

British Columbia Acupressure Therapists' Association Continuing Education Summary

The overall goals of having a Continuing Education (CE) program are:

- 1) to maintain high standards of knowledge and competence in the practice of acupressure with the general public;
- 2) to ensure professional and public confidence in acupressure as a viable and accomplished method in health care;
- 3) to make CE desirable and achievable among BCATA members;
- 4) to increase professional exposure for the BCATA and its members.

While OTP status does not require a continuing education component, other title-protected occupations are formulating CE policy to maintain standards and raise public confidence. As well, continuing education, even on a voluntary basis, is encouraging to potential occupational insurers. Twelve (12) credits in the course of the membership year are recommended, balanced between practical education and professional development according to individual needs; however, this balance may be better achieved over the course of two years. It is thought that many members are already achieving close to this number of credits, or even exceeding it each year.

The Board is proposing continuing education categories that span a number of different areas and that are generous in scope and credits. These include courses directly related to acupressure, treatment of clients, processing skills, related healing modalities, chi cultivation, ongoing studies, support groups, BCATA organizational development, professional development courses covering skills necessary to conduct and maintain an acupressure practice as a health professional as well as promoting its awareness to the public and other professional communities, and a combined category for members who wish to do research or create a professional journal article.

One example of attainable credits even before the end of this year is attendance at the Conference (6 credits), AGM morning workshops (3 credits), and the AGM (3 credits), for 12 credits in all. The Board is also researching the viability of CE incentives or rewards for completing credits or unique contributions.

Reporting credits is easily done at each membership renewal. Send in a copy of the completed Continuing Education Form, available on the BCATA Web site www.acupressurebc.org, showing the credits attained along with your Membership Renewal form and fees. Retain your copies of attendance certificates, receipts, or instructor support for your records.

Sources for continuing education include community colleges, universities, distance education, community centres, recognized acupressure schools, authorized teachers of a modality, related conferences, and BCATA-sponsored events.