

# Fact Sheet

## Qualified Professional Test Counselor Certification

Anyone who is not a licensed physician, physician's assistant, nurse (certified nurse practitioner and midwife) or medical student working under a licensed physician must be certified by the Rhode Island Department of Health (Department of Health) before providing HIV test counseling. The AIDS statute is located on the Department of Health web site (<http://www.health.ri.gov/hiv/laws.php>). For your reference, the final regulations are also available on the Rhode Island Secretary of State's website (<http://sos.ri.gov/documents/archives/regdocs/released/pdf/DOH/6087.pdf>)

### **Participants NOT trained as test counselors prior to 5-1-2010.**

Anyone seeking a QPTC certification and not trained prior to 5-1-2010 must complete the following:

- The Integrated Communicable Disease 101 (ICD 101) with a passing grade of 80% on the written exam.
- The QPTC 3 day course with a passing grade of 80% on the written exam.
- Complete the QPTC practicum with a passing grade. The practicum is graded pass/fail.
- Individuals who fail the QPTC Practicum 2 times will be required to retake the QPTC 3 day course or the 1 day Booster course, prior to retaking an additional Practicum. Note: Passing scores are required for both the written test and the practicum.
- Individuals who fail the QPTC Practicum may appeal the decision with the QPTC Advisory Counsel.
- Submit a completed application to the Rhode Island Department of Health with all required forms and documentation within six (6) months of completing the Practicum.
- The QPTC certification will be issued for two (2) years.
- The certification will expire on the last day of the month two (2) years from date of issue.

### **Previous Trained Test Counselors (trained prior to 5-1-2010).**

Current status as a trained test counselor will expire 3-31-2011. Currently practicing test counselors seeking to be certified Qualified Professional Test Counselors must complete the following:

- Successfully complete a one day "booster" course (skills assessment session) approved by Department of Health.
- Complete the QPTC practicum with a passing grade. The practicum is graded as pass/fail.
- Individuals who fail the QPTC Practicum 2 times will be required to retake the QPTC 3 day course or the 1 day Booster course, prior to taking an

additional Practicum. Note: Passing scores are required for both the written test and the practicum.

- Individuals who fail the QPTC Practicum may appeal the decision with the QPTC Advisory Counsel.
- Successfully complete six (6) contact hours within the past two (2) year period in related content areas (i.e. HIV, sexually transmitted disease, viral hepatitis, sexual behavior, prevention, harm reduction).
- Submit a completed application to the Rhode Island Department of Health with all required forms and documentation no later than 3-1-2011.
- The certification will be issued for two (2) years.
- The certification will expire on the last day of the month two (2) years from date of issue.

### **To Maintain a Qualified Professional Test Counselor Certification**

To maintain the QPTC certification, counselor must:

- Successfully complete (6) contact hours within a 2 year period in related content areas (i.e. HIV, sexually transmitted disease, viral hepatitis, sexual behavior, prevention, harm reduction).
- Successfully complete a one day “booster” course (skills assessment session) approved by Department of Health.
- Submit a completed application to the Department of Health with all required forms and documentation.
- The certification will be issued for two (2) years.
- The certification will expire on the last day of the month two (2) years from date of issue.

### **What does the QPTC Course consist of?**

#### **Qualified Professional Test Counselor Training must:**

- Be approved by Department of Health
- Be at least 21 hours with learning objectives approved by Department of Health
- Have training content that is determined and approved by Department of Health
- Have the training delivered by a instructor certified and approved Department of Health
- Have criteria for determining the students skills at delivering the Eight Step QPTC session in role playing exercises
- Adhere to the most recent guidance referencing HIV testing counselors published by CDC

The written curriculum for the QPTC training must include the following objectives:

**Goal 1: Have a basic knowledge and understanding of the importance of integrating of HIV, sexually transmitted infections and viral hepatitis into test counseling**

**Objective 1**

Participants will be able to:

- State one fact about HIV and other STI infection rates
- State one fact about viral hepatitis infections rates
- State one fact about STI, HIV & HCV co infection
- List at least three benefits of Partner Counseling and Referral Services (PCRS)
- Know how to access the AIDS/HIV law and regulations at the Department of Health website.

**Goal 2: Have a basic knowledge in prevention counseling concepts**

**Objectives 2**

Participants will be able to:

- State the three concepts that guide the work of prevention counseling: client centered, focus on personal risk assessment and the development of a personalized action plan.
- State at least three reasons why the three concepts are important.
- State four basic counseling skills: open-ended questioning, attending, offering options, and giving information simply.
- Demonstrate the four basic counseling skills: open-ended questioning, attending, offering options, and giving information simply.

**Goal 3: Demonstrate the 8 Steps of prevention counseling**

**Objectives 3:** participants will be able to:

- State verbally and in writing Steps 1-8 of prevention counseling:
  1. Introduce and orient client to session
  2. Identify client's personal risk behaviors and circumstances
  3. Identify goals for safer behaviors
  4. Incorporate rapid testing into the counseling session
  5. Provide test results and appropriate referral
- State verbally and in writing the purpose of Steps 1-8
- Demonstrate through practice sessions and role plays Steps 1-8 of prevention counseling.

## **What does the QPTC Practicum consist of?**

### **Successful Completion of the Practicum:**

During the 40 minute QPTC Practicum, individuals will be scored pass/fail based on his or her ability to do the following:

- Provide accurate HIV/STI/Viral Hepatitis information in simple terms and use correct terminology
- Demonstrate knowledge and awareness of the Counseling Concepts
- Demonstrate knowledge and awareness of the Counseling Skills
- Incorporate the Counseling Concepts and Skills during the counseling session
- Demonstrate an understanding of the Eight Steps of QPTC
- Execute the Eight Steps of QPTC during the client centered CTR session, including the ability to collect, test, and read an HIV Rapid test result.

## Qualified Professional Test Counselor Instructor Course

**Currently practicing QPTCs may apply to be an instructor of the Department of Health approved QPTC course.**

**The minimum requirements are as follows:**

- Have at least 5 year experience as an HIV test counselor
- Completion of the Qualified Professional Test Counselor certification
- Have at least 2 years experience as an instructor/trainer in any related field.
- Completion of a 14 hours instructor's course approved by Department of Health
- Submit a completed application to Department of Health with all required forms and documentation.
- Maintain QPTC certification while being an instructor.
- Instructors must have sufficient proficiency in the language used for instruction.

**What does the Instructor course consist of?**

- The instructor course is 2 days (14 hours) 8:30am-4:30pm
- The intended audience is individuals who have successfully completed the 3-day QPTC certification training and Practicum and meet the minimum requirements outlined above.
- Individuals who complete the QPTC Booster **only** are not eligible for the instructor course.

This course will provide the candidate the necessary tools to facilitate the three (3) day QPTC course, the one (1)-day Booster training, and proctor the Practicum. The instructor course will reinforce training, facilitation, and team building skills. During the two days, the participants will engage in role plays and other interactive situations. Successful completion of this course and passing a Practicum are required for individuals conducting or proctoring state approved QPTC trainings or Practicum.