

CCHA Education Standards of Herbal Practitioners

Revised July 25, 2013 in Calgary, Nov 20 2013, Ottawa

Definition

The CCHA has adopted certain minimum standards for member associations that are intended to ensure the safe and effective practice of herbal medicine. This document outlines those minimal standards. Each member association can adopt or modify these standards as required.

In order to accommodate different traditions, educational backgrounds and models, we are including three possible educational pathways:

1. Formal Education:

For applicants with formal education qualifications acquired through a combination of classroom, correspondence and/or apprenticeship programs, the minimum requirement is a total of 1500 education hours broken down as follows:

- 1.1. Minimum 500 hours consisting of instruction in core herbal subjects such as history and philosophy of herbalism, materia medica, herbal therapeutics, herbal pharmacology, herbal pharmacy, safe use of herbs, therapeutic interactions, clinical skills, herbal energetics, botany and field identification, organoleptic skills, wildcrafting, cultivation;
- 1.2. Minimum 350 hours consisting of instruction in the health sciences such as anatomy, physiology, biochemistry, pathology and nutrition;
- 1.3. Minimum 300 hours of supervised clinical practice;
- 1.4. Minimum 350 hours, which may consist of extra hours in any of the above points and/or additional complementary alternative medicine related subjects. See Appendix A of this document for suggestions.

Clinic hours must primarily consist of client / patient consultations, assessment, protocol development, remedy formulation, herbal dispensing, record keeping and follow-up.

Notwithstanding the minimum requirements outlined above, all applicants are expected to have met the training requirements for the **particular tradition or designation** in which they intend to practice.

Applicants must submit documentary evidence to support all training hours. If training has been acquired through a program not recognized by the member association, detailed transcripts must be provided, together with contact information for the school

and/or instructor(s).

If training is through more than one program of instruction, applications will be individually assessed based on level of education undertaken, rather than solely on the number of hours completed.

If training was completed more than five years prior to application, the applicant must be able to demonstrate on-going education, professional achievement, or clinical practice during the intervening years. Documentary evidence must be included.

2. **Self Directed Studies:** The CCHA recognizes that many herbalists do not have the formal herbal education outlined above, and provision is made for applicants who fall into this category.

Applicants in this category must submit all of the following information where applicable:

- Documentary evidence of all training in relevant fields
- Documentary evidence of completion of any supervised practical hours with a herbalist(s), together with the qualifications and training of the herbalist(s).
- The applicant must have established and maintained a herbal practice for a minimum of 2 out of the past 5 years, and must provide evidence of practice (advertising, business registration, etc.).
- The applicant should also provide 3 professional health practitioner and 3 client references. All references should be willing to allow direct contact from the Member Association as necessary.

b) Where documentary evidence is insufficient, or not available, applicants may be asked to demonstrate their ability to practice safely by taking a written and/or oral examination.

Written examinations have their foundation in the Western herbal tradition at this time. Applicants who are trained in other disciplines may request a peer assessment only. In this case, every effort will be made to assemble a committee with knowledge and understanding of the applicant's tradition.

All applicants under this category are subject to final approval by the Member Associations Board of Directors. The Board reserves the right to request a peer assessment for any applicant, regardless of documentation. *Membership in another herbal association does not mean automatic membership in the Member Association.*

3. **Apprenticeship within an Oral Traditions:** Applicants who have received training or have apprenticed within an oral tradition that does not recognize certificates or diplomas as a means of attesting to the qualifications of practitioners within that tradition, will be assessed on the basis of the recommendations of their teacher(s) as

long as those teacher(s) are respected within their community, and their authority is recognized within their tradition. Their teacher(s) must be willing to either:

(i) Meet or speak with a representative of the Board of Directors of the member association and provide their verbal and written assurance that the applicant is qualified to practice within their tradition, or

(ii) If their tradition does not allow them to provide their assurances in writing, meet with two representatives of the Board of Directors from the member association and provide their verbal assurance that the applicant is qualified to practice within their tradition. The Board of Directors has the right to change this requirement to meeting with one representative of the Member Association if it feels that a request to meet with two representatives may be considered disrespectful.

These standards are subject to ongoing review by the CCHA Committee.

Continuing Education

CCHA recommends that each practitioner completes 40 hours per year of continuing education applicable in CAM (complementary alternative medicine) which can take a variety of forms such as: conferences; workshops; apprenticeships, board member / committee contribution, writing a published book and articles, mentoring; field trips; university, college and distance education from herbal institutions; self study through videos, research, new presentations (which required research).

APPENDIX A (for Educational Standards)

Minimum 350 hours, which may consist of educational hours in a variety of complementary alternative medicine related subjects, such as:

- Research Skills
- Thesis
- Laboratory Science: interpreting and analyzing medical diagnostic tests
- Business Skills
- Plant Spirit Medicine
- Aromatherapy
- Flower Essences
- Study of Additional Natural Health Products
- Homeopathy
- Study of Additional Complementary Alternative Methodologies
- Alternative diagnosis techniques such as tongue diagnosis, iridology, energetic assessment, and/or applied kinesiology