



The College of Naturopaths of Ontario

# Continuing Education and Professional Development Handbook



## Introduction

All regulated health care professionals have an obligation – to their patients and members of the public – to be well-educated in all areas in which they practice and stay up to date with the competencies of their chosen profession.

The College of Naturopaths of Ontario (College), under the *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991 (RHPA)* is required to develop and maintain a Quality Assurance (QA) program. This helps ensure that the people of Ontario receive safe, competent, and ethical naturopathic care.

The College's QA program has three components:

- Self-Assessment,
- Continuing Education and Professional Development, and
- Peer and Practice Assessment.

The Continuing Education (CE) and Professional Development component requires Registrants to participate, in a meaningful and ongoing manner, in activities that support their practice competence, education in and contributions to their profession. This handbook has been created to help Registrants comply with this requirement.

## Participation

All Registrants who hold a General Class certificate of registration with the College are required to participate in Continuing Education and Professional Development. This includes engaging in relevant activities, submitting a summary log of those activities, and submitting supporting documentation (when selected) to verify participation in CE activities.

Registrants who hold an Inactive Class certificate of registration with the College are not required to participate in any component of the QA Program.

## Continuing Education and Professional Development Requirements

Registrants are required to participate in a minimum of 70 hours of Continuing Education over a three-year cycle. During the three-year period, they must complete and document Continuing Education credits (CECs) in two categories:

A: Core Activities – 30 credits. These are pre-approved structured learning activities related to clinical competencies and are within the scope of practice of the profession.

B: Self-Directed Activities – 40 credits. These are professional development activities related to the practice of the profession that the Registrant chooses, and do not require pre-approval.

The credits outlined above are the minimum required. Any CECs beyond the 30 required for Category A can be used towards the Category B requirements.

Registrants may accumulate additional credits that further their professional development. We encourage any learning that better serves the public interest. However, credits that were acquired within the three-year reporting period cannot be used in a subsequent reporting period. The required 70 hours of

Continuing Education and Professional Development must be claimed in the reporting period in which they are earned.

### **Category A – Core Activities**

These are structured learning activities related to the clinical competencies of the profession. They should be relevant to the practice of naturopathic medicine and help to enhance a Registrant's competence and practice in accordance with professional standards. Potential topics include assessment and diagnostics, pharmacology, primary care management, patient-centered care, naturopathic modalities, and referrals to other practitioners.

For Category A, one hour of Continuing Education equals one credit (CEC). The 30 credits in Category A include specific requirements:

#### **Jurisprudence**

- All Registrants must complete a minimum of three CECs in jurisprudence. This may be achieved by either attending three hours of jurisprudence education or completing the Jurisprudence Examination that is available for Registrants to retake after being registered with the College.

#### **Prescribing**

- Registrants who have met the Standard of Practice for Prescribing must complete six CECs in pharmacology.

#### **Intravenous Infusion Therapy (IVIT)**

- The College recognizes the importance of competency in the areas of increased risk associated with controlled acts. If a Registrant has met the Standard of Practice for IVIT, they must complete six additional Category A CECs related to IVIT, for a total of 36 CECs in Category A at the end of their three-year cycle.

### **Pre-Approval for Category A Credits**

The College's QA Committee must approve course content in advance for it to qualify for credits in Category A. This evaluation process will ensure that each course meets the following criteria:

- takes place in a structured learning environment,
- course providers are recognized subject experts,
- subject is based on the clinical competencies and is within the scope of practice of the profession,
- references or links are provided to support the educational material,
- activities are evidence-based,
- no commercial bias or product placement,
- generic names are used in presentations whenever possible for all natural health products, devices, laboratory tests etc.,
- if brand names are used, the brand name appears after the generic name (e.g. in parenthesis); every drug mentioned is referred to in a similar manner throughout the presentation,
- clearly articulated and relevant learning outcomes for participants, and
- accessible to all Registrants equally.

For IVIT courses, the evaluation process also ensures that content includes information regarding contraindications, management of adverse reactions, and relevant emergency procedures.

Both course providers and Registrants of the College may submit Category A credit approval requests. More information can be found in the [CE Credit Application Form](#) and the [CE Credit Application Handbook](#). All courses that have been approved for Category A credits can be found [here](#).

The QA Committee strives to review all requests within 60 days of receiving the completed application. Incomplete applications will not be forwarded to the Committee until all the necessary information is received, including requested supporting documentation. The application form should be submitted as far in advance as possible where prior approval is required, and it should be no less than 60 days prior to the date of the activity.

When a credit application is approved, the College will notify the Registrant in writing and post the activity on our website under the approved courses list for Category A. Submitting a credit application does not guarantee its approval. The QA Committee reserves the right to deny approval to any activity that it feels is insufficient, for reasons of quality, relevance of the content, the completeness of the submission or for any other reason.

### **Category B – Self-Directed Activities**

Learning often comes from being involved in professional activities and engaged in a variety of community functions. The College places a high value on Registrants being a part of the naturopathic community, the broader community of health professionals, and society in general. Category B activities relate to the naturopath as a health professional and emphasize community involvement. Over a three-year period, Registrants must participate in a minimum of 40 CECs through activities such as (but not limited to):

- serving on a College committee, working group or task force, or on the Council,
- serving on the board, committee, working group or task force of a professional association or educational institution,
- supervising in a student clinic, providing a preceptorship, or overseeing an externship,
- acting as a peer assessor,
- writing and publishing articles or books about naturopathic medicine for any publication in North America,
- reviewing professional journals, textbooks, literature, etc.,
- acting as a presenter/lecturer for an approved or self-directed activity offered to naturopaths or other health care professionals, and
- attending educational courses related to business practices or modalities complementary to the practice of the profession.

The College does not have to pre-approve activities in this category. However, the QA Committee may, upon review of an individual's summary, reject developmental activities that do not provide education for the Registrant as a health professional.

For a complete list of possible activities that may be used to fulfill the Category B requirements, please see the [Maximum Credit Allotment and Acceptable Proof of Completion Guide](#). Registrants can contact the College if an activity they are interested in is not in the guide, or if they are not sure whether an activity can be used towards their Category B requirements.

While Registrants may use any Category A CECs above the minimum 30 credits towards their Category B requirements, no Category B CECs can apply to Category A requirements.

### **Maximum Credit Allotment**

Apart from certain structured learning opportunities (seminars, lectures, courses, conferences,

workshops, or online course equivalents), Category B activities have a maximum number of credits in any three-year cycle. This is meant to encourage Registrants to engage in a variety of Continuing Education and Professional Development activities. The goal is for Registrants to maintain a broad and well-rounded understanding of the standards of practice, current issues facing the profession, new developments in the field of naturopathic medicine, etc.

## Selecting Continuing Education Activities

The College recognizes that not all practices are the same. Each Registrant will develop a practice that offers a variety of services within the scope of practice of the profession.

When determining which activities to participate in, we encourage Registrants to:

- consider specific areas of their practice that they feel need improvement,
- choose courses to ensure their knowledge and skills are current in a specific modality (i.e. botanical medicine, acupuncture, etc.),
- seek opportunities to gain knowledge in different areas of practice that they may wish to provide in the future, and
- give back to their community by supervising students, participating in a Committee for a professional organization, writing articles, delivering courses for peers, etc.

## Reporting Cycles

All General Class Registrants of the College of Naturopaths are required to participate in Continuing Education and Professional Development activities on a three-year cycle. The reporting cycles start on October 1 and ends on September 30. For example, if the CE cycle starts on October 1, 2017, the cycle end date will be September 30, 2020.

The reporting cycle is determined by the Registrant's initial year of registration and not by the specific date on which they were registered. For example, all Registrants who were registered in 2014 have a cycle end date of September 30, 2017, regardless of whether they registered in January or December.

Registrants are notified of their CE reporting cycle and the deadline to submit their first Continuing Education and Professional Development Logs (CE & PD Logs) upon registration with the College. They can also check their reporting cycle by looking up their initial registration date in their profile on the College [website](#) or by contacting the College.

## Determining The Reporting Cycle

The chart below can be used to determine which reporting cycle Registrants have been assigned to. The [Public Register](#) on the College's website includes the initial registration date for all Registrants.

For example, if a Registrant initially registered in January 2019, they are in Group II and their first CE cycle will be from October 1, 2019 to September 30, 2022, which is also the due date for them to submit their first CE & PD Logs. Their next CE cycle begins on October 1, 2023, and ends on September 30, 2025, and so on.

Group I		Group II		Group III	
<i>Initial Registration Year with BDDT-N or CONO</i>	1964 1967 1970 1973 1976 1979 1982 1985 1988 1991 1994 1997 2000 2003 2006 2009 2012 2015 2018 2021 2024	<i>Initial Registration Year with BDDT-N or CONO</i>	1965 1968 1971 1974 1977 1980 1983 1986 1989 1992 1995 1998 2001 2004 2007 2010 2013 2016 2019 2022	<i>Initial Registration Year with BDDT-N or CONO</i>	1966 1969 1972 1975 1978 1981 1984 1987 1990 1993 1996 1999 2002 2005 2008 2011 2014 2017 2020 2023
<i>Next CE &amp; PD Log Due:</i>	Sept. 30, 2027	<i>Next CE &amp; PD Log Due:</i>	Sept. 30, 2025	<i>Next CE &amp; PD Log Due:</i>	Sept. 30, 2026
<i>Subsequent CE Submission Dates:</i>	Sept 30, 2030 Sept 30, 2033 Sept 30, 2036	<i>Subsequent CE Submission Dates:</i>	Sept 30, 2028 Sept 30, 2031 Sept 30, 2034	<i>Subsequent CE Submission Dates:</i>	Sept 30, 2029 Sept 30, 2032 Sept 30, 2035

## Submitting Continuing Education and Professional Development Logs

At the end of a three-year cycle, Registrants will submit their CE & PD Logs to the College, as a summary of their CE activities over the previous three years. The CE & PD Logs consist of three forms (one for Category A, one for Category B, and one for IVIT if applicable).

For each activity completed, Registrants need to include the course provider, the name and a brief description of the course, the activity date, the number of credits earned and the outcome (i.e. how the Registrant plans to modify their practice based on what they have learned) on the CE & PD Logs. All logs may be submitted by mail, fax, or email by the September 30 deadline. The CE & PD Logs can be found [here](#).

## Submitting a Detailed Continuing Education Summary

Each year, the College may randomly select up to 20% of Registrants who are due to submit their CE & PD Logs to participate in a detailed Continuing Competency and Professional Development review. The College will notify these Registrants in writing well in advance of the submission deadline.

This means that selected Registrants will be required to submit proof of attendance/completion of their Continuing Education and Professional Development activities for the past three years along with their CE & PD Logs. The documents are to be attached (with the activity numbers) to the appropriate logs.

## Acceptable Proof of Completion

The QA Committee determines acceptable proof of completion for Continuing Education and Professional Development activities. Some examples of acceptable proof are:

- a certificate of completion from a course or lecture attended,
- a letter confirming participation as a supervisor in a student clinic, and
- a copy of a published article authored by the Registrant.

The Maximum Credit Allotment and Acceptable Proof of Completion Guide details the documentation that may be used as proof of attendance/completion for each type of CE activity. If Registrants are not sure about what can be used as proof of completion for a particular activity, or if they have documentation that is not on the list, please contact the College at [qa@collegeofnaturopaths.on.ca](mailto:qa@collegeofnaturopaths.on.ca) for clarification.

## Document Retention

All Continuing Education and Professional Development materials must be kept for a minimum of two reporting cycles, or six years. This includes copies of CE & PD Logs, certificates of completion from courses, lectures, or seminars attended and any other documentation verifying participation in CE activities. All materials related to participation in CE activities are to be maintained in the Registrant's Professional Portfolio.

## Amendment Requests

Registrants may request an amendment to their CE reporting requirements if they:

- are seriously ill,
- bereaved, or
- experiencing other extenuating circumstances that impact the ability to meet these requirements.

The QA Committee will review all amendment requests. If the request is approved, this will not change the Registrant's future CE reporting cycle. They will still be required to complete and report on the full number of credits for subsequent CE cycles.

To request an amendment, please complete and submit the [Amendment Request for Continuing Education and Professional Development Reporting form](#).

The College must receive amendment requests no later than July 31<sup>st</sup>, unless there are extenuating circumstances that affect the Registrant's ability to submit the application earlier.

## FAQs

### **Do I have to participate in Continuing Education and Professional Development activities?**

Yes. All Registrants who hold a General Class certificate of registration with the College are required to

participate in Continuing Education and Professional Development activities and report these to the College on a three-year cycle. Participation in a QA Program is a mandatory requirement for all regulated health professionals and is set out in the *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991*.

### **How many credits do I need?**

You will need to complete 70 Continuing Education credits (CECs) over a three-year period. Of the 70 required credits, 30 must be from Category A – core activities, and 40 must be from Category B – self-directed activities.

### **What's the difference between Category A and Category B credits?**

Category A credits are related to the clinical competencies of the profession and are pre-approved by the College. These include structured activities such as attending courses, seminars, or lectures. Category B credits are self-directed and relate to you as a health professional and a member of your community. These may encompass a wide range of professional activities and community functions that contribute to your professional development.

### **Can I use Category A credits to meet my Category B requirements?**

Yes. Any CECs beyond the required 30 Category A credits can apply towards Category B. In fact, you can take all 70 CECs in Category A if you wish. However, the College encourages Registrants to participate in a wide range of Continuing Education activities, which includes a combination of core credits and self-directed activities. This will ultimately benefit your patients and members of the public. The CE requirements allow you to self-direct your learning in a way that you feel is most beneficial for you as a health professional.

### **Can I use Category B credits to meet my Category A requirements?**

No, you may not use additional CE activities over and above the 40 credits required for Category B to fulfill your Category A requirements. You must always complete at least 30 credits from Category A.

### **When are my credits due?**

Each Registrant is assigned to a reporting cycle based on their initial date of registration. Your credits are due at the end of your three-year reporting cycle. Reporting cycles go from October 1 to September 30. For example, if your cycle starts on October 1, 2022, your cycle end date is September 30, 2025 – this is the deadline for you to submit your credits to the College.

### **What should I do if I've forgotten my reporting cycle?**

Check your CE reporting cycle and due date in the QA section of our [website](#). You can also contact the College if you have questions about your CE cycle.

### **How do I keep track of my CE courses and activities?**

Use the College's Continuing Education and Professional Development Logs (CE & PD Logs). This provides a template to record the relevant information about each CE activity you complete, such as the course provider, activity name and date, and the number of credits you received. Please retain copies of your certificates of completion/proof of participation for every CE activity and keep them, along with your CE & PD Logs, in your Professional Portfolio for a minimum of six years.

### **How do I report my Continuing Education to the College?**

At the end of your three-year reporting cycle, you will submit your CE & PD Logs to the College. If you



have been selected to participate in a detailed review, you will submit the proof of completion for all your CE activities along with your logs. The QA Committee will review your submission for completeness and notify you if you are in compliance with the CE requirement of the QA program.

**Does the College keep track of the CE courses I've completed?**

No. It is your responsibility to keep accurate records of all the CE activities in which you participate. The College will not accept notification from course providers that you have completed a course. Please make sure you obtain/request a copy of your certificate of completion or appropriate documentation from the course provider upon successfully completing an activity. All courses that have been approved for Category A credits can be found [here](#).

**Do I get CE credits for taking a CPR course?**

Yes. You can claim one Category B credit for every hour of participation in a CPR course, up to a maximum of eight credits per CE cycle.

**Do Inactive Registrants still need to participate in CE?**

No. However, if you change your status to General Class, the QA Committee will determine your CE requirements based on where you are in your CE reporting cycle.

**If I exceed the required 70 hours of Continuing Education, can I carry my excess credits forward to the next three-year cycle?**

No. Your credits must be claimed in the reporting period in which they are earned. However, if you complete additional CE activities, report them. The College encourages all Registrants to participate in additional learning activities to better serve the public interest.

**I am a new Registrant. Do I have to participate in Continuing Education activities?**

Yes. All Registrants of the College are required to participate in Continuing Education and Professional Development. As a new Registrant, you will be assigned to one of three reporting groups based on your initial registration date and be notified of your cycle end date when you register. You will have plenty of time to complete the required number of CE credits.

**How do I know if a Category A course has been approved by the College?**

The College posts a list of all the approved activities for Category A [here](#). Please check this page periodically as new courses are posted on a regular basis.

**Can I submit a course I have already completed for approval?**

Yes. If you have completed a course or activity that meets the criteria for Category A, you can submit it to the College for approval. You must submit your Credit Approval Application well in advance of your cycle end date if you plan on using the credits to fulfill your Category A requirements.

**I am on parental leave do I still need to complete CE credits?**

Yes. If you hold a General Class certificate of registration with the College you still need to participate in Continuing Education activities. If you are on parental leave and were inactive during that time, you can request an amendment to complete and submit your credits. If you have changed your status to Inactive Class you do not need to participate in CE activities.

**What will happen if I don't complete the required number of credits in my three-year cycle?**

All Registrants must participate in Continuing Education and Professional Development activities as part of the QA Program requirements. If you do not complete and report on the required number of CE credits, this may be considered non-compliance with the QA Program. The QA Committee may require some follow-up or a Peer and Practice Assessment, or may refer the matter to the Inquiries, Complaints and Reports Committee.

**Contact**

If you have any questions about Continuing Education and Professional Development, please contact: [qa@collegeofnaturopaths.on.ca](mailto:qa@collegeofnaturopaths.on.ca).