

B.C. ASSOCIATION OF CLINICAL COUNSELLORS STANDARD FOR PROMOTING AND ADVERTISING SERVICES

This Standard is to ensure that Registered Clinical Counsellors (RCCs) who deliver clinical services shall accurately and completely represent themselves to clients. The primary intention behind the promotion or advertising of services should be to fully respect and support a prospective client's ability to make informed judgments and choices. This Standard applies regardless of the mode or forum of promotion or advertising chosen, and includes, but is not limited to, promotional statements made during presentations, in print or other media advertising, on websites, faxes or email, or on personal web pages, social networking web sites, text messages or pre-recorded telephone messages.

All standards are interpreted and applied with reference to the BCACC *Code of Ethical Conduct*. RCCs should familiarize themselves with the *Code*, and may wish to consult in particular paragraphs 1, 2, 5, 11, 23 and 25 under Respect for the Dignity of All Persons and Peoples, paragraphs 1, 3 and 12 under Responsible Caring, paragraphs 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 14, 16 and 18-21 of Integrity in Relationships and paragraphs 9 and 12 under Responsibility to Society.

An RCC should never:

1. Make public statements that are false, deceptive, misleading or fraudulent, either because of what they state, convey, or suggest or because of what they omit, concerning their clinical practice or other work activities, or those persons or organizations with which they are affiliated.
2. Solicit testimonials, expressly or by implication, from clients or other persons who, because of their particular circumstances, may be vulnerable to undue influence.
3. Use their place of employment or ongoing institutional affiliation to actively recruit or gain clients, supervisees, or consultees for their private practices.
4. Use their professional or employment positions on Boards, Councils Committees, or Agencies to solicit clients, or to seek unjustified personal gains, unfair advantage or unearned goods or services.

An RCC should:

1. Limit personal information they provide to that which is relevant to the client's informed consent to engage in therapy with the RCC. This would include information such as:
 - The RCC's name
 - Highest relevant degree conferred,

- Provincial registration/certification, including number
 - Any national certification, including number
 - Other relevant certifications and training
 - Address
 - Telephone number
 - Office hours
 - Types of issues with which the RCC has competency
 - A clear explanation of types of services offered
 - Cost of services
2. Consider carefully the use of testimonials in advertising or promoting their practices. It is preferable that testimonials used in advertising be unsolicited unless it is entirely clear that there is no possibility of undue influence or the appearance of such influence.
 3. At presentations or other public events, seek permission from event organizers and/or the person or organization requesting the RCC's appearance, prior to distributing any materials promoting the RCC's practice or other cause with which the RCC is associated.
 4. Make reasonable efforts to correct inaccurate statements made by others about themselves or the profession of counselling.
 5. Display their Certificate of Registration in a prominent place in their office or therapy room. Such certificate shall be removed from display upon resignation or termination of registration.

Acknowledgements

American Counseling Association (2005). *Code of Ethics*.

American Mental Health Counselors Association. (2010) *Code of Ethics*.

American Psychological Association (2010). *Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct*.

Standard for Promoting and Advertising Services

Approved Board of Directors

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