



CASC / ACSS
Canadian Association / Association canadienne
for Spiritual Care / de soins spirituels

STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

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The Canadian Association for Spiritual Care / Association canadienne de soins spirituels (CASC/ACSS) advances the professionalism of spiritual care and psycho-spiritual therapy in Canada.



CASC/ACSS

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CANADIAN ASSOCIATION FOR SPIRITUAL CARE/ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE DE SOINS SPIRITUELS

SECTION II STANDARDS OF PRACTICE – CASC/ACSS CERTIFIED PROFESSIONALS

A. DEFINITION STATEMENT

A Member of CASC/ACSS can be Certified as a Spiritual Care Practitioner or as a Psycho-Spiritual Therapist.

The Certified Professional is grounded in a faith commitment endorsed according to the provisions of the CASC/ACSS Policy and Procedure Manual: Chapter 2, Section VI.

The Certified Professional responds to spiritual and psychosocial needs working holistically, namely as healer, witness, advocate, clinician and educator.

The Certified Professional accepts responsibility and accountability for maintaining professional Certification, for continuing education and for active participation in the vision, direction and activities of the Association.

B. COMPETENCIES OF CASC/ACSS CERTIFIED PROFESSIONALS

1. PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY

A Certified Professional is rooted in one's spiritual / religious / cultural tradition that connects with self, other and the sacred for a holistic and spiritually-oriented approach to care and therapy. From this foundation, a Certified Professional reflectively integrates the wisdom of spiritual / religious / cultural traditions with psychotherapeutic modalities as a way of being with and for others during times of crisis, challenge and change.

- 1.1. Embodies a holistic and spiritually-oriented approach to care and therapy.
- 1.2. Engages in regular personal and communal spiritual practices to nurture awareness of and connection with the spiritual and the sacred in all relationships.
- 1.3. Engages in regular reflective practice that informs professional functioning.
- 1.4. Demonstrates safe and effective use of self in personal and professional practice.
- 1.5. Attends to the dynamics of one's own social location¹, beliefs, power, vulnerability and boundaries as these impact relationships with individuals and groups.

¹ **Social Location:** "The groups people belong to because of their place or position in history and society. All people have a social location that is defined by their gender, race, social class, age, ability, religion,



- 1.6. Engages in personal growth and professional continuing education, such as on-going supervision.

2. KNOWLEDGE

A Certified Professional integrates psychological and spiritual / religious / cultural frameworks and engages in evidence-informed professional practice supported by current research.

2.1. SPIRITUAL / RELIGIOUS / CULTURAL

- 2.1.1. Identifies one's own beliefs and spiritual / religious / cultural traditions and their influence on personhood and practice.
- 2.1.2. Acquires knowledge of world religions, spiritualities and cultural traditions through experiential and conceptual learning.
- 2.1.3. Develops cultural humility and competency through learning about the diversity of social location, cultural safety and human rights.
- 2.1.4. Develops cultural humility and competency through learning about Indigenous peoples' experience of colonization in Canada, and the findings and recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

2.2. PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORIES

- 2.2.1. Demonstrates an understanding of a broad spectrum of psychological and personality theories and is proficient in at least one psychotherapeutic modality.
- 2.2.2. Articulates theoretical and philosophical frameworks out of which one practices, recognizing the benefits, limitations and contraindications of differing frameworks.
- 2.2.3. Understands and engages group dynamics and organizational systems.
- 2.2.4. Engages in experiential learning using adult education principles and an action-reflection model.
- 2.2.5. Integrates knowledge of human and spiritual development and utilizes theories of change to facilitate wellness.
- 2.2.6. Utilizes a trauma-informed approach with individuals and groups attentive to the potential for decline or growth in human functioning.
- 2.2.7. Demonstrates familiarity with the major psychological diagnostic categories in current use.

sexual orientation, and geographic location. Each group membership confers a certain set of social roles and rules, power, and privilege (or lack of), which heavily influence our identity and how we see the world." <https://web2.uvcs.uvic.ca/courses/csafety/mod2/glossary.htm>



- 2.2.8. Demonstrates familiarity with major classes of psychoactive drugs, the drugs used in one's area of practice, and their effects on health.
- 2.2.9. Integrates knowledge of psychological theories with spiritual / religious / cultural frameworks.
- 2.3. RESEARCH
 - 2.3.1. Engages evidence-informed practice as integral to professional functioning.
 - 2.3.2. Demonstrates knowledge of research methods, including theoretical, quantitative and qualitative methodologies, Quality Assurance and Program Evaluation.
 - 2.3.3. Demonstrates ability to conduct a literature search, critically assess the value and quality of both seminal and current research, integrate findings and share through written and oral communication.
 - 2.3.4. Implements relevant research findings into practice context and engages in ongoing evaluation of new practices.
 - 2.3.5. Participates in research led by other primary investigators and, when possible, conducts research as the primary investigator in projects applicable to one's practice context.

3. PROFESSIONAL ETHICAL CONDUCT

A Certified Professional practices and advocates for excellent and equitable care congruent with the CASC/ACSS Scope of Practice and Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct. A Certified Professional demonstrates accountability to clients, the public, spiritual / religious / cultural communities, employers and relevant regulatory and professional organizations in all professional relationships.

- 3.1. Works within one's scope of practice knowing when it is appropriate to make a referral or initiate a consultation.
- 3.2. Articulates and maintains clear and appropriate therapeutic and professional boundaries.
- 3.3. Demonstrates awareness of and sensitivity to the diversity of an individual's social location and life experiences.
- 3.4. Demonstrates and promotes inclusive behaviour and advocates for diverse spiritual / religious / cultural needs and practices.
- 3.5. Articulates and demonstrates the importance and limits of confidentiality.
- 3.6. Keeps records in a manner appropriate to the professional setting.
- 3.7. Engages ethical issues encountered in one's practice, teaching and research.



- 3.8. Demonstrates awareness of occupational hazards and takes preventative measures.
- 3.9. Demonstrates clear and concise professional communication, including written, oral, electronic, third party reporting and consultation.

4. PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

A Certified Professional utilizes a comprehensive skill set for the purpose of engaging in therapeutic relationships with individuals, groups, communities and organizations. Certified Professionals are attentive to the spiritual and the sacred in each encounter.

4.1. THERAPEUTIC RELATIONSHIP

Develops a spiritually-integrated therapeutic relationship of trust to engage clients and communities in their healing processes

- 4.1.1. Practices safe and effective use of self.
- 4.1.2. Demonstrates a non-anxious presence and neutral stance in the provision of care.
- 4.1.3. Engages clients and clients' narratives on their own terms.
- 4.1.4. Works collaboratively with clients, care team and relevant stakeholders.
- 4.1.5. Listens actively and responds effectively using both verbal and non-verbal communication.
- 4.1.6. Communicates role and function, confidentiality and consent in a manner appropriate to the recipient.
- 4.1.7. Explains theoretical and spiritual concepts in everyday language.
- 4.1.8. Recognizes conflict, whether overt or covert, verbal or non-verbal and uses a conflict resolution approach appropriate to the situation.

4.2. ASSESSMENT

Collaboratively gathers and evaluates information as it pertains to clients' presenting issues and is relevant to their life-giving and life-limiting beliefs, thoughts, emotions, behaviours and social needs.

- 4.2.1. Demonstrates an awareness of how social location operates consciously and unconsciously at personal, interpersonal and systemic levels.
- 4.2.2. Implicitly assesses by means of listening to the life narrative of the client.
- 4.2.3. Explicitly assesses by utilizing spiritual assessment tools that are appropriate to context.



- 4.2.4. Explores with clients what is life-limiting and life-giving in their beliefs and values, ways of coping and resources.
- 4.2.5. Assesses spiritual distress, spiritual pain, suffering, grief and loss.
- 4.2.6. Explores sources of strength, hope, resilience and opportunities for transformation.
- 4.2.7. Identifies intra- and interpersonal dynamics related to family history.
- 4.2.8. Identifies intra- and interpersonal dynamics related to present and past trauma.
- 4.2.9. Conducts risk assessments appropriate to one's therapeutic context.
- 4.2.10. Identifies how clients' spiritual, religious, philosophical and cultural beliefs and values may inform treatment choices.
- 4.2.11. Assesses ritual/ceremonial needs and spiritual/religious care appropriate to one's context.
- 4.2.12. Assesses limits of one's professional ability and identifies circumstances when consultation or referral may be beneficial or required.

4.3. INTERVENTION

Provides a variety of interventions according to a co-created therapeutic plan that supports clients' overall goals and includes their community of care.

- 4.3.1. Collaboratively develops appropriate interventions consistent with clients' social location.
- 4.3.2. Facilitates expression of clients' stories and emotions to address spiritual distress and enhance spiritual resources.
- 4.3.3. Utilizes reflection from religious/theological/spiritual/cultural perspectives for the purpose of meaning-making with clients.
- 4.3.4. Provides or facilitates prayers, rituals, rites, ceremonies and services appropriate to context.
- 4.3.5. Offers support and guidance for spiritual growth.
- 4.3.6. Supports relational connections and experiences of community.
- 4.3.7. Evaluates with clients the effectiveness of the therapeutic relationship and interventions.
- 4.3.8. Utilizes clinical supervision and consultation to monitor effectiveness of interventions.



- 4.3.9. Refers to additional professional or community-based services when appropriate, including the inter-professional care team, elders and religious leaders.

4.4. DOCUMENTATION

Documents referrals, informed consent, clinical assessments and interventions relevant to one's clinical context.

- 4.4.1. Notes reason for initial referral or presenting issue, assessment and follow-up plans.
- 4.4.2. Differentiates facts from opinion in the clinical record.
- 4.4.3. Demonstrates the necessity and limits of confidentiality regarding client information.
- 4.4.4. Uses an informed consent process relevant to one's practice context.
- 4.4.5. Employs electronic communication as relevant to practice and maintains appropriate security in its use.
- 4.4.6. Keeps records and statistics in a timely manner for an appropriately designated length of time.
- 4.4.7. Maintains professional documentation on clients in a secure location.

4.5. LEADERSHIP

Envisions creative possibilities that inspire oneself and others to supportive and advocacy action with individuals and communities and within organizations.

- 4.5.1. Demonstrates a non-anxious presence and neutral stance in the provision of mediation and consultation.
- 4.5.2. Acts as a change agent in one's clinical setting to promote a culture of care, respect, justice and reconciliation.
- 4.5.3. Promotes, facilitates and supports ethical decision-making in one's workplace.
- 4.5.4. Thinks and acts creatively in times of crisis or conflict while attending to the emotions and differing viewpoints in the situation.
- 4.5.5. Demonstrates planning and management skills in the development of spiritual and therapeutic practice in private or organizational settings.
- 4.5.6. Establishes and maintains inter-professional relationships.
- 4.5.7. Educates and advocates for the value of spirituality to health and wellbeing at the individual, communal and systemic levels. This includes advocating for the uniqueness of CASC/ACSS Certified Professionals.



- 4.5.8. Builds capacity for spiritual health and wellbeing among other professionals and community partners.
- 4.5.9. Participates and contributes in one's spiritual / religious / cultural communities and professional organizations.

C. ACCOUNTABILITY AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ACCOUNTABILITY

Certified Professionals are accountable to all of the following:

The persons with whom they work (students, clients, patients, and members of faith communities);

Appropriate workplace standards and authority;

Workplace colleagues;

Their own faith community; and

CASC/ACSS.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Certified Professionals are responsible for ongoing development and integration achievable in two or more of the following individual and relational ways:

Active membership in an ongoing professional and personal peer support group;

Ongoing supervision and consultation;

Personal therapy and/or spiritual growth; and

Recreation and self-care.

Certified Professionals demonstrate their ongoing commitment to personal and professional development by integrating their philosophy of spiritual care, psychotherapy, psychological theory, ethical understanding, and religious and spiritual learning into their professional practice. This commitment will be demonstrated by the completion each year of 50 hours of professional development that is comprised of:

At least 20 hours focused on spiritual growth, e.g., retreats, spiritual direction, personal therapy, personal reflective study and spiritual discipline;

At least 20 hours focused on continuing education and supervision, e.g., workshops, conferences, courses, case studies, seminars, peer support and/or supervision;

10 hours focused on research and/or utilization of research findings in practice.



Continuing education is an integral part of the Certified Professional's responsibility in maintaining and fulfilling their practice of spiritual care or psycho-spiritual therapy. Therefore:

Certified Professionals will develop a strategic program of continuing education that addresses the needs of their own professional growth and development and the needs of those with whom they work; and

Certified Professionals will pursue opportunities for continuing education on an annual basis. The specific number of days will be negotiated with the workplace, but five to ten days per year are recommended.

SECTION III: STANDARDS OF PRACTICE – CERTIFIED SUPERVISOR-EDUCATORS

A. DEFINITION STATEMENT

The Certified Supervisor-Educator is a CASC/ACSS Certified Professional who has demonstrated supervisory competence in the field of Supervised Pastoral Education (SPE) and has demonstrated the ability to conduct autonomous SPE programs in keeping with the standards outlined in the CASC/ACSS Policy and Procedure Manual.

As a CASC/ACSS Certified Professional, the Certified Supervisor-Educator is also accountable to the Standards of Practice outlined in Chapter 3, Section II above.

CASC/ACSS recognizes Certified Supervisor-Educators in the areas of Spiritual Care (CPE) and Pastoral Counselling (PCE).

There are two categories of Supervisor-Educators within CASC/ACSS:

Provisional: A Provisional Supervisor-Educator is a Member who is certified in their field of specialization as either a Psycho-Spiritual Therapist or a Spiritual Care Practitioner and has achieved formal admission to learn the theories and competencies required to supervise SPE and who supervises students under the supervision of a CASC/ACSS Certified Supervisor-Educator.

Certified: A Certified Supervisor-Educator is a Member who has demonstrated supervisory competence in the field of SPE and is able to conduct SPE programs in keeping with the standards of CASC/ACSS. CASC/ACSS recognizes supervisors in the areas of Spiritual Care (CPE) and Psycho-Spiritual Therapy (PCE).



B. COMPETENCIES OF CERTIFIED SUPERVISOR-EDUCATORS

1. CONCEPTUAL KNOWLEDGE OF CLINICAL SUPERVISION

Demonstrates knowledge in theories and methodologies related to SPE supervision drawn from adult education, spiritual/religious understanding, the behavioural sciences, and professional and organizational ethics.

Articulates an understanding of methodologies for clinical supervision grounded in the professional literature.

Develops and articulates a philosophy of SPE based on adult learning models relevant to the supervision of individuals and groups that is congruent with the distinct professions of spiritual care and psycho-spiritual therapy.

Demonstrates a thorough understanding of human diversity and the ability to supervise out of this conceptual knowledge, integrating principals of intercultural competency, human rights and anti-racism. Supervises from an awareness of how various dynamics related to ethnicity, culture, religion, gender, and class operate consciously as well as unconsciously at interpersonal, intrapersonal and systemic levels.

Articulates an understanding of organizational culture and systems within which SPE program development can occur and is conversant about how to develop various elements of an SPE program.

Articulates an understanding of various types of trauma (e.g. complex or repetitive; intergenerational) and implements a trauma-informed approach to SPE program design, group facilitation and supervision. The reason for this is to ensure the safety of students and to guide their ability to provide trauma-informed spiritual care or spiritually integrated counselling / psychotherapy.

APTITUDE IN SPE PROGRAM DESIGN, IMPLEMENTATION AND ADMINISTRATION

Demonstrates an ability to design, implement and manage a program of SPE based on educational principles appropriate to experiential learning and that integrates the CASC/ACSS core competencies.

Understands and articulates CASC/ACSS guidelines, regulations and procedures as found in the CASC/ACSS Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct, the Standards for Certification, the Standards for Accreditation in securing program approval, the Standards of Practice for Certified Members and the Standards of Practice for Supervisor-Educators, and their relevance to students' clinical practice and progress toward certification.

Draws on and effectively uses a wide variety of clinical education methods program resources for SPE students' learning (e.g. client aggregates, spiritual care/psycho-spiritual therapy colleagues, interdisciplinary staff and consultants, community agencies, administrative structures, etc.).

Assists diverse students in taking responsibility to formulate a plan of learning and to evaluate the results of the learning experience.



Integrates the Competencies of CASC/ACSS Certified Professionals into the education material and their supervisory practice.

Understands and articulates how social locations, systems and structures can affect students' spiritual care/psycho-spiritual therapy practice, learning and the educational context. Attends to diverse needs of students including attention to learning styles and accommodation of learning differences. Demonstrates an understanding of how colonization in Canada and demography must factor in when designing SPE programs contextual to the needs of the region in which they teach and seeks engagement with Indigenous healers and/or Elders in SPE content related to Indigenous peoples.

Articulates, understands, and complies with legislated regulations and expectations of career colleges or educational institutions within their province or jurisdiction such as employment standards acts, consumer protection acts, and human rights codes.

ENGAGEMENT IN THE SUPERVISION OF INDIVIDUAL SPE STUDENTS

Demonstrates an ability to assess and relationally engage individual SPE students such that the student's clinical learning, personal awareness, reflection on spiritual/religious theories, and professional competency is furthered and optimal integration can occur.

Understands the individual student through awareness of the student's cultural, religious and spiritual history and experiences of trauma. Assists the student to understand how these factors may operate across a range of contexts, including interpersonal, intrapersonal and systemic levels, both consciously and unconsciously. Is sensitive to and respectful of the student's psychological and psychosocial patterns and individual learning style.

Assesses the individual student's spiritual care/psycho-spiritual therapy and personal resources, and engages them moving toward a viable spiritual care practitioner/psycho-spiritual therapist professional identity.

Responds flexibly to individual students, using a wide range of supervisory methods and strategies with particular attention to enabling students to develop an optimal and measurable plan for learning which is reviewed regularly.

Uses the strengths and limits of one's own personality and personal history as teaching tools and as resources in shaping one's supervisory style.

Assesses students' performance and growth according to the requirements of CASC/ACSS Standards including a formal written mid-unit assessment.

FACILITATION OF SPE GROUP SEMINARS AND RELATED ACTIVITIES

Demonstrates knowledge of group process, and skills for group supervision. This will include the ability to facilitate the shared review of students' clinical documents, personal/professional development, skills integration, and ability to use the peer group for learning.



Facilitates the development of group interpersonal relationships and interactions to optimize learning in the safe and effective use of self.

Assists the group and enables individual group members to use their response to the program as a learning experience for their ongoing development as reflective practitioners and therapists.

Draws upon a wide range of clinical education methods such as IPR, verbatims, audio/videotaped interviews, team interaction, administrative meetings, clinical seminars, didactic seminars, case conferences, the practice of counselling, and supervisor-student sessions.

Attends to and navigates group dynamics (e.g. overt and covert conflict, unengaged member, dominating member, critical conversation).

Draws on and effectively uses a wide variety of clinical education methods program resources for SPE students' learning (e.g. client aggregates, spiritual care/psycho-spiritual therapy colleagues, interdisciplinary staff and consultants, community agencies, administrative structures, etc.).

C. ACCOUNTABILITY, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND RESPONSIBILITIES

ACCOUNTABILITY

Certified Supervisor-Educators are accountable to all of the following:

The persons with whom they work (students, clients, patients, and members of faith communities);

Appropriate workplace standards and authority;

Certified Supervisor-Educators will be familiar with the policies and procedures of the institution at which they work along with those of any other professional bodies that may influence the delivery of spiritual care or psycho-spiritual therapy in that setting;

Certified Supervisor-Educators will have a working knowledge and an ability to function within the system of the workplace;

Certified Supervisor-Educators will develop and exercise the leadership and administrative skills needed to carry out their responsibilities in the workplace. These may include the development of policies and procedures, supervision of staff and volunteers, and networking within the larger community; and

Certified Supervisor-Educators will maintain appropriate records in accordance with the CASC/ACSS Policy and Procedure Manual: Chapter 3, Section V.

Workplace colleagues;

Their own faith community; and

CASC/ACSS.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Certified Supervisor-Educators are responsible for ongoing development and integration achievable in two or more of the following individual and relational ways:

Active membership in an ongoing professional and personal peer support group;

Ongoing supervision and consultation;

Personal therapy and/or spiritual growth; and

Recreation and self-care.

Certified Supervisor-Educators demonstrate their ongoing commitment to personal and professional development by integrating their philosophy of spiritual care, psychotherapy, psychological theory, ethical understanding, and religious and spiritual learning into their professional practice. This commitment will be demonstrated by the completion each year of 50 hours of professional development that is comprised of:

At least 20 hours focused on spiritual growth, e.g., retreats, spiritual direction, personal therapy, personal reflective study and spiritual discipline;

At least 20 hours focused on continuing education and supervision, e.g., workshops, conferences, courses, case studies, seminars, peer support and/or supervision;

10 hours focused on research and/or utilization of research findings in practice.

Continuing education is an integral part of the Certified Supervisor-Educator's responsibility of maintaining and fulfilling their professional practice. Therefore:

Certified Supervisor-Educators will develop a strategic program of continuing education that addresses the needs of their own professional growth and development and the needs of those with whom they work; and

Certified Supervisor-Educators will pursue opportunities for continuing education on an annual basis. The specific number of days will be negotiated with the workplace, but five to ten days per year are recommended.

RESPONSIBILITIES

GOAL SETTING AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

Certified Supervisor-Educators will develop clear goals based on an understanding of the practice of supervision; and

Certified Supervisor-Educators will develop concrete plans for maintaining the quality of the education offered.

CASC/ACSS ADMINISTRATION

Certified Supervisor-Educators will promptly attend to all matters related to administering an SPE program, including, but not limited to:



Seeking program approval and site accreditation as required;

The submission of the following to the National Office:

Student Membership Forms, together with the Student Membership fee at the beginning of the unit; and

The Education Centre Unit Reports together with the student registration fees by the mid-point of the unit, in order to guarantee that students who successfully complete the unit receive their certificates;

The completion of student evaluations by the end of the unit; and

The completion of the Certified Supervisor-Educator's Summary and Assessment (Form 2.2) at the end of each Advanced student's first Advanced unit.

