



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).

In August 2002, the CPEC developed a CPE Discussion Paper and undertook a consultative process with all members and invited feedback on all aspects of the reviewed CPE program. The responses from 259 members were analysed, and the views of members were instrumental in the development of the ATMS CPE Policy.

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

The CPE Policy was reviewed in 2011, 2012, 2014 and further reviewed in 2016 where changes were made to the number of points that could be accrued for ATMS approved and other educational activities. Refer to the table at the end of this document.

An important point to note, 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 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. One of the chief roles of CPE is to bridge the gap between the skills and knowledge gained as a student, and the skills and knowledge actually required in clinical practice.

A CPE program is generally regarded as an integral part of professional person's occupation. Being a professional person generally implies a commitment to updating and furthering one's education. It is not enough for a person to become a professional, one must remain a professional.

CPE consists of any educational activities which assist to maintain, develop or increase knowledge and technical skills, which will enhance clinical outcomes and the capacity to solve problems. Also to assist with effective client management or professional performance standards to provide the best in health care.

3. Principles Underpinning the ATMS CPE Policy

The ATMS CPE Policy is founded on the following principles:

- Easily accessible to all members, regardless of geographic location
- Members are provided with a variety of methods to accrue their mandatory CPE points to assist their individual and ongoing learning and professional development.
- Applicable to not only the disciplines in which a member has ATMS accreditation, but also to other practices that are relevant to clinical practice which ATMS does not accredit e.g. Yoga, Reiki, etc.
- Applicable to not only clinical practice, but also to all activities associated in managing a small business e.g. bookkeeping, advertising, marketing etc.
- Seminars, workshops and conferences that qualify for CPE points should be of a high standard and encompass both broad based topics as well as discipline- specific topics.
- Relevant to the learning needs of accredited members, taking into account different, yet valid, learning styles.
- Collaborative process between professional natural medicine associations, teaching institutions, suppliers of therapeutic goods and devices and government agencies to offer members variety of options to complete their CPE activities.
- Emphasis on member consultation by actively surveying members in regard to numerous CPE approved events.
- Directed by the CPEC specifically established to review and oversee suitable CPE activities.

4. The Continuing Professional Education Committee (CPEC)

The role of the CPEC is to oversee and be responsible for reviewing, implementing and monitoring the overall CPE program, and ensure that the CPE program offers a high standard of educational opportunities for members to complete their CPE activities.

The CPEC regularly reviews suggestions from the membership.

5. 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).

The general rule is that one hour of activity equates with one CPE point for activities which are conducted by ATMS, ATMS Recognised Colleges or by Organisations which have obtained ATMS CPE approval for their activity.

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

Other activities not listed on the ATMS website, or have the ATMS CPE logo, may still qualify for ATMS CPE points, but at a lesser 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 professional life. Activities considered to be irrelevant will not be accepted.

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

The ATMS CPE policy document as well as the CPE Record Sheet can be obtained from the ATMS office (telephone 1800 456 855), or downloaded from the ATMS website at www.atms.com.au.

6. CPE and Non-Practicing Members

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

7. CPE Record Keeping

The onus of record keeping is the responsibility of each individual accredited member. The ATMS CPE Record form is available as stated above, 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.

The self-monitoring approach aligns with the expectations of a person in a professional occupation.

8. CPE Audit

The ATMS Office undertakes a random audit of at least 5% of Accredited Members each year, generally in March and requires audited members to provide evidence of their CPE for that financial year. This is to ensure all 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.

9. Non-Compliance with CPE Requirements

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

10. Activities that Qualify for CPE Points

ATMS defines Continuing Professional Education (CPE) as a well-structured program of further education for graduates of natural medicine to ensure they maintain and increase 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. One of the chief roles of CPE is to bridge the gap between the skills and knowledge gained as a student, and the skills and knowledge actually required in clinical practice.

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

An important point to note, it is both a compulsory requirement of health funds and ATMS to engage in CPE activities each year in order to gain the required 20 CPE points to remain eligible for health fund lists and ATMS Accredited membership.

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 & Certificate of Attendance
ATMS Approved Webinars and Teleseminars	1 point per hour Extra point for short review	Certificate of Attendance with number of hours Copy of review for extra point
Other seminars / workshops / conferences	1 point per 2 hours	Certificate of Attendance with number of hours
Other Webinars and Teleseminars	1 point per 2 hours Extra point for short review	Certificate of Attendance with number of hours Copy of review for extra point
Staff Meeting or Participation in a local group of practitioners to enhance clinical competence	1 point Extra point for short review	Written evidence of participation by group leader including Agenda and Minutes/Outline of sessions. Copy of review for extra point
Undertaking Mentoring	1 point per 2 hours Maximum of 8 points for this activity	Letter from Mentor stating hours and topics covered during mentoring sessions
Completion of questions in designated articles in the <i>Journal of the Australian Traditional-Medicine Society</i>	1 point per article of each issue 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 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 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 Maximum of 8 points for this activity	Evidence of reports, publications or where this is not possible a letter from their Employer advising of the research including topics and hours of research
Clinic Supervisors	1 point per hour 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 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 Maximum of 10 points for this activity Extra point for short review	Proof of purchase or loan of material from library as well as evidence of content Copy of review for extra point
Volunteer work in natural medicine for a community based agency/project	1 point per 2 hours 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.