

**Starting in CE Cycle 4 (July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2018), CCO Enacts
Mandatory Five Hours of Continuing Education Related to the
Controlled Acts - What Does This Mean to You?**

February 6, 2016

“Perfect practice makes perfect”

Vince Lombardi,

Legendary Head Coach of the Green Bay Packers

In order to be registered as a chiropractor by the College of Chiropractors of Ontario (CCO), one must successfully graduate from an accredited chiropractic college or university, successfully complete national board examinations and a provincial legislation and ethics examination, and pay the annual registration fee. Depending on the class of registration a member holds, on a go-forward basis, one must also participate in a number of mandatory initiatives developed by the Quality Assurance Committee and approved by Council. For members holding a “General” class of registration, these initiatives include attending the Record Keeping Workshop, undergoing a peer and practice assessment when selected to do so, completing the self-assessment questionnaire, and fulfilling the continuing education (CE) requirements as set out by CCO.

Current CE requirements

Currently, CE requirements are divided into 20 hours of structured activities and 20 hours of unstructured activities that must be met during every two-year cycle. Initially, CCO provided broad definitions of what constituted either structured or unstructured activities, with the intention of further developing mandatory requirements as data was gathered from stakeholders - principally Peer Assessors as well as feedback from the membership. Now armed with sufficient information from a variety of sources, CCO is rolling out the next phase of structured CE requirements.

New CE Requirements

There are two new requirements:

- **Five, of the 20 structured hours shall be related to the controlled acts authorized to chiropractors under the *Chiropractic Act, 1991* or *Healing Arts Radiation Protection Act, 1990***
- **Maintaining certification in Emergency First Aid/CPR**

The purpose of this communiqué is to provide a thorough explanation of the reasons behind the requirement for the five hours of CE related to the controlled acts and to provide members with information that will enable them to comply with these new requirements.

Please see the first aid/CPR Q&A for information about this requirement.

Why are these five hours of CE important?

First and foremost, it is in the **public interest** for a member to continue to maintain his/her current clinical skills and to learn about new findings in health care. Simply put, it makes a chiropractor better at what he/she already does well: diagnose and treat patients for a variety of neuromusculoskeletal (NMSK) disorders and conditions of the spinal and peripheral joints, within chiropractors' legislated scope of practice. By requiring members to continually hone their clinical acumen, it instills confidence in the public and enhances the image of the entire profession.

Focusing on the controlled acts for chiropractors, as defined in the *RHPA*

While it is possible that spinal adjustments or manipulations play a central role in the chiropractic profession. The Quality Assurance (QA) Committee was mindful that many members who hold a General class of registration may manage patient care with non-adjustive/manipulative approaches (soft tissue therapy, mobilizations) or may not be engaged in active patient care at all (that is, they may principally be involved in teaching or research).

With those considerations in mind, the QA Committee looked to the *RHPA* and the controlled acts it allows chiropractors to perform. These are:

1. Communicating a diagnosis identifying, as the cause of a person's symptoms,
 - i. A disorder arising from the structures or functions of the spine and their effects on the nervous system, or
 - ii. A disorder arising from the structures or functions of the joints of the extremities.
2. Moving the joints of the spine beyond a person's usual physiological range of motion using a fast, low amplitude thrust.
3. Putting a finger beyond the anal verge for the purpose of manipulating the tailbone.

Moreover, chiropractors are authorized to take and order radiographs by the *Healing Arts Radiation Protection Act, 1990 (HARP)*. The following *HARP* excerpts are as follows:

Section 5

- (1) No person shall operate an X-ray machine for the irradiation of a human being unless the person meets the qualifications and requirements prescribed by the regulations.
- (2) The following persons shall be deemed to meet the qualifications prescribed by the regulations:
 4. A member of the College of Chiropractors of Ontario.

Section 6

- (1) No person shall operate an X-ray machine for the irradiation of a human being unless the irradiation has been prescribed by,
 - (d) a member of the College of Chiropractors of Ontario.

Therefore, **starting in the next CE Cycle (July 1 2016-June 30, 2018)**, the mandatory five hours for each CE cycle **must align with one of the controlled acts granted to chiropractors**

under the *RHPA* or with clinical activities permitted under *HARP*. That is to say, a member must participate in a minimum of five hours of clinical skill learning that:

- (i) address diagnostic skills;
- (ii) involve adjustments/manipulations of the spine, peripheral joints;
- (iii) involve adjustments/manipulations of the coccyx; or
- (iv) review radiographic taking and/or interpretation, or any combination of all of these acts. The requirement must be fulfilled **by the end of June 30, 2018 CE cycle, and every two-year CE cycle thereafter.**

For example, a member may take a program (see definition below) that is dedicated to learning diagnostic skills (i.e., palpation, postural analysis, ortho-neurological testing) or a member may take a program that focuses on reviewing a clinical therapy within the chiropractic scope of practice (i.e., soft tissue therapy, mobilizations, spinal adjustment/manipulation). Similarly, a member could take a program that is dedicated to enhancing patient interview skills, or perhaps x-ray taking or interpretation. As long as the course captures **at least ONE** of the controlled acts listed above, then that course would satisfy this mandatory CE requirement.

What constitutes an acceptable program for the purposes of this CE requirement?

The QA Committee was sensitive to the fact that some members have chosen to practise outside of metropolitan areas in Ontario and that most programs (workshops or seminars) are typically held in large metropolitan areas. Moreover, a member may want to attend a program that is offered out-of-province or even out-of-country. Therefore, for the purpose of this CE requirement, an acceptable program may be a workshop that a member attends in person and is required to actively participate. In addition a member may also fulfill this obligation by means of **web-based seminar** (webinar) or online communication if it is a lecture being offered in real-time.

The over-arching intent is for members to maintain and enhance those clinical skills that can be used to improve patient care.

An acceptable program must be consistent with the description of structured activity under Standard of Practice S-003: Professional Portfolio.

Any program sponsored by a chiropractic organization (accredited college or university, advocacy group or society) is automatically eligible to meet this requirement. In addition, a program attended by a number of chiropractors, not sponsored by a chiropractic organization, is also eligible to meet this requirement, provided the following criteria are met:

- An agenda is provided that includes Learning Objectives of the program
- Attendance is recorded (e.g., members have to sign in at the start and sign out at the end of the program)
- The number of program hours is specified
- Members interact with other members of the profession

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- A copy of the agenda and the member's attendance sheet is maintained in the member's Professional Portfolio and may be inspected during a member's peer and practice assessment
- It is **highly recommended** but not mandatory that one of the members participating in the program be a content expert on the topic cited in the program's Learning Objectives

For example, the following program would constitute a workshop that would fulfill the CE requirement:

A group of chiropractors meets at one of the member's offices. An agenda is developed and states that the learning objective of the meeting is: "To review spinal static and motion palpation". The meeting is three hours in length. Members sign in at 7 p.m. and sign out at 10 p.m. During the program, members review spinal static and motion palpation. At the end of the meeting, each attendee is provided with a copy of the agenda and his/her sign-in sheets.

What does it mean when CCO states something is "mandatory"?

When CCO informs members something is "mandatory" it means members must comply with that initiative. Not doing so may be considered failure to comply with a standard of practice and an act of professional misconduct, which may result in a referral to the Inquiries, Complaints and Reports Committee.

Do I have to take a course on spinal manipulative therapy in order to fulfill this new CE requirement?

No. You **may** do so, but it is not necessary in order to comply with this CE initiative.

I practise using an Activator Adjusting Instrument (AAI). I want to take a seminar on that technique system. Would that seminar fulfill the requirement?

Yes. Since such a seminar would cover the diagnostic methods used by Activator practitioners (e.g., leg check, isolation, stress and pressure tests), and the use of an AAI complies with Standard of Practice S-001: Chiropractic Scope of Practice.

Will taking a course on acupuncture or the use of modalities (e.g., ultrasound, laser) fulfill this mandatory CE requirement?

No. Acupuncture is an adjunctive therapy that may be used by chiropractors provided they comply with Standard of Practice S-018: Acupuncture. Likewise, the QA Committee has determined that modalities are adjunctive therapies to chiropractic and are not eligible to fulfill this requirement.

What if I take a course on x-ray taking or reading (interpretation)?

Yes. That would fulfill your CE obligations and is captured by the controlled act of “communicating a diagnosis”. In addition, chiropractors are permitted to take, order and interpret radiographs under *HARP*.

Can I apply these five hours to ‘structured’ or ‘unstructured’ hours?

Hours obtained during an interactive program (such as a seminar or workshop) are by definition “structured” hours of CE.

If I take a 25-hour workshop in clinical skills, and apply 20 hours to the structured hours for this CE cycle, can I bank the extra five hours for the next CE cycle?

No. Hours cannot be banked or applied from a current CE cycle to a future CE cycle. However, you may fulfill the CE requirement with more than 20 hours of structured hours of learning, all 25 hours of this program could be counted toward structured hours of CE. You would then be able to fulfill that cycle’s CE requirement with an additional 15 hours of structured hours or with 15 hours of unstructured hours of learning.

The course I signed up for is 10 hours in length but the requirement is for a minimum of five hours? What does that mean to me?

The requirement is for a **minimum** of five hours of clinical training. If you take a course that is 10 hours in length, you may apply all 10 hours toward the structured hour obligation and fulfill the five hours of mandatory clinical training at the same time.

Are courses offered by accredited chiropractic colleges the only ones eligible to meet this CE requirement?

No. A program must meet the definition of “structured activity” as defined in Standard of Practice S-003 to qualify.

Would programs offered in other provinces or other countries be eligible to fulfill this CE requirement?

Yes. There is no limitation to take CE courses in Ontario.

Would lecture-based programs be eligible to fulfill this CE requirement?

Yes. For the purpose of this CE requirement, a member may attend a workshop requiring active participation, a lecture-based program offered in real-time (attendance may be in-person or online) or a member may take a web-based seminar/lecture.

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I want to enroll in a soft tissue therapy program such as trigger point therapy, Active Release therapy or some kind of instrumented soft tissue therapy (ie Graston) - would that meet the requirements?

Yes. Part of any of those programs would be identifying pathology of soft tissues (i.e., rendering a diagnosis) by using palpation or orthopedic testing.