



## Australian Hypnotherapists Association

### Continuing Professional Development Policy

#### 1. Introduction

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is how AHA members maintain, improve and broaden their skills, knowledge and expertise and develop the qualities required for professional practice. CPD is an ongoing process throughout a hypnotherapist's career informed by the changing practice environment, professional domains, new information and community need.

The AHA's CPD Policy was reviewed in 2011 and again in 2015 when changes were made to the number of points that could be accrued for AHA approved and other educational activities. Refer to the table in the *Supervision and CPD Record Card*.

The AHA's online CPD was also introduced in 2015 to assist with the CPD of members living in rural and remote areas who may find it difficult to attend capital city workshops.

**An important point to note:** it is both a compulsory requirement of the private health funds and the AHA that all members engage in CPD activities each year. A minimum of 20 CPD points must be attained for members to remain eligible for listing with both the private health funds and AHA Accredited Membership.

Activities which contravene the AHA policies, or are deemed not relevant will not be recognised as eligible for CPD points. Please refer to the *AHA Code of Conduct* and the *AHA Official Policies Manual* for further information regarding AHA Policies.

#### 2. What is Continuing Professional Development?

The AHA's philosophy is that consumers of hypnotherapy services have the right to expect they will be treated in a competent, safe and effective manner that meets the best practice standards of health care within Australia.

The AHA defines CPD as a well-structured program of further education for hypnotherapists to ensure they maintain and increase their knowledge, skills, expertise and competence throughout their professional career.



The AHA's CPD Policy is designed to ensure its members regularly update their clinical skills and professional knowledge. One of the chief roles of CPD is to bridge the gap between the skills and knowledge gained as a student, and the skills and knowledge actually required in clinical practice.

A CPD program is generally regarded as an integral part of one's professional development in all of the helping professions. Being a professional person generally implies a lifelong commitment to updating and furthering one's education. It is not enough for a person to become a professional, one must remain professional with structured CPD forming part of this process.

CPD consists of any educational activities which help to maintain, develop or increase knowledge, problem-solving, technical skills, clinical outcomes, effective client management, or professional performance standards to provide the best in health care.

### 3. Principle underpinning the AHA CPD Policy

The AHA defines CPD as a range of learning activities through which professional hypnotherapists grow and develop throughout their career to ensure that they retain their capacity to practise safely and effectively within their evolving scope of knowledge. It is the method by which practising hypnotherapists may keep abreast of new developments and techniques within the field. Effective CPD should ensure that members stay up-to-date in their practice.

**N.B.** A regularly updated list of CPD courses, conferences, seminars and workshops is posted on the individual state pages as well as on the 'CPD for hypnotherapists' page on the AHA website.

The AHA's CPD Policy is founded on the following principles:

- CPD should be easily accessible to all members, regardless of geographic location
- Members should be given broad latitude in the selection and design of their individual learning programs.
- CPD is applicable to not only clinical practice, but also to all activities associated in managing a small business e.g. bookkeeping, advertising, marketing etc.
- Seminars, workshops and conferences that qualify for CPD points should be of a high standard and encompass both broad based topics as well as hypnotherapy specific subjects.
- CPD should be relevant to the learning needs of members, taking into account different, yet valid learning styles and needs.



- CPD should be a collaborative process between professional hypnotherapy associations, teaching institutions and government agencies to offer members the widest possible choice in CPD activities
- CPD activities should be effectively managed by the Conference and Workshop Sub-committee (CWSC) which has been specifically established to develop and implement CPD activities.

#### 4. The conference and workshops sub-committee (CWSC)

The role of the CWSC (chaired by a member of the National Executive Committee) is to oversee and be responsible for reviewing, implementing and monitoring the AHA's CPD program, and ensuring that the program is of the highest standard and reflects the expectations and requirements of members.

The CWSC is the point of contact to receive, assess and implement suggestions from members.

The CWSC is the point of contact to receive and assess what is relevant and acceptable to the AHA as CPD for members.

#### 5. Members are responsible for their continuing professional development

Members are responsible for their own continuing professional development. To record a professional development activity towards a CPD goal, members are required to ensure the activity is relevant to them and consistent with AHA policy.

Federal Legislation requires a practitioner who wishes to be recognised as a provider by any health fund to undertake CPD activities. Accordingly all health funds stipulate that a member must undertake activities to gain 20 CPD points each year.

Consequently members who do not declare on their Supervision & CPD Card / Renewal Documents that they have undertaken relevant and approved activities to gain 20 CPD points in the relevant AHA financial year are at risk of losing the entitlement to be included on the lists of eligible providers that the AHA sends to the health funds. This of course means clients will no longer be able to claim a rebate for that member's services.

**Note:** The AHA has no discretion in this area. It is a requirement of the health funds, and is outside of the control of the AHA. Thus all accredited members are urged to maintain accurate and proper records and evidence of their CPD activities.



**The Member's Record Card:** The member's record of professional development activities should be kept on their Supervision & CPD Record or in their Member File on the AHA Database (member log-in required). The preferred method by the Association is via the National Database as this reduces the workload of the National Office and can be done throughout the year by members. Alternatively members may use their Supervision and CPD Record Card, available from the National Office or the AHA members webpage.

## 6. It can be helpful for members to develop a CPD plan

Members are encouraged reflect on their professional development needs from time to time and develop a CPD plan appropriate to their needs and practice. AHA supervisors, mentors and national and state board members are available to assist members if required.

## 7. CPD plans

It may be useful for members to develop a CPD plan annually by writing a plan or goals outlining what learning opportunities they may seek during that year. This can then be discussed with a supervisor / peer support group or mentor. This process ensures that CPD activities are relevant and thought through, rather than being a scramble at the end of the year.

CPD can therefore include a range of activities which contribute to the member's learning and which help the member to learn and develop as a practitioner.

**Note:** developing a structured CPD plan is optional for members but recommended by the National Executive Committee.

Members are able to choose how and when they complete their CPD. Members are also able to select the types of activities they think will be of most benefit to them. Consequently a wide range of activities are recognised which members can count towards their CPD. These could include, for example:

- Personal attendance at hypnotherapy, NLP, counselling, psychotherapy; evidenced by a certificate of attendance.
- Advanced training courses; evidenced by a certificate of attendance
- Online AHA Approved CPD courses, evidenced by a certificate of completion
- Reading or writing articles; evidenced by supplying a one page review of the article for the AHA Journal.
- Internet research; evidenced by supplying a one page review of the research for the AHA Journal.



- Participation in research; evidenced by supplying a one page review of the research for the AHA Journal.
- First aid and health & safety instruction; evidenced by a certificate of attendance
- Marketing training and business development etc. evidenced by a certificate of attendance

When deciding what to include in their CPD members need to consider their learning plan if they have developed one. Members should reflect on how an activity will enhance their work as a hypnotherapist and how that might be reflected in practice.

Some questions which may help members to decide which type of activities would be of most benefit to them at a particular time might be:

- What do I need to learn to improve the treatment or service I provide to my clients?
- How can I keep up with current trends, new techniques and good practice?
- Where and how could I do things better?
- What do I need to know more about, should things go wrong?
- What can I learn from observing other practitioners?
- If I want to specialise in a particular area of practice, what types of activities would be most useful?

Therefore whichever activities members decide to participate in, they can structure them with their CPD plan in mind.

## 8. Number of CPD points required

Members must accumulate 20 CPD points per annum, commencing and ending in the AHA financial year (1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> March).

The general rule is that one hour of activity equates with one CPD point for activities which are conducted by the AHA including the AHAs Online CPD. For example; an all-day seminar/workshop involves attendance as well as study of the reading material and might therefore be allocated 7 CPD points.

The activities which accrue points at the highest rate are listed on the AHA website, or advertised in the AHA's *Australian Hypnotherapy Journal*, and the AHA's monthly *Newsletter* for the benefit of members.

Other activities may still qualify for AHA's CPD points, but at a lesser rate of accrual of 1 CPD point per 2 actual tuition hours.



Members who undertake CPD as a condition of their membership in other healthcare professions / associations such as counselling associations may apply to have these activities taken into account, providing that the CPD remains compatible with and relevant to the practice of hypnotherapy.

Many activities qualify for the AHA's CPD points. This is in keeping with the philosophy that the AHA's CPD Program consists of self selected learning from a wide variety of activities to allow accredited members to choose how to best continually develop their existing knowledge and skills. The onus however is on the accredited member to demonstrate that an activity undertaken is relevant to their professional life. Activities considered to be irrelevant will not be accepted.

**Additional CPD Credits:** Should a members undertake a course of study accruing more than 20 CPD points, these can be transferred to the next AHA financial year. Points can only be carried forward for one year.

## 9. The onus of record-keeping is the responsibility of each member

Members are to record their activities with the required proof in the Record Card or through the AHA Database. The requirement of proof is an essential factor in the Supervision and CPD process, and the evidence produced must be reasonably self-evident that the activity was undertaken. Proof of a dubious nature will not be accepted. This self-responsibility approach is cost-effective and in harmony with the expectations of a professional person.

Members who have not completed all 20 CPD points at the time of membership renewal (1<sup>st</sup> April each year) are required to outline what activities that they will undertake over the following three months to accrue the necessary points.