



## **College of Psychotherapy Leadership Group TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **Purpose**

The College of Psychotherapy (CoP):

- Advocates for the recognition of PACFA Registered Clinical Psychotherapists (RCPs) and their profession.
- Acknowledges, supports, respects and engages with the diversity of psychotherapy modalities that are represented within the PACFA CoP.
- Aims to enable a sense of belonging for RCPs of all modalities.

### **Strategic Objectives of the College**

1. Recognition of the value of certification in providing professional identity and legitimacy.
2. Recognition of the role of core clinical competencies to further develop, strengthen and promote the professional identity of RCPs.
3. Recognition of the role of accreditation standards for psychotherapy training programs, as such accreditation:
  - a) Ensures that graduates of psychotherapy training programs are suitably trained, qualified, and safe to practise.
  - b) Gives confidence to stakeholders and consumers that PACFA-accredited programs are appropriate for entry into the psychotherapy profession, i.e. accredited programs provide the knowledge, skills and professional attributes for safe, effective, competent, ethical, and culturally responsive practice.
  - c) Provides training providers with a guiding framework for course development.
4. Recognition of the role of a scope of practice as it communicates to stakeholders and consumers how RCPs competencies, knowledge, skills, and experience allow for the provision of effective therapy for a range of presentations.
5. Advocacy for RCPs in relation to:
  - a) PACFA.
  - b) Aligned professionals.

- c) Stakeholders such as government agencies and insurance companies.
  - d) The general public as current and prospective consumers of psychotherapy.
6. Increase the membership by:
- a) Providing a clear pathway for membership applications into CoP.
  - b) Strengthening training opportunities for aspiring psychotherapy trainees.
7. Promote a broader understanding and recognition of psychotherapy as a distinct profession by:
- a) Highlighting the importance of the RCP badge which makes CoP membership visible both within and outside the professional field.
  - b) Offering relevant professional development.
  - c) Offering short training programs.
  - d) Participating and presenting at relevant conferences.
  - e) Publishing relevant content in PACJA and more broadly.
  - f) Promoting psychotherapy in PACFA activities.
  - g) Advocating for benefits of undergoing psychotherapy training including the requirement for personal therapy.
8. Provide a united professional community for RCPs, including:
- a) Face-to-face meetings.
  - b) Online meetings.
  - c) Online discussion groups.
9. Review existing and emerging psychotherapeutic practices.

## **Projects and Activities**

Activities are guided by the Strategic Objectives, including:

- Finalising relevant foundational documents to inform registration and training of RCPs.
- Maintaining a Membership Assessment Panel (MAP) to process applications for the CoP.
- Establishing and maintaining a pool of PD events and short training programs.
- Promoting the RCP badge.
- Actively collaborating with emerging therapeutic modalities and approaches, e.g. psychedelic assisted psychotherapies.
- Attending to incoming correspondence.
- Maintaining and moderating the CoP online community.
- Organising face-to-face and online meetings for CoP members.
- Establishing a budget for planned activities.

- Appointing representatives to participate in PACFA Council Meetings.
- Establishing a dialogue with the convenors of other colleges.
- Establishing a dialogue with international psychotherapy associations.

### **Leadership Group Membership**

- An eligible member of the CoP is elected on the PACFA Board of Directors by the PACFA membership as the Psychotherapy Representative. The elected CoP member has two key roles: one is being the Psychotherapy Representative on the PACFA Board, and the other being the Convenor of the CoP.
- Eligibility to sit on the LG is open to PACFA RCPs.
- The LG will ideally have a minimum of four and a maximum of eight members who are drawn from the CoP membership.
- The LG consists of a Convenor and ordinary members.
- The LG aspires to reflect the diversity of practices and professional experiences of CoP members and respond to emerging needs.
- Prospective CoP members may volunteer to join the Leadership Group at any time or may be invited by the LG. Prospective members are required to submit an up-to-date Curriculum Vitae to express interest in joining the LG.
- New Leadership Group members require Board approval. The CV of prospective members approved by the LG are submitted to the Board for its approval.

### **PACFA Board**

- The PACFA Board holds responsibility for determining the overall direction of both PACFA and the CoP, which includes providing advice and direction on its roles and responsibilities relative to PACFA's overarching strategy.

### **The Convenor**

The Convenor or their delegate will:

- Keep the PACFA Office informed of College activities, including the submission of an annual plan.
- Provide annual activity reports to the Board and Council.
- Ensure that CoP membership applications are assessed promptly and fairly in accordance with MAP processes.
- Submit the meeting minutes to the CEO or their delegate following each meeting.
- Seek advice from the CEO on any matters that impact on PACFA staff, are beyond these Terms of Reference, or which require Board consideration.
- Chair LG meetings.
- Liaise between the LG, the CEO and the PACFA Board by attending Board meetings, submitting regular reports to the Board, and liaising with the President.

## Accountability

- These Terms of Reference delegate responsibilities to the LG of the CoP once approved by the PACFA Board.
- LG members will adhere to all applicable PACFA policies, procedures and guidelines.
- The LG will seek advice from the PACFA CEO on any matters that impact on PACFA staff, which are beyond these Terms of Reference, or which require Board consideration.

## Leadership Group Meetings and Communication Plan

- The LG will meet approximately 8 times a year or more often if required for 90-minute tele-conference meetings.
- The meetings are conducted in a spirit of respect, cooperation, collaboration, and mutual support, to allow for the expression of differing points of view where they exist, and to enable LG members to safely contribute.
- A representative of PACFA's operational team will schedule the meetings and be present for taking meeting minutes and notes.
- Whenever possible, an annual face-to-face meeting will be held.
- LG Group members must participate in a majority of meetings each year.
- The quorum for meetings is a minimum 50% of the current Leadership Group.
- The person responsible for checking the Psychotherapy Email Inbox will update the LG members weekly about relevant communication and action items. Any urgent items will be circulated via email and labelled as urgent.
- All LG members are required to respond to correspondence within a calendar week.

## Review

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed bi-annually by the Leadership Group, preferably at the beginning of its term. Changes to the Terms of Reference require review by the Governance Committee and approval by the Board prior to implementation.

## Document version control

Version	Description	Originator	Reviewed	Approved	Date	Next review
0.4	Approved	CoP Convenor	Governance Committee	Board	July 2025	July 2027

For further information, please email [psychotherapy@pacfa.org.au](mailto:psychotherapy@pacfa.org.au).  
Proposals for amendments or additions to this document should be sent to the College Convenor.