

## *Improvements to the AASW Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Policy (Effective 1 July 2015)*

### **What is the AASW CPD Policy?**

The AASW CPD Policy is the document which outlines the CPD requirements for AASW members.

### **Why CPD is integral to professional social work practice**

Engaging in CPD ensures social workers maintain, improve and broaden their skills and knowledge in order to retain their capacity to practice safely, legally and effectively. CPD is an ongoing process and is a core professional responsibility of social workers in keeping informed of changes to practice contexts and professional domains; research and new knowledge development; and the needs of those who access social work services. CPD is an important aspect of self regulation and protecting and building public trust. Compliance with CPD requirements demonstrates to clients, employers, colleagues, peers and the public a practitioner's commitment to updating and extending their professional practice.

### **Overall CPD hours haven't changed**

- Total annual CPD hours for Accredited Social Workers will remain unchanged at 30 hours
- Total annual CPD hours for Accredited Mental Health Social Workers will remain unchanged at 50 hours

### **Why has the CPD policy been updated?**

The AASW identified a need to update the CPD policy in order to align with the [AASW Supervision Standards 2014](#), and current industry standards for allied health and community service professionals.

### **The improvements to the CPD policy will ensure that:**

- The social work CPD requirements are simplified and are consistent with requirements of other registered and self-regulating professions;
- Our accreditation program is strengthened and streamlined with a corresponding [trade mark](#) for each level of CPD accreditation;
- The requirements across both levels of accreditation are now consistent and demonstrate that accreditation is the 'gold standard' in professional recognition;
- The AASW's self-regulatory documents and processes are consistent and that the [Supervision Standards](#) recommendations are reflected in the CPD Policy.

### **The updates include:**

- Reduction to two CPD accreditation types only to correlate with the two accredited trade marks
- Advanced Accredited category will be discontinued in recognition that the requirements of that category were well above industry standards and that there is not a corresponding trade mark for this category.
- Category 1 is dedicated to supervision, in recognition of the importance of supervision for best practice in social work. A minimum of 10 hours of professional supervision (or similar) each financial year allows members to meet the AASW Supervision Standards and other industry standards in relation to supervision.

- Category 2 is broadened to include reflective activities, formerly included in the previous category 1, which still contributes to skills and knowledge; the minimum hours required for category 2 have been increased to reflect this. .
- Category 3 is focused on Professional Identity and the Accredited Social Worker goal will now include a minimum number of hours for this category (5 hours); in recognition of the importance of this for all social workers.

### **Annual Requirements and accompanying trade marks for the two accreditation types:**

<b>CPD Accreditation Types</b>	<b>Requirements</b>	<b>Accompanying Trade Mark</b>
<b>Accredited Social Worker</b>	10 hours of category 1: Supervision 15 hours of category 2: Skills and Knowledge 5 hours of category 3: Professional identity  <b>TOTAL = 30 hours</b>	
<b>Accredited Mental Health Social Worker</b>	10 hours of Category 1: Supervision 15 hours of Category 2: Skills and Knowledge 5 hours of category 3: Professional Identity 20 hours of any type(s) of CPD (from categories 1, 2 or 3).  <i>N.B - 20 hours must be relevant to mental health practice and 10 hours must be relevant to Focused Psychological Strategies.</i>  <b>TOTAL = 50 hours</b>	

### **Important messages about supervision**

Supervision is important to ensure high standards of professional practice, irrespective of the practice setting. The [AASW Supervision Standards 2014](#) define professional supervision in social work as "... a forum for reflection and learning..." The updated CPD policy provides flexibility around how social workers engage in supervision, reflection and learning, including the means of engagement and types of activities undertaken.

Social workers may access supervision: face to face; online; telephone or via video/web conferencing, and may also engage in individual, group or peer supervision forums. It is recognised that social workers in some non-direct practice roles might not necessarily engage in traditional forms of professional supervision however, activities such as peer and professional consultation; professional coaching and mentoring, to name a few examples, may constitute 'supervision' for the purposes of meeting the CPD requirements.

The [updated policy](#) will come into effect from **1 July 2015**; meaning you will have until the **30 June 2016** to meet the requirements.

Please direct any questions to [cpd@asw.asn.au](mailto:cpd@asw.asn.au)