



## **WORKING IN THE FIELD OF ADDICTION and MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELLING in BC**

### **OVERVIEW**

Addictions and Community Mental Health counsellors help individuals, families and communities identify and deal with addictions through treatment and prevention programs. They work with clients from diverse cultures and backgrounds who have eating disorders or are addicted to alcohol, drugs, gambling, sex or tobacco. Counsellors develop client treatment plans based on research, clinical experience and client history; provide information about available services and programs; make appropriate referrals; hold information sessions and therapy groups; develop public education prevention and health promotion programs. They work with organizations, institutions and communities to develop, implement and evaluate health and wellness programs.

Addiction and community mental health counsellors are employed in residential treatment centres, detox centres, group homes, overnight shelters, hospitals, outpatient centres, schools or community-based agencies, counselling centres, social service agencies, government agencies, family therapy centres, health care and rehabilitation facilities, or maintain their own private practice.

This type of counselling work is not a regulated profession in BC, nor are any specific membership certifications required.

### **EDUCATION, TRAINING AND QUALIFICATIONS**

The preferred minimum qualification is a related university degree. Some employers accept a related two-year post-secondary diploma plus related work experience or training.

The salary of an addiction counsellor is often tied to their level of training and experience, as well as the type of facility in which they work. Individuals with higher levels of education (Bachelor or Master's degree) command higher salaries.

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## EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN BC

Several public and private post-secondary institutions offer courses, certificates and diploma programs in addiction and/or community mental health. Two institutions offer Post-Degree Diploma programs (PDDs).

- **Public Colleges and Universities**

Camosun College - Certificate in Mental Health and Addictions – (10 months, full time)  
<http://camosun.ca/learn/programs/mental-health-and-addictions/>

Douglas College – Certificate in Community Mental Health – (*This CE program is not a part-time version of the for-credit Community Mental Health Worker Program*)  
<https://www.douglascollege.ca/programs-courses/continuing-education/health/certificate-programs/community-mental-health>

Justice Institute – Substance Use Certificate (Course) -  
<https://www.jibc.ca/course/neurobiology-addiction-and-substance-use-strategies>

UBC – Addictions Care (Online course) - <https://ubccpd.ca/course/addiction-care-and-treatment>

Vancouver Community College (VCC) - Addiction Counselling Skills Certificate (Advanced) - <https://www.vcc.ca/programs/addiction-counselling-skills--advanced/> (admission requires successful completion of VCC's [Counselling Skills Foundational Certificate](https://www.vcc.ca/programs/courses/human-and-family-services/counselling-skills/)) and <https://www.vcc.ca/programs/courses/human-and-family-services/counselling-skills/>

Vancouver Island University – Community Mental Health Worker Certificate -  
<https://www.viu.ca/programs/health/community-mental-health-worker>

- **Private Colleges**

Academy of Learning – Addictions Worker -  
<https://www.academyoflearning.com/programs/british-columbia/addictions-worker/>

CDI College of Business Technology and Health Care - Addictions and Community Services Worker Program - <https://www.cdicollege.ca/british-columbia/programs-and-courses/healthcare/addictions-community-services-worker/>

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Kelowna College of Professional Counselling – Addictions and Recovery Training (Course) - <https://www.counsellortraining.com/addictions-and-recovery-online-training.php>

Kompass Professional Development Community Mental Health Certificate (online) - [https://info.kompasstraining.ca/community-mental-health?mid=18235&gclid=EAlaIQobChMIgK-U-dqP7wIV4Qh9Ch1eXwwDEAAYAyAAEgKE-PD\\_BwE](https://info.kompasstraining.ca/community-mental-health?mid=18235&gclid=EAlaIQobChMIgK-U-dqP7wIV4Qh9Ch1eXwwDEAAYAyAAEgKE-PD_BwE)

Rhodes Wellness College – Addictions Counselling Diploma Program - <https://www.rhodescollege.ca/programs/diploma/addiction-counselling-courses/>

Sprott Shaw - Addictions Worker Program - <https://sprottshaw.com/child-family/addictions-worker-program/>

Stenberg College – Counselling Therapist - <https://www.stenbergcollege.com/program/counselling-therapist/>

Vancouver College of Counsellor Training - Addictions Worker Certificate - <http://www.vcct.ca/curriculum.htm> Or <https://www.vcct.ca/curriculum.htm#certificateaddictions>

- ***PDD programs***

Camosun College – Interprofessional Mental Health and Addictions (PDD for those with a baccalaureate) - <http://camosun.ca/learn/programs/interprofessional-mental-health-and-addictions/>

This PDD prepares graduates to engage in the assessment, planning, treatment and evaluation of older teens and adults experiencing acute, persistent, and/or co-occurring mental health and addiction challenges. The IMHA was developed in collaboration with Vancouver Island Health Authority.

- 11-month program, blended delivery (online, on site seminars, 13-week practicum)
- Starts each September
- There are approximately fifteen mandatory face-to-face seminars, combined with online learning at the college over the year. All students must attend the

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orientation. Distance students who do not live on Vancouver Island may not be expected to attend all the face-to-face seminars

- The program is available through distance delivery across Canada and internationally.

## RESOURCES

Canadian Addictions Counsellor Certification Federation - <http://www.caccf.ca/>

CCPC Certified Addiction Counsellor II (CAC II)

<https://www.ccpcglobal.com/certification/certified-addiction-counsellor-ii-cac-ii/>

Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) - <https://cmha.ca/>

Canadian Mental Health Association (BC) - <https://cmha.bc.ca/>

Canadian Mental Health and Addictions statistics (CAMH) -

<https://www.camh.ca/en/driving-change/the-crisis-is-real/mental-health-statistics>

HealthMatchBC (note: reference links are broken)-

<https://www.healthmatchbc.org/Jobs-in-BC/Health-Career-Directory/Career-Description.aspx?careerId=27>

## JOB BOARDS

Indeed (Addiction Counsellor) - <https://ca.indeed.com/Addiction-Counsellor-jobs-in-British-Columbia>

Indeed (Community Mental Health Worker) - <https://ca.indeed.com/Mental-Health-jobs-in-Vancouver,-BC>

Provincial Health Services Authority - <http://www.bcmhsus.ca/careers>

Workopolis - <https://www.workopolis.com/jobsearch/addiction-jobs/bc?job=a4cFob2asVpnKg1hhYBCi6GSqrAb8nGWldfCTgdqDqvIkWDRco1eQ>