTION

The First Nations Wellness/Addictions Counsellor Certification Board was created at the direction of the Association of BC First Nations Treatment Programs to provide a process for certifying aboriginal wellness & addictions workers that incorporated indigenous peoples culture, traditions and healing philosophies and that meet or exceeded certification standards in Canada and internationally. Our Board certifies qualified Indigenous Certified Addictions Specialists. Our certification attests to the professional qualifications and competence of certified counsellors. Our standards for certification are compliant with 11 International Boards and 70 US Districts, including alcohol/drug groups and authorities in most Provinces, and the U.S., First Nations alcohol/drug programs as well as various foreign alcoholism commissions, branches of the military and the First Nations Health Services.

AUTHORITY

The authority of the Certification Board is derived from knowledgeable, experienced, and skilled individuals who are dedicated to the wellness of Alcohol/Drug Counsellors, Trainers and those they serve. This authority is embodied in the Corporate By-Laws of our Certification Board to meet and include First Nations culture and philosophies. Provincial, Federal and international agencies require certification. Individuals seeking certification choose to do so of their own free will and agree to accept the decision of our Board. Application and recognition of certification is voluntary.

The credibility of this certification is derived from the maintenance of standards, which the Counsellors reflect in their daily practice, as well as the performance of the Certification Board itself. The Certification Board is governed by approved By-Laws and is currently incorporated under the laws of the Province of British Columbia. The board is in the process of incorporating nationally. Members of the Board serve without remuneration.

GOALS OF CERTIFICATION

In the establishment of a system for the Certification of Indigenous Certified Addictions Specialists, the FNWACCB recognizes the need to define the role of the addictions counsellor in a manner that is distinct from others who may provide additional services to the same client population.

The FNWACCB believes that addictions is a chronic, progressive, and potentially fatal disease, that effects the total person physically, psychologically, socially, culturally, and spiritually, and is characterized by tolerance, withdrawal, physical dependence, loss of control, denial, and pathological organ changes, (DSM IV).

The primary responsibility of the Indigenous Certified Addictions Specialists is to deal with the relationship between a person's use of alcohol/drugs, and the problems experienced as a consequence of such use. Therefore, the Indigenous Certified Addictions Specialists goals are centered around the following:

1. Assist the client to recognize that his/her use of alcohol/drugs is a primary and chronic illness rooted in bio-psycho-social impairment;
2. Assist the client and the family in gaining insight and motivation to make a commitment to resolve problems by taking appropriate action relative to the use of alcohol/drugs;
3. To provide experienced, culturally appropriate, professional guidance, assistance, and support for the client's efforts to establish a new lifestyle and value system which is designed to achieve the fullest possible recovery from addiction which requires:
 - a) Total abstinence from all mood altering drugs;
 - b) Replacement of self-defeating behavior and attitudes with healthy ones;
 - c) Treatment of physical deterioration;
 - d) The learning of healthy personal social skills;
 - e) Re-entry into society with a sense of self respect and personal well-being;
 - f) The spouse, children and individuals close to the addicted person whom have been affected by the addiction need also be provided with care and treatment;
 - g) Resolution of cultural, traditional, and spiritual conflicts.

- h) The principles of harm reduction where appropriate.
- 4. To recognize problem areas which are beyond the scope of his/her training, skill or competence, and assist the addicted individual or his/her family in accessing and utilizing professional assistance appropriate to their identified needs.

Such activities will, of necessity, cover a broad range of activities equal to the infinite variety of the addicted person's problems such as physiology, age, sex, religion, spirituality, education, culture, economics, and social status.

HOW TO APPLY FOR CERTIFICATION

1. Determine your eligibility for certification by reading this Manual. If you need to meet more of the requirements, use this Standards and Procedures Manual to guide your application preparation and further training to meet all the criteria.
2. If you wish to make application for certification as an Indigenous Certified Addictions Specialist I, Indigenous Certified Addictions Specialist II, or Indigenous Certified Addictions Specialist III, use the contact information to reach our agency and request the appropriate forms. Complete all the application forms and return them to our Registrar. When you meet the qualifications for certification you will be issued the appropriate certificate. Your certificate as an Indigenous Certified Addictions Specialist is recognized for two (2) years. If you need any additional information, please contact our Board at the information provided.

STANDARDS FOR A CERTIFIED ADDICTIONS COUNSELLOR

An Indigenous Certified Addictions Specialist may be certified for either of three (3) levels of knowledge and competence: Indigenous Certified Addictions Specialist I, Indigenous Certified Addictions Specialist II or Indigenous Certified Addictions Specialist III. The basic difference between levels I, II, and III is in the length of supervised training and/or work experience, and in the amount of education acquired. It is not mandatory that applicants attain certification as an Indigenous Certified Addictions Specialist I, before being certified as an Indigenous Certified Addictions Specialist II and III. The important distinctions to consider when making an application for the appropriate category are the qualifications required at each level.

In developing a system of certification, our Certification Board must, of necessity, be vested with broad powers to assess the applicant; her/his work experiences, competencies and training. The Certification Board may require additional information or evidence, in some cases, to clarify the applicant's qualifications. In the process of certification, applicants have the right to access the information from employers, coworkers, references or educational institutions.

Certification Board members are required to respect the confidentiality of all submitted oral or written materials with respect to the application. Certification is awarded for a two-year-period. Recertification is required every two years on the anniversary of the original certification. There is no waiver or substitution for the one-year full time supervised work experience, which involves Counselling in the Alcohol/Drug Abuse field.

QUALIFICATION PROCEDURES SPECIFIC TO INDIGENOUS CERTIFIED ADDICTIONS SPECIALIST I, II AND III

The First Nations Wellness/Addictions Counsellor Certification Board issues certificates for Indigenous Certified Addictions Specialist I, Indigenous Certified Addictions Specialist II and Indigenous Certified Addictions Specialist III to applicants, who meet the following criteria and who, in the opinion of the issuing Board, are qualified to hold and maintain this professional credential. Acceptance of and adherence to the Professional Code of Ethics and Standards and demonstrate the abilities, knowledge and competencies as outlined below. The prerequisites essential to all levels of certification are:

Professional Code of Ethics and Standards:

1. Requirements for Indigenous Certified Addictions Specialist I, II and III.

- a. Be familiar with the concept that addictions and process addictions are treatable.
- b. Respect the client by maintaining an objective professional relationship at all times.
- c. Respect and protect the client confidentiality including all records, materials, and communications.
- d. Do not discriminate among clients, colleagues, or other professionals on the basis of race, color, creed, age, sex, or sexual orientation.
- e. Respect the rights and views of other Wellness/Addictions workers and other professionals.
- f. Respect institutional policies and cooperate with management functions, strive to improve institutional policies and management functions.
- g. Evidence a genuine and authentic interest in helping and serving persons with Addictions problems and be dedicated to the concept of Wellness in helping those we serve to help themselves.
- h. Assess personal and vocational strengths and limitations, biases and effectiveness and be willing to recognize when it is in the client's best interest to refer or release them to other individuals and/or support programs.
- i. Take personal responsibility for continued professional growth through education and training.
- j. Make a total commitment to provide the highest quality services evidenced by continued personal effort, utilization of other health

professionals or services to assist and guide the client to support her/his recovery and Wellness.

- k. Sign the Code of Ethics and Standards of Indigenous Certified Addictions Specialist.

2. Knowledge and Competence Requirements for all Levels

1. Communication: Possess sufficient communication skills to communicate effectively with clients and resources, whether First Nations or non-First Nations. Such skills may include fluency in a First Nations language.
2. Records and Reports: Ability to prepare, maintain and disseminate accurate client records and reports in a timely manner.
3. Knowledge of Addictions: Counselling individuals and families with alcohol related problems; knowledge of existing and generational effects of drugs/alcohol and its impact and influence on relationships is prerequisite. Knowledge of the effects of Addictions and Process Addictions falls into these major categories:
 - a) Physiological and pharmacological - effects of alcohol on the human body, relationship between blood alcohol level and behavior, management of the illness and recovery process, and physiological mechanisms of chemical dependencies, addictions, and abuse.
 - b) Psychological dependencies and complications, patterns of progression/regression, recovery, personal and social support for reconstruction.
 - c) Sociocultural value and attitudinal systems relating to addictions, and alcohol and substance abuse, family, community, spiritual, industrial and legal ramifications amongst First Nations.
 - d) All of the above in relation to other drugs/substances and in particular the synergistic potentiation of alcohol and drugs.
4. Evaluation and Assessment: To insure appropriate services to meet client needs, the ability to evaluate and assess client needs, and the ability to evaluate and assess the needs and problem stage level of the counseling recipient:
 - a) Knowledge of human growth and development.
 - b) Knowledge of family dynamics and interactions, with particular emphasis on the unique differences among First Nations families and communities.
 - c) Knowledge of environmental and sociocultural aspects as they relate to First Nations, including:
 - early, middle and late signs and symptoms of addictions and/or polydrug abuse.
 - signs and symptoms of problems needing other medical/psychological and/or social assessment.
 - characteristics of family dysfunctions.

5. Analytical Skills Including
 - a) assessing the stage of addiction of a client.
 - b) case history methodology.
 - c) ability to recognize appropriate treatment modalities.
 - d) evaluation of the client's progress.
6. Case Planning: To assure healthy participation of individuals and families in the counseling/treatment process, Counsellors should involve their clients in the counseling/treatment process of planning and individualized treatment programs, including:
 - a. skill in sharing evaluation findings with the clients and their families and in working through their reactions and/or resistance to this evaluation.
 - b. skill in involving clients in the process of planning individualized treatment, admission and discharge.
 - c. skill in informing clients of their legal rights.
 - d. skills in assisting clients to accept and resolve financial responsibilities including acquiring financial knowledge and where appropriate, paying for treatment and Counselling.
 - e. basic writing skills and documentation to effectively communicate necessary information to clients, management, co-workers, colleagues, and other agencies.
7. Referral Skills: First Nations clients and their families have a multitude of needs that may require a multidisciplinary approach. Appropriate community agencies must be utilized by the Counsellor in order to meet and serve a wide spectrum of needs:
 - a) Outreach skills: Ability to choose appropriate methods of recruiting clients
 - b) Mobilizing community resources.
 - c) Knowledge of and access to community support sources, their eligibility requirements, treatment philosophies, administrative contact and service procedures.
 - d) Skill in making referrals, including: confidence to contact and contract with other agencies, persons or groups, including those with different treatment philosophies.
 - e) Ability to determine appropriate referral and educational resources.
 - f) Skill in interpreting to the client the referral resource and its function in relationship to the client's needs and problems.
 - g) Ability to assist individuals and families with drugs and alcohol related problems by referrals to other types of Counselling and services, such as traditional cultural, spiritual, pastoral church counseling, public assistance, and vocational or occupational counseling.
8. Counselling and Treatment: The Counselling and treatment process relates to the primary direct delivery of service. Counselling constitutes a major

- portion of treatment: therefore, the skills and knowledge identified here are required:
- a) Ability to establish and maintain a therapeutic relationship with a client.
 - b) Knowledge and ability to use Counselling techniques, e.g. to educate, elicit feelings, facilitate self-understanding, and motivate the client to Wellness.
 - c) Knowledge of and skill in goal setting, contracting, and problem solving.
 - d) Ability to recognize denial defense behaviors and mechanisms.
 - e) Ability to locate and/or develop and utilize informational support systems, such as:
 - materials, pamphlets, literature, films, videos, research reports, workshops, etc.
 - consultation services, such as traditional/cultural, medical, psychiatric, legal, vocational, etc.
9. Skills in individual and group Counselling methods, including cultural techniques for including spouses, families, and other significant individuals or groups.
- a) Knowledge of and ability to participate in various comprehensive treatment processes, knowledge of their rationale, relationship to other methods, and their strengths, limitations and appropriateness for treatment.
 - b) Be familiar with the philosophy and process of recognized and accepted self-help groups such as: Alcoholics Anonymous, Al-Anon, Codependency Anonymous, Adult Children of Alcoholics, Al-A-Teen, Parents Anonymous, Gamblers Anonymous, Sexual Addiction Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, Over-Eaters Anonymous and the importance of these supports for long term rehabilitation.
10. Ability to respect, implement and incorporate First Nations culture, beliefs, values and traditions in treatment, including separate and combined Sweat Ceremonies, Coming of Age Ceremonies and all other cultural/spiritual ceremonies. Ability to support and assist client participation in traditional and cultural aspects of spiritual recovery.
11. Knowledge of long range rehabilitation processes, including management of the new and emerging problems attendant to recovery and to each of the recovery stage processes, awareness of needs for medical care, post treatment crisis and support to forge and maintain a Wellness lifestyle.
12. Professional Integrity:
- a) Ability to maintain confidentiality of all records, materials and communications concerning the identity of clients.

- b) Ability to work under supervision and to cooperate with other personnel as well as function effectively with minimal supervision.
- c) Evidence of a genuine and authentic interest in supporting the addict and dedication to assist that individual to ultimately help themselves.
- d) Ability to share the assessment personal process to identify and support persons thorough relapses, personal crises and/or problem solving to reclaim sobriety, and when to seek support and help.

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTIFICATION

An Indigenous Certified Addictions Specialist I will possess the following qualifications.

Indigenous Certified Addictions Specialist I:

EDUCATION: High School Diploma or GED.

240 hours of Alcohol and Drug Specific education, including the 12 Core functions.

EXPERIENCE: One-year full time work experience fulfilled by:

One-year (2,000 hours) full time paid employment in an alcohol program. Training includes supervised on the job training, with workshops or formal education focusing on Counselling the chemically dependent individual and family.

Indigenous Certified Addictions Specialist II

EDUCATION: Associate of Arts (AA) Degree in Human Services Field from an accredited college, e.g. we include Addictions/Wellness Counsellors, Social Workers, Wellness Worker, Psychiatrist, Community Health Associates, Day Care Workers, etc.

270 hours of Alcohol and Drug Specific education.

A minimum of 6 hours of Specific Ethics training.

A minimum of 6 hours of Specific HIV training is recommended but not mandatory.

EXPERIENCE: Three years (6,000 hours) full time work experience fulfilled by:

1. Three years full time paid employment in an alcohol program.
 - a. An Associate of Arts (AA) degree in Chemical dependency will reduce the work requirement by 1000 hours.
 - b. A Bachelors degree with 30 semester hours or 40-quarter hours in Counselling courses will reduce work requirement by 2000 hours.
 - c. A Masters or higher degree with 30 semester or 40-quarter hours in Counselling courses will reduce the work requirement by 4000 hours.

PRACTICUM: Supervised 300-hour practicum with a minimum of 10 hours in each of 12-Core Functions.

Indigenous Certified Addictions Specialist III

EDUCATION: Four year degree B.Sc./B.A. in Human Services Field from an accredited college.

270 hours of Alcohol and Drug Specific education.

A minimum of 6 hours of Specific Ethics training.

A minimum of 6 hours of Specific HIV training is recommended but not mandatory.

EXPERIENCE: Four years (8,000 hours) full time work experience fulfilled by:

1. Four years full time paid employment in an alcohol program.
 - a. An Associate of Arts (AA) degree in Chemical dependency will reduce the work requirement by 1000 hours.
 - b. A Bachelors degree with 30 semester hours or 40-quarter hours in Counselling courses will reduce work requirement by 2000 hours.
 - c. A Masters or higher degree with 30 semester or 40-quarter hours in Counselling courses will reduce the work requirement by 4000 hours.

PRACTICUM

Supervised 300-hour practicum with a minimum of 10 hours in each of 12-Core Functions. Anyone applying for Indigenous Certified Addictions Specialist I must have completed a minimum of twenty (20) semester credits or 300 contact hours in an accredited institution of higher learning (college or university) or training program in specialized alcohol/drug courses. Those credits must include courses in the following:

- a. Introduction to Chemical Dependency
- b. Bio/systems and Pharmacology
- c. Counselling the Chemically Dependent
- d. Case Report Writing
- e. Ethics in Chemical Dependency Counselling
- f. HIV/AIDS is highly recommended.
- g. Group Facilitation Skills
- h. Relapse Prevention

Indigenous Certified Addictions Specialist II and III must have completed 8 credit hours or 120 contact hours in addition to the 20 credit hours required for Level I, which have a specific alcohol/drug oriented focus in the areas of the 12-Core Functions.

- a. Screening Case Management
- b. Intake Crisis Intervention
- c. Orientation Client Education
- d. Assessment Referral
- e. Treatment Planning Reports and Record Keeping
- f. Counselling Consultation

Specific Qualifications – Indigenous Certified Addictions Specialist II and III.

An Indigenous Certified Addictions Specialist II and III should possess the following qualifications in addition to those general qualifications and competencies already enumerated.

- a. Ability to speak knowledgeably on First Nations alcohol/drug problems.
- b. Knowledge of different Counselling philosophies and theories related to First Nations healing and recovery practices.
- c. Ability to coordinate, manage and facilitate continuance of treatment within the Treatment Center delivery system.
- d. Ability to assess the effectiveness of various treatment and program modalities as they apply to First Nations clients and their families.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

The applicant shall:

- a. Submit an application for certification as an Indigenous Certified Addictions Specialist I, Indigenous Certified Addictions Specialist II or Indigenous Certified Addictions Specialist III.
- b. Give consent to the Certification Board to seek specific information, which will help to clarify the applicant's qualifications. The Board may, without further permission from the applicant, approach the individuals who made personal and professional references for additional information.
- c. Complete all required forms and mail to the Certification Board for approval.
- d. Submit a current criminal record check.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CERTIFICATION BOARD

- a. The Registrar will inform the applicant of receipt of the completed application form or if it is not complete identify what is missing before the application can be processed.
- b. The Registrar has twenty (20) working days to review the application and to make a decision to certify or to deny certification. Applicant's granted certification will be sent a congratulatory letter accompanied by their certificate.
- c. Persons not granted certification or certification at the level requested will be informed of the appeal procedure should they wish to lodge an appeal.
- d. If the applicant is found not eligible at the time of the application review, the applicant will be made aware of the areas in which she/he needs more training or help, so that the applicant can take remedial action.
- e. Within twenty (20) days after the Certification Board meets, the applicant will be notified of the results and issued a certificate if she/he is qualified.
- f. Ensure a renewal notice for recertification is posted to the applicant 120 days prior to the certification expiry date.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE APPLICANT

In addition to the Specific Procedures outlined for the applicant to follow in making application, the following guidelines are provided to help the applicant.

- a. It is the responsibility of the applicant to meet all time deadlines.
- b. The applicant is responsible for alerting references to return their recommendations and to respond to any additional inquiries from the Board as promptly as possible.
- c. If an applicant is know personally to a member of the FNWACCB Board, he/she may, if the Board member grants permission, use the Board member as one of their references.
- d. Applicants are advised that the Board members will abstain from voting on her/his application when the full board convenes.
- e. Applicants are responsible for advising the Board of their correct contact information such as addresses, phone, email, postal codes on their references. The applicant's HOME ADDRESS unless otherwise noted by the applicant, will be used for all communications.
- f. Once the completed application package has been submitted to FNWACCB any questions the applicant may have should be directed to the Certification Administration office at the phone number or address on page one (1) of this manual.

RECERTIFICATION

Initial certification is good for two years from the anniversary of the date of certification. After two (2) years have passed, it will be necessary to reapply for certification. Requirements pertaining to reapplication include:

- a. Renewal of certification will be required every two years, including a current criminal record check. Application for recertification must be made ninety (90) days prior to expiration of certification date.
- b. Applicants for recertification shall have been previously certified by our Board and such certification shall still be in effect and good standing at the time of recertification.
- c. Applicants will receive a renewal notice 120 days prior to the certification expiry date.
- d. Lapsed Certification in excess of thirty days, or has been withdrawn by the Certification Board for any reason whatsoever, will not be subject to renewal. Applicants whose certification status falls into these two conditions must re-submit a new application subject to all the provisions of such an application.
- e. To be recertified you must verify sixty (60) clock hours of continuing education during a two year period. These must include 6 hours in Ethics education and it is recommended to include 6 hours in HIV education. At least thirty (30) hours must be acquired outside your agency.

SUSPENSION OR REVOCATION OF CERTIFICATION

Our Board shall be empowered to revoke or suspend an individual's certification(s) for just cause. Conditions for revocation or suspension shall include but not be limited to:

- a. Obtaining or attempting to obtain certification or renewal by deliberate misrepresentation.
- b. Conviction of a felony during the certification period.
- c. Mis-use and/or chronic abuse of alcohol and/or mood altering drugs.
- d. Violation of the Professional Code of Ethics, i.e., sexual harassment and intimacy, breach of confidentiality, gross negligence and reasonable care.

APPEAL PROCESS

The appeal process for those refused certification or who have had certification revoked or suspended shall be as follows:

- a. Appeals must be made to our Board by the person affected, in writing, and within thirty (30) days of the action of denial, revocation or suspension.
- b. A hearing date will be set not less than fifteen (15) days not more than ninety (90) days, from the date the letter was received by the Certification Board. Notification of the appeal date, time and place will be provided in writing to the person who has had certification denied, revoked or suspended.
- c. Allegations should be directed to the Board and the person bringing the charge and any witnesses must sign said allegations. Only written and signed allegations will be recognized.
- d. Notifications of the charge shall be made by certified mail deliverable to addresses ONLY with return receipt requested. A response shall be in writing within two (2) weeks after receipt of the notification on an individual contesting the charges at a formal hearing before the Board.
- e. If the charges are not contested either by letter or at the next regular meeting of the Board the certification of the individual in question will be revoked depending on Board decision or be suspended for a maximum of one year.
- f. If the charge is contested, a hearing day shall be established, not less than fifteen (15) days or more than ninety (90) days from the date notification of contested action was received by the Board. Notification of the appeal date, time and place will be sent in writing to all parties concerned. Individual may hire an attorney to represent the individual charged.
- g. The decision of a simple majority of those present from our Certification Board will be binding.

RECIPROCITY

Our Certification Board recognizes the credentials of other IC & RC Alcohol Drug Counsellors.

FEES

- a. Application Packet \$10.00
- b. Application for Certification \$200.00
- c. Recertification \$200.00
- d. Duplicate certificate \$15.00
- e. Late renewal \$25.00
- f. Inactive status \$50.00
- g. Copies of Certification File \$10.00
- h. NSF Check Fee \$55.00