



# **CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION (CPE) POLICY**

# **The ATMS Continuing Professional Education Program Overview**

## **Continuing Professional Education (CPE) Policy**

### **1. Introduction**

The Continuing Professional Education (CPE) Working Party was formed in July 2002 to review and further develop ATMS CPE policy. This Working Party is now formally called the Continuing Professional Education Committee (CPEC).

The CPE Policy is designed to be flexible and is reviewed periodically in order to meet the changing professional needs of ATMS members and community expectations of complementary medicine practitioners.

It is both a compulsory requirement of health funds and ATMS to complete CPE activities each year in order to gain the required 20 CPE points and maintain health fund eligibility and status as an ATMS accredited member.

Activities and events should align to your clinical skills and professional knowledge in your accredited modalities. Activities which contravene ATMS policies, or are deemed irrelevant, are not eligible for CPE points. Please refer to the ATMS Code of Conduct and ATMS Official Policies for further information regarding ATMS Policies.

### **2. What is CPE?**

ATMS philosophy is that consumers of natural medicine services have the right to expect they will be treated in a competent, safe and effective manner that meets the best practice standards of health care within Australia.

ATMS defines Continuing Professional Education (CPE) as a well-structured program that provides further educational opportunities for practitioners of natural medicine to ensure they maintain and/or increase their knowledge, skills, expertise and competence throughout their professional life.

The ATMS CPE Policy is designed to ensure its accredited members regularly update their clinical skills and professional knowledge. The main purpose of CPE is to maintain and increase skills and knowledge actually required in clinical practice.

A CPE program is generally regarded as an integral part of professional occupation. Being a professional generally implies a commitment to updating and furthering one's education.

CPE consists of any educational activities which assist to maintain, develop or increase knowledge and technical skills, which potentially enhance clinical outcomes and the capacity to resolve clinical matters.

### **3. Principles Underpinning the ATMS CPE Policy**

The ATMS CPE Policy is founded on the following principles:

- Easily accessible to members, in a variety of geographic locations
- Members are provided with a choice of methods to accrue their mandatory CPE points
- Applicable to practices that are relevant to clinical practice including activities associated in managing a small business e.g. bookkeeping, advertising, marketing etc.
- Collaborative process between professional natural medicine associations, teaching institutions, suppliers of therapeutic goods and devices and government agencies to offer members a variety of options to complete their CPE activities.

#### **4. Number of CPE Points Required**

Accredited Members must accumulate 20 CPE points per annum, commencing and ending in the financial year (1 July to 30 June).

One hour of activity equates to one CPE point for activities which are conducted by ATMS, ATMS Recognised Colleges or by Organisations which have obtained ATMS CPE approval for specific activities.

The activities which accrue points at the higher rate are listed on the ATMS website. Only approved activities may advertise that they have approval for ATMS CPE points and use the ATMS CPE logo.

Other activities not listed on the ATMS website may still qualify for ATMS CPE points, but at a rate of accrual of 1 CPE point per 2 actual tuition hours.

The onus is on the accredited member to demonstrate that an activity undertaken is relevant to their clinical practice. Activities considered to be irrelevant will not be accepted.

If a member exceeds a minimum of 20 CPE points in each financial year, a maximum of 10 CPE points can be carried over into the following year.

The ATMS CPE policy document as well as the CPE Record Sheet can be obtained from the ATMS office or downloaded from the ATMS website at [www.atms.com.au](http://www.atms.com.au).

#### **5. CPE and Non-Practicing Members**

All ATMS Accredited Members must undertake CPE activities. This includes Accredited Members who might not be in current practice.

#### **6. CPE Record Keeping**

The onus of record keeping is the responsibility of each individual Accredited Member. The ATMS CPE Record form is available, on the ATMS website. The requirement of satisfactory evidence is an essential factor in the CPE process, and the evidence produced must be reasonably self-evident that the activity was undertaken. Proof of a dubious nature will not be accepted.

The CPE Record and supporting documentation must to be kept in a safe place for a minimum of 3 years, and upon reasonable request from an appropriate body, this CPE evidence must be produced.

#### **7. CPE Audit**

The ATMS Office undertakes a random audit of at least 5% of Accredited Members annually, generally in March and requires audited members to provide evidence of their CPE for that financial year. This is to ensure members are complying with the requirements of accredited membership, but also those that are eligible for health funds are complying with this health fund requirement.

For members who have not completed all 20 CPE points at the time of the audit are required to outline that activities that they will undertake over the following months to accrue the necessary points. Before a member can successfully pass the CPE Audit, the member must provide evidence of attendance or completion of all activities used to gain CPE points. The member must finalise their CPE audit and have successfully passed the audit by mid-July.

#### **8. Non-Compliance with CPE Requirements**

As compliance with the ATMS CPE Policy is a condition of Accredited Membership, as well as health fund eligibility, members who fail to comply with the ATMS CPE Policy, whether audited or not, will have their Accredited membership downgraded to Associate level membership. No refunds or adjustments to fees paid will be made. No exemptions or extensions with regards to completing CPE will be granted.

The member will then be required to demonstrate completion of 20 CPE points in order to have their Accredited Membership reinstated. The Accredited Member must still maintain compliance with ongoing CPE and membership requirements after reinstatement to retain their accredited membership.

## 9. Activities that Qualify for CPE Points

ATMS defines Continuing Professional Education (CPE) as a well-structured program of further education for accredited members of natural medicine to ensure they maintain and enhance their knowledge, skills, expertise and competence throughout their professional career. The ATMS CPE Policy is designed to ensure its practitioners regularly update their clinical skills and professional knowledge.

CPE consists of any educational activities which assists to maintain, develop or enhance knowledge, problem-solving, technical skills, clinical outcomes, effective client management or professional performance standards to provide the best in health care.

Activities which contravene ATMS policies, or are deemed irrelevant, are not eligible for CPE points. Please refer to the ATMS Code of Conduct and ATMS Official Policies for further information regarding ATMS Policies.

| ACTIVITY   | CPE POINTS   | EVIDENCE REQUIRED  |
|--|--|--|
| ATMS Approved seminars / workshops / conferences   | 1 point per hour   | Signed ATMS CPE Record Form or Certificate of Attendance   |
| ATMS Approved Webinars and Teleseminars  | 1 point per hour<br>Extra point for short review                       | Certificate of Attendance stating number of hours<br>Copy of review for extra point  |
| Non-approved seminars / workshops / conferences  | 1 point per 2 hours  | Certificate of Attendance stating number of hours  |
| Other Webinars and Teleseminars  | 1 point per 2 hours<br>Extra point for short review                    | Certificate of Attendance stating number of hours<br>Copy of review for extra point  |
| Staff Meeting or Participation in a local group of practitioners to enhance clinical competence  | 1 point per 2 hours<br>Maximum of 8 points for this activity           | Written evidence of participation by group leader including Agenda and Outline of sessions.  |
| Mentors / Mentees  | 1 point per 2 hours<br>Maximum of 8 points for this activity           | Mentees: Letter from Mentor stating hours and topics covered during mentoring sessions<br>Mentors: Only eligible for Mentors who compile their own Mentoring Program. A copy of the Mentoring Program or a letter from the Clinic Manager confirming the Mentor compiled the activity. |
| Completion of questions in designated articles in the <i>Journal of the Australian Traditional-Medicine Society</i>  | 1 point per article of each issue<br>Max 3 points per issue            | Evidence of completion of the questions  |
| EBSCO CE Activities  | 1 point per activity   | Evidence of completion of the activity   |
| Paid subscription to a peer reviewed journal related to clinical practice or business management of the clinic   | 2 points per subscription  | Proof of subscription  |
| Free subscription to an electronic journal via the Internet related to clinical practice or business management of the clinic  | 1 point per subscription   | Proof of subscription eg copy of table of contents   |
| Author or joint author of a published book relating to natural medicine clinical practice  | 20 points  | Copy of the book   |
| Publication of an article in a clinically relevant peer reviewed journal   | 5 points for 1 -2 pages<br>10 points for 3 pages and more              | Copy of article  |
| ATMS website Bloggers who write an article of a minimum of 500 words ( <i>Blog articles need approval by the marketing committee</i> )   | 5 points<br>Limited to 3 approved blogs per financial year.            | Evidence of the blog and the approval from the ATMS Marketing Committee.   |
| Ongoing study / research in natural medicine, clinical practice or business management at Certificate IV, Diploma, Advanced Diploma, Bachelor, Graduate Diploma, Masters or PhD level. | 20 points per year while undertaking study                             | Evidence of enrolment and undertaking study in the relevant period   |
| Research Consultants   | 1 point per 2 hours<br>Maximum of 8 points for this activity           | Evidence of reports, publications or where this is not possible a letter from their supervisor advising of the research including topics and hours of research   |
| Clinic Supervisors   | 1 point per hour<br>Maximum of 8 points for this activity              | Letter from employer, college or other educational institution   |
| Lecturers and Presenters of short courses, seminars, workshop, webinars, teleseminars and conferences  | 1 point per presentation hour<br>Maximum of 8 points for this activity | Only eligible for lecturers and Presenters who compile their own course, seminar etc. Proof of presentation, including notes of presentation. For Lecturers of shorts courses and workshops a letter from the educational institution stating that the lecturer compiled the activity. |
| Professional development through purchase of Apps, Technical Books, DVDs, CD-ROMs etc, or borrowed from a library  | 2 points per item<br>Maximum of 10 points for this activity            | Proof of purchase or loan of material from library as well as evidence of content  |
| Volunteer work in natural medicine for a community based agency/project  | 1 point per 2 hours<br>Maximum of 8 points for this activity           | Written evidence of participation from organisation  |

**NOTE:** If a member exceeds 20 CPE points in a year, a maximum of 10 CPE points can be carried over into the next year.