



Health Career Directory

Addictions Counsellor

Overview

Addictions counsellors help individuals, families, and communities, identify and deal with addictions through treatment and prevention programs.

Main Roles

In general, addictions counsellors:

- Work with clients from diverse cultures and backgrounds who have eating disorders or are addicted to alcohol, drugs, gambling, sex or tobacco.
- Assess client strengths, problem areas, severity of dependence and readiness to change
- Develop client treatment plans that are based on research, clinical experience and client history.
- Provide information about addiction issues.
- Provide information about available services and programs.
- Make appropriate referrals, if necessary.
- Hold information sessions and therapy groups, as required.
- Counsel affected individuals and family members through all stages of recovery.
- Counsel affected individuals using appropriate intervention strategies and treatment approaches.
- Review, evaluate, and document client progress.
- Provide aftercare and follow-up, as appropriate.
- Develop public education, prevention, and health promotion programs.
- Work with organizations, institutions, and communities to develop, implement, and evaluate health and wellness programs.

Special Duties

Family, marriage, and other related counsellors often specialize in helping specific client groups including:

- injured workers
- those with drug and alcohol addiction
- those with marital difficulties
- those with behavioural disorders.

Who is suited to become an addictions counsellor?

Addictions counsellors are most effective when they have the following skills and characteristics:

- emotional maturity
- a balanced, healthy lifestyle
- patience
- tolerance for beliefs and values that are not their own
- belief that individuals, families and communities have the ability to make changes with the necessary support
- excellent communication skills
- excellent presentation skills
- an ability to manage time effectively.

They should enjoy working with people and helping others (clients, families, etc.) They should be good at synthesizing information to find creative solutions to problems.

Who employs Addictions Counsellors?

Addictions counsellors work for agencies that offer:

- prevention
- health promotion
- early intervention
- treatment programs.

Addictions counsellors may work 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
- their own private practice.

Depending on the agency, an addictions counsellor may work standard weekday office hours or work shifts that include evenings and weekends. Some travel may be required. This work can be both emotionally rewarding and emotionally draining.

Salary

Salary Range - \$34,461-\$47,946

Education to become an addiction counsellor

A related university degree is the preferred qualification for addictions counsellors. Depending on the place of employment, a related two-year post-secondary diploma, plus related work experience or training, may also be acceptable.

Career Advancement

Career building opportunities depend on the counsellor's qualifications and the size and nature of the organization. Counsellors usually become specialized in a particular area through their training and experience. Advancement to social service management positions is possible with additional training and experience.

Education Programs

Canadian Career College
Addictions Intervention Counselling Diploma Program
<http://www.ctsccc.com/addictions-intervention-counselling/>

Canadore College
Mental Health and Addiction Worker Diploma Program
<http://www.canadorecollege.ca/programs-courses/mental-health-and-addiction-worker>

CDI COLLEGE of Business Technology and Health Care
Addictions and Community Services Worker Program
<http://www.cdicollege.ca/programs-and-courses/addictions-and-community-services-worker-bc/>

Everest College of Business, Technology & Health Care
Addictions and Community Service Worker
<http://www.everest.ca/campus/barrie/program/addictions>

Georgian College
Addictions: Treatment & Prevention Post-graduate Diploma
<http://www.georgianc.on.ca/programs/outline/addictions-treatment-and-prevention-adtp/>

Kelowna College of Professional Counselling
Diploma of Applied Psychology and Counselling
<http://www.counsellortraining.com/>

University of Lethbridge
Addictions Counselling Degree Program
Masters in Counselling Psychology (new Master's program specializing in addictions and mental health)
<http://www.uleth.ca/healthsciences/addictions>

McMaster University, Centre for Continuing Education
Addiction Certificate and Diploma Programs
<http://www.mcmaster.ca/conted/programs/addiction-education/>

Medicine Hat College
Addictions Program
<http://www.mhc.ab.ca/ProgramsandCourses/Academic%20Programs/Programs%20of%20Study/Addictions%20Counselling.aspx>

Nechi Training, Research and Health Promotions Institute
Aboriginal Addictions Services & Certificate
Aboriginal Addictions Services & Diploma
<http://www.nechi.com/>

Nova Scotia Community College
Halifax, NS
http://www.nsc.ca/learning_programs/programs/default.aspx

St. Clair College
Chemical Dependency Program
http://www.stclaircollege.ca/programs/coned/community_studies_coned.html

Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Sciences and Technology
Addiction Counselling
<http://gosiast.com/programs-and-courses/programs/Addictions-Counselling.aspx>

Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies
Community Services Addictions Certificate
<http://www.sit.sk.ca/content/community-services-addictions-certificate>

Trios College
Addiction Worker Diploma
<http://www.trios.com/career/?section=AddictionWorkerINT>

Vancouver Community College
Addiction Counselling Skills Certificate
<http://www.vcc.ca/programscourses/program-areas/health-sciences/addiction-counselling-skills-certificate/>

Vancouver College of Counsellor Training
Addictions Worker Certificate
<http://www.vcct.ca/curriculum.htm>

Yorkville University
MA in Counselling Psychology and Post Graduate Diploma in Addictions Studies
<http://www.yorkvilleu.ca/programs/faculty-of-behavioural-sciences/post-graduate-diplomas/addiction-studies/certification-with-caccf/>

Financial assistance and bursaries

For information about Canada student loans and grants, please visit:
http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/learning/canada_student_loan/index.shtml

Association

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