



College of Homeopaths of Ontario

Registrant Factsheet Ongoing Practice Hours Requirement

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Registrant Factsheet: Ongoing Practice Hours Requirements

The College of Homeopaths of Ontario (CHO or the College) requires registrants to maintain ongoing practice hours. This requirement helps registrants maintain their competence on a continuing basis. Competence is demonstrated not just by knowing how to practice, but through consistently doing the right things every time. It is also about understanding what you know about practicing homeopathy in Ontario, recognizing what you don't know, and taking steps to increase or improve your knowledge, skill and judgment. Competence applies to clinical, theoretical, ethical, and regulatory compliance areas of your practice.

The requirement of 750 hours over every three year period is a continuous and ongoing requirement and can be reviewed on an annual basis and in three-year cycles. You are required to report on your practice activities in the past 12-months. Though the records audit process and Quality Assurance (QA) Program the College may also ask you to provide proof of your actual hours over any three-year period since you become registered with the College. The hour requirement is important to uphold and adhere to. The College has the power to grant some flexibility for registrants who do not or cannot achieve this level of practice. The College uses this discretion provided the registrant maintains his/her competence and professional knowledge, skill and judgment. The College reviews each registrant's practice situation on a case-by-case basis.

Competence and public protection is key to ongoing practice

Success of practice is up to each individual. Monitoring each registrant for competence, ethical and responsible practice is one of the roles of the College. For public safety and protection it is important to strive to demonstrate your ongoing practice competence. The College wishes to see registrants succeed and grow their practices where possible, but most importantly it is in the public's interest to ensure that all homeopaths are able to provide safe and competent care. Ongoing registration and quality care are intended to benefit both patients and registrants.

This factsheet will help you better understand the ongoing hour requirement. If you still have questions after reading this information, please contact the College at 647-749-9366 or by email at registration@collegeofhomeopaths.com for more help.

Hours Requirement

1. Q. What is the requirement?

The CHO Registration Regulation (O. Reg. 18/14) requires registrants to practice the profession a minimum of 750 hours during every three-year period.

Similar to when you applied for registration, the 750 hours over each three-year period may be divided between clinical and non-clinical hours. The ongoing hour requirement is roughly equal to 5 hours a week, every week for three-years.

2. Q. How does CHO requirement for ongoing hour requirements work?

Until 2019, the CHO has monitored hours reported through the Health Human Resource Database Survey (HHRDS). Now each registrant is required to provide an accurate report of clinical and non-clinical hours in conjunction with his or her registration renewal.

3. Q. How do I prove that I have met the requirement?

You are required to track and record your clinical and non-clinical practice hours. This may be done on a monthly or yearly basis, and summarized using the CHO Hour Tracking Form. Clinical hours can be proven using supporting documents such as appointment book or schedule, billing records or patient files and receipts, attendance confirmation, personal professional portfolio, or a personal continuing education/professional development (CEPD) log to verify non-clinical practice hours.

Reporting will be done on a trust basis. All practice hours must be verifiable in order to be recorded. For more information on record keeping of hours see question 8.

4. Q. What happens if I don't meet the requirement?

The 750-hour requirement over each three-year period is exemptible which means that the College has the ability to grant lenience provided the registrant maintains practice competence and professional knowledge, skill and judgment.

The College reviews each registrant's practice situation on a case-by-case basis. The College and the appropriate committees are developing mechanisms to ensure that registrants maintain their competence despite the size of their practice. **CHO will recognize the 750 practice hours in a three-year period as exemptible, relieving registrants with small practices from the stress of striving to meet practice hours outside of their personal reach.**

In accordance with the Registration Regulation, the CHO has the right to require a registrant to demonstrate their competence, as maybe necessary, through vehicles such as a quality assurance peer and practice assessment, taking a refresher program, any other undertaking acceptable to the Registrar, or moving to Inactive Class.

The CHO is currently looking at a monitoring process through the QA Program which would create more frequent self-assessments check-ins with individuals whose practices are below the currency hour requirement. It is important to note that the overall goal of QA is two-fold:

1. To monitor ongoing competency; and
2. To help registrants improve their practice and compliance.

If the self-assessment or the randomized QA peer assessment reveals significant issues of competence or compliance, the QA panel will direct the member to a program for remediation or make a referral to the Inquiry, Complaints and Reports Committee. The College believes that demonstration of competence should not be unduly onerous to the registrants.

5. Q. Do I need to notify the College in advance if I am not able to meet the hour requirement?

No. The College will review your reported activities on an annual and three-year basis and request additional information as required.

Timing

6. Q. When does my three year hour window start?

The first three-year 750 hour requirement period begins the day you were issued a certificate of registration, and each subsequent three-year period begins on the first anniversary of the commencement of the previous period. For example, if you received your certificate of registration on April 2, 2015 the three-year period ends on April 1, 2018. Your next reporting period then starts on April 2, 2018, etc.

Registrants are required to maintain 750 currency practice hours of broadly defined activities related to homeopathy on a rolling three-year basis.

Registrants who have completed fewer than 750 currency hours in the previous three calendar years may be required to complete upgrading activities or undergo a peer and practice assessment.

The College reviews the number of hours claimed during each renewal period and on a three-year rolling basis. The College will look at each registrant on an individual basis.

For the purposes of reporting your hours at renewal time you must choose a start date and end date. The **start date** should be relatively recent. For example, no earlier than January 1 of last year or within 15 months of this renewal period.

The **end day** should be 365 days (1 year) after the start date. For example, if you select a start date of February 1 last year, the end date must be January 31 of this year. The 12 month period must start no **less** than 365 days (1 year) from today's date.

Tracking and Record Keeping

7. Q. How is clinical practice hour tracking different from the information reported on the Health Human Resource Database Survey completed at renewal time?

The Health Human Resource Database Survey (HHRDS) allows you to indicate the number of weeks practised in the last 12 months, and the average number of weekly hours practised over the past 12 months.

While the College may look at what you report under the HHRDS with some degree of interest, you are also required to accurately report your clinical and non-clinical practice hours. These hours can be tracked using the Hour Tracking Form located on the CHO website. The total number of initial intake and follow-up visits for each 12 month period must be reported on your renewal form.

8. Q. How do I keep track of and record my hours?

Tools are available on the CHO website including the CHO Practice Hour Tracking Worksheet and the Hour Tracking Submission Form.

All practice hours within the past 12-month (365-day) period should be listed. Clinical practice hours may be paid or voluntary. Do not include hours for preparation, administrative and travel time, or time spent on marketing activities.

Track your hours using the following sources:

Clinical Practice Hours – appointment book or schedule, billing records or patient files.

Non-Clinical Practice Hours – receipts issued by continuing education (CE) providers, attendance confirmation, program/course outline, personal professional portfolio, personal non-clinical practice hour log, or volunteer hours.

It is the registrant's responsibility to calculate and record non-clinical practice hours.

All hours must be verifiable in order to be recorded.

Note: You must report a minimum of 15 hours of continuing education or professional development (CEPD) each year. This is a requirement of the Quality Assurance Program. Note all CEPD hours need be from paid courses. But CEPD should help you advance your practice knowledge, skill and judgment.

9. Q. How do I calculate my hours?

While the calculation of clinical practice hours are defined by the regulation itself – two (2) hours for each initial intake (this can be a new patient or new chief complaint from an existing patient), and one (1) hour for each follow-up – the College has been very liberal in what may be counted as non-clinical hours. For full details on what may be included in your hour count look to the end of this document, or see **REG CS 04 Full Class, Breakdown of 750-Hours** on the College website at: <http://www.collegeofhomeopaths.on.ca/pages/policies.html>

You may find it easier to track practice hours by month and/or year.

Practice Hours

Clinical Practice Hours

Regardless of how long each visit actually took, the College counts each intake visit as two (2) hours and each follow-up visit as one (1) hour. Note an initial visit may be a new patient or a new chief complaint from an existing patient.

The demonstration of 750 practice hours over a three-year period includes a minimum of two-thirds of your time or 500 of the 750 hours as direct patient contact. Clinical experience hours are based on patient visits.

It is not a requirement for clinical practice hours to be paid, however all unpaid hours must be verifiable in order to be included in the hour tracking form.

Non-Clinical Practice Hours

When demonstrating practice hours you may claim a maximum of one-third or 250 of the 750 hours over a three-year period as non-clinical experience. The Registration Regulation indicates specific categories of non-clinical experience that can be counted towards practice hours. They are:

- Formal professional development
- Academic research
- Employment teaching hours
- Employment related direct supervision
- Employment related administration

The College has specific criteria for each of these categories and specified hours that can be claimed for each category. Information on the criteria, hours and what constitutes acceptable proof for each category is detailed in policy **REG CS 04 Full Class, Breakdown of 750-Hours**, which can be found on the College website at:

<http://www.collegeofhomeopaths.on.ca/pages/policies.html>.

10. Q. How do I track my Non-clinical Practice and CEPD hours?

For your non-clinical practice hours you may use the forms provided on the College website or a simple activity list including date, activity, activity type, start time/end time, and eligible hours. Keep a copy of supporting information in a separate file.

For the 15 hours of CEPD that you record for the QA Program and for any hours which support your QA Program activities you should use the CEPD Hours Tracking Form.

Regardless of the tangible supporting documentation, keep track of your CEPD attendance in a dedicated log. If you do not have a receipt for attendance, you could include any of the following information: indication of the webinar time/date/content/length of session; a copy of any available PowerPoint material/handouts or a screenshot; receipt of confirmation of sign-up or attendance.

For a CEPD event to be included in your non-clinical practice hour count the content must be applicable to homeopathy practice.

11. Q. Can CEPD activities be counted as non-clinical practice hours?

You must report your hours each year at renewal time as part of your online renewal form.

12. Q. When do I need to report my hours?

You must report your hours each year at renewal time as part of your online renewal form.

13. Q. How long do I need to keep my records?

Records should be kept for 10 years.

14. Q. Why do I need to keep records?

Records help to support your hours claim. All practice hours must be verifiable in order to be recorded. Registrants are not required to provide verification of their hours at renewal time; however, they may be audited through the College and would be required to provide verification at that time. If practice hours cannot be verified at the time of audit, the College could take action.

The CHO may audit up to five percent of registrants in any year.

What if?

15. Q. What do I do if I plan to stop my practice or if I have already taken a break from my practice?

Report whatever hours you have achieved. Hours must be current, however, if you are not practicing or plan to take an extended break from practice consider transferring to the Inactive Class of Registration. You can find out more about the Inactive Class and how to transfer in the Guide to Transferring Registration Class. Note there is a fee to transfer between classes and you must renew your Inactive status each year.

Being in the inactive class allows you to put your ongoing practice requirements on hold, until you are ready to move back into the class you transferred from. The Guide to Transferring Registration Class which be found on the College website at: <http://www.collegeofhomeopaths.on.ca/docs/Guide%20to%20Transferring%20v2.pdf>

16. Q. What happens if I do not have adequate hours every three years?

See Q. 4 above.

17. Q. What is a requirement exemption?

A requirement exemption may grant lenience to a registrant, allowing him or her to not meet the full scope of the requirement. The registrant must maintain practice competence and professional knowledge, skill and judgment. As a rule of thumb, granting a registration requirement exemption such be rare and not the norm. The onus is on the registrant to satisfy the College of ongoing competence. The College reviews each registrant's practice situation on a case-by-case basis.

18. Q. What can I expect from this process?

Should you require an exemption from the hour requirement you can expect this process to be transparent, objective, impartial and fair. You can expect the College to have direct dialogue with you on your practice situation and to provide you with clear information about options and requirements. Should the Registrar or QA Committee determine additional steps to demonstrate knowledge, skill, judgment and competence the College will provide instructions with reasonable time and cost requirements (if any). The College believes that demonstration of competence should not unduly onerous to the registrants.

Continuing Education and Professional Development

19. Q. Am I required to do CEPD every year?

Yes. Each calendar year, registrants will be required to have achieved 15 hours of CEPD units. The CEPD requirement is not intended to be onerous or expensive. In the future, CHO will provide continuing education programs, specific to regulatory compliance issues, which can be counted under the 15 hour requirement. This is a requirement of the CHO QA Program.

20. Q. How can I find out if a continuing education offering is approved? Does the College have a list of approved continued education offerings?

The College does not recognize institutions, providers or programs of continuous learning, continuing education or professional development. It is the registrant's responsibility to regulate their practice and ongoing professional development. Each registrant must also maintain a log and proof of participation of their individual activities.

The key to CEPD relates to applicability to homeopathy practice. In some cases CHO may require you to take some CEPD related to improving your understanding of regulatory requirements.

The onus is on the registrant to log and demonstrate hours – both clinical and non-clinical. As a general rule of thumb, one hour of lecture/workshop/course/conference time equals one hour of non-clinical practice or continuing education. Please see policy **REG CS 04 Full Class, Breakdown of 750 Hours** for more information. The hour count does not include lunch or breaks.

21. Q. I am a course provider. How can I get my program, workshop or education session approved?

The College of Homeopaths of Ontario does not recognize individual institutions, providers or programs of continuous learning, continuing education or professional development.

22. Q. Is CHO the only College which requires ongoing practice hours?

All regulatory health professions in Ontario have both entry-to practice and ongoing requirements.

23. Q. I have already demonstrated 750 practice hours when I registered with the College. Why must I demonstrate ongoing hours?

The hours you documented in your application process provided proof that you have practice experience within the profession. Ongoing currency is especially important to the maintenance of professional competence. One cannot maintain competence without practice. Moreover, in its role as public protector the College is responsible for monitoring ongoing practice and the quality of practice via the QA program. The concept of currency is an important piece of the accountability and monitoring framework.

Still have more questions?

If you have questions or concerns about the hours required and what it means to your situation, please contact the College at 647-749-9366 or by email registration@collegeofhomeopaths.com.