

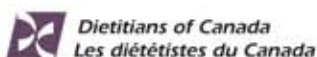
HealthForceOntario's Allied Health Professional Development Fund:

Application Guide

The Allied Health Professional Development Fund is provided by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care who would like to acknowledge the assistance of the following Regulatory Colleges and Professional Associations.



College of Dietitians of Ontario



Introduction

The Allied Health Professional Development Fund (AHPDF) is part of the province's health human resources strategy, HealthForceOntario. Investing in this innovative plan will help to ensure Ontario has the right supply and type of health care professionals. Through HealthForceOntario, the government is reaching out for the second consecutive year and recognizing the contribution provided by allied health professionals to Ontario's health system by providing funds for professional development.

In 2006/2007, the fund was an overwhelming success. This year the fund was increased to \$2.5 million and expanded to provide support for professional development opportunities to more health professionals. For 2007/2008, medical laboratory technologists, physiotherapists, medical radiation technologists, occupational therapists, speech-language pathologists, audiologists, pharmacists, dietitians and respiratory therapists will be eligible for reimbursements. The fund will be allocated based on the size of each profession's membership. Applicants must be currently registered with their regulatory college and practicing or eligible to practice in their profession.

HealthForceOntario's AHPDF is a fund that aims to provide professional development opportunities to an increased number of allied health professionals. The objectives of the AHPDF are to:

- Enable more health care **professionals** to access professional development;
- Expand current skills and leadership capacity to improve health care service quality;
- Facilitate the retention of valued allied health professionals in Ontario;
- Assist allied health professionals **to adapt** to changing expectations and healthcare needs; and;
- Maintain and build Ontario's capacity as a competitive employer.

Professional development is beneficial in all workplace settings and all sectors, particularly in times of rapid technological and medical advances. An evaluation of the AHPDF was conducted in June 2007 which indicated that ongoing education or life-long learning enhances the delivery of health services, job satisfaction, staff motivation and morale. For those individuals who received funding in 2006-2007 and responded to the survey, 90% felt the fund helped them adjust to changing expectations and health care needs.

For further information please access the AHPDF website (www.ahpdf.ca).

AHPDF administration staff is available for direct inquiries at:

The 24-hour FAQ line: 905-602-0457; (a pre-recorded information line)

Help Line (Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4.30 pm): / 905-602-6015 or 1-866-992-6015

By email: lsawaya@ahpdf.ca or rstas@ahpdf.ca

How To Apply

If you are a medical laboratory technologist, medical radiation technologist, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, speech-language pathologist, audiologist, dietitian, pharmacist or respiratory therapist who is currently registered with your regulatory college and practicing or eligible to practice in Ontario, you may apply to receive a reimbursement for a completed professional development activity. Eligible health professionals may receive up to \$1,500 for professional development (PD) opportunities¹ completed between April 1, 2007 and March 31, 2008. It is important to remember that while all reimbursement requests with appropriate documentation will be considered, funding is not guaranteed and the funding pool is limited.

To apply you will need to include:

1. A completed signed application form. Incomplete applications will not be processed and will be returned. This includes your SIN for T4A information as well as your signature declaring agreement to all terms of eligibility.
Please note: Employers are not eligible to submit applications for professional development activities that they have paid for on behalf of the candidate.
2. Proof of payment.
An official receipt issued by the provider of the professional development is required. Invoices and T2202A forms are not acceptable. The document must clearly state the professional activity name and fee paid as well as the start date of the activity.
3. Evidence of successful completion of, or attendance at the professional development activity.
This includes: a passing grade report, course certificate or transcripts from the educational facility, certificate of attendance at a conference/workshop, or a printout from a student based web service stating the student's name and course completion date. In the event that no proof of successful completion was provided, signing the declaration is certifying that the professional development activity was completed.
4. Proof of registration with your regulatory college. (Photocopy of current registration card)
5. A void cheque for direct deposit purposes.

Keep a copy of your application, receipt and proof of completion for your records.

To submit by Mail: Allied Health Professional Development Fund
5025 Orbitor Drive, Building 4 Suite 200
Mississauga, ON L4W 4Y5

By Fax: 905-602-6012

By E-mail: lsawaya@ahpdf.ca or rstas@ahpdf.ca

Online: Information about how to apply online is available at <http://www.ahpdf.ca>

¹ PD activities include courses, workshops, conferences, undergraduate and graduate education

Please note:

Successful applicants (those who receive funding) must be willing to participate, if requested, in an evaluation to facilitate ongoing development and demonstrate successful outcomes of this initiative.

Application Process

Quarterly funds will be allocated for each eligible profession based on its population size. If requests for funding in any quarter exceed allocated funds, eligible applications will be held until the end of the fiscal year (March 31, 2008); these requests will be considered if there are unallocated funds. The AHPDF fund is to be split proportionally among the nine health professions below which, will correlate with the number of registered members in each profession as follows:

Pharmacists	24%
Medical Laboratory Technologists	18%
Physiotherapists	15%
Medical Radiation Technologists	15%
Occupational Therapists	10%
Audiologists & Speech-Language Pathologists	7%
Dietitians	6%
Respiratory Therapists	5%
Grand Total	100%

Evaluation Criteria:

The following criteria will be taken into consideration when processing individual applications:

1. First applications, within the current funding year, from eligible applicants will be given priority; subsequent applications submitted by the same professional will be held for consideration if funds are available until the end of the fiscal year (March 31, 2008). Applications will be processed as they are received until the quarterly funding allocation is spent. Unprocessed applications from each quarter will be reconsidered at the end of the fiscal year and will receive priority if there is funding remaining.
2. A clear rationale to support how the PD activity is relevant to practice and will improve the quality of patient care or how it increases leadership skills.
3. The Professional Development Activity was delivered by a professionally recognized provider (e.g. post-secondary institution, professional association, employer, etc).
4. Applicants should be currently practicing or eligible to practice in their profession in Ontario.

Professional development activities must be completed between April 1, 2007 and March 31, 2008 to be eligible for reimbursement. AHPDF applications must be submitted online, faxed or postmarked by March 31, 2008. To facilitate reimbursement, applications should be submitted as close as possible to date of completion of the professional development activity. Funding is not guaranteed.

All applications will be acknowledged upon receipt; late applications will not be processed.

Please note:

Successful applicants (those who receive funding) must be willing to participate, if requested, in an evaluation to facilitate ongoing development and demonstrate successful outcomes of this initiative.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Who is eligible to apply?

Health professionals in medical laboratory technology, medical radiation technology, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech-language pathology, audiology, dietetics, respiratory therapy and pharmacy who are registered and practicing or eligible to practice in Ontario can apply for funding.

2. What is considered to be a professional development activity relevant to practice?

A professional development activity may include workshops, courses, undergraduate, or graduate education if demonstrated to be relevant to practice resulting in increased knowledge and /or leadership skills. For a professional development activity to be clinically relevant to practice, the activity should directly result in acquired knowledge and skills that enhance patient care and/or the quality of health services. In the AHPDF application, the applicant will be asked to identify the expected outcome and benefits, and how it supports improvement within his/her practice setting.

3. Can I check more than one employment setting?

No. Check off the primary setting in which you practice. Use the space provided to add any other area not specified.

4. Why do I have to provide a copy of my registration card from the regulatory college?

Your registration card is needed as proof of registration which identifies you as practicing or eligible to practice in Ontario.

5. How does the application process work?

Once you submit your application, you will be notified in writing that your application has been received. Missing information will result in an incomplete application and will be returned. All eligible applications will be considered and potentially reimbursed when assessed according to the criteria outlined on the application form. Once your application has been reviewed, an acknowledgement letter will be issued with a **decision**.

6. Can I get advanced funding for a course?

The course or other professional development activity must be completed prior to submitting an application. No advanced funding is provided.

7. What if I wasn't provided with a proof of successful completion of the professional development activity?

Some providers of professional development do not issue documentation related to proof of successful completion or attendance. In lieu of this documentation, by signing page 4 of the application form, applicants are signing a self-declaration that they have successfully completed or fully attended the professional development activity applied for. Applicants, as professionals, are entrusted with the responsibility of providing correct information. Failing to do so will result in the invalidation of their application.

8. What is the maximum funding amount per AHPDF applicant?

Only one course per application may be submitted. The fund will provide **up to** \$1,500 per applicant per year to allied health professionals for professional development. Multiple applications will be allowed if funding is available.

9. What is the fund allocation mechanism?

The AHPDF is to be split proportionally among the nine health professions, **and** will correlate with the number of registered members in each profession as follows:

Pharmacists	24%
Medical Laboratory Technologists	18%
Physiotherapists	15%
Medical Radiation Technologists	15%
Occupational Therapists	10%
Audiologists & Speech-Language Pathologists	7%
Dietitians	6%
Respiratory Therapists	5%
Grand Total	100%

Quarterly funds will be allocated for each eligible profession based on its population size. If requests for funding in any quarter exceed allocated funds, eligible applications will be held until the end of the fiscal year (March 31, 2008); these requests will be considered if there are unallocated funds.

10. Can I apply to the AHPDF more than once?

Only one course or professional development activity per application can be submitted. A whole program cannot be submitted through one application form; each course or unit has to be submitted through a separate application form provided they do not exceed the limit of \$1500. It

should be noted that priority will be given to first-time applicants, within the current funding year, to ensure equity among health professionals in this group.

11. What is not eligible for reimbursement?

The professional development activity must be relevant to practice or increase the leadership capacity of the profession. Any books or course material that is paid for in addition to the tuition/course/program fee are not eligible nor is salary replacement, administrative or activity fees, travel, meals and/or accommodation. Exam fees also are not included.

12. What are the timelines for the professional development activity and application submission?

Professional development activities must be completed between April 1, 2007 and March 31, 2008 to be eligible for reimbursement. AHPDF applications must be submitted online, faxed or postmarked by March 31, 2008. All applications will be acknowledged upon receipt; late applications will not be processed.

13. Am I eligible to receive reimbursement from multiple sources?

If you received full reimbursement from another source for the same professional development activity, or if you have an application pending from another organization or funding source, you are not eligible to apply to the AHPDF. If you only received partial reimbursement from another source, please state the partial amount you received on your application.

14. How will I be reimbursed?

Funds will be paid through direct deposit only. Upon approval of your application, the reimbursed amount will be directly deposited into your account using the banking information obtained from your void cheque. Please ensure that you include a void cheque from your bank, with your application.

15. Why do I have to provide my Social Insurance Number?

Reimbursement funding totaling over \$499 in each tax year is considered a taxable benefit. The applicant's Social Insurance Number must be provided to comply with federal and provincial income tax laws. Irrespective of the amount, T4A information will be sent to all individuals who have received funding from this program.

Paragraph 56.1.n of the Income Tax Act or www.cra-arc.gc.ca/E/pub/tp/it75r4/it75r4-e.pdf

16. What is the purpose of the Allied Health Professional Development Fund Steering Committee?

The Steering Committee was created to guide the development, implementation and the eligibility criteria of the AHPDF. The Steering Committee has representatives from the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario, Ontario Society of Occupational Therapists, College of

Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario, Ontario Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists, College of Medical Laboratory Technologists of Ontario, College of Medical Radiation Technologists of Ontario, Ontario Society of Medical Technologists, Ontario Association of Medical Radiation Technologists, College of Dietitians of Ontario, College of Respiratory Therapists of Ontario, Dietitians of Canada, Ontario Pharmacists' Association, Respiratory Therapy Society of Ontario and the Ontario Physiotherapy Association. Applications that fall outside the boundaries of the established criteria will be reviewed by the Steering Committee for a final determination to ensure fairness in the application process. Appeals on any decisions will also be considered by the Steering Committee.