



## **An introduction to the Australasian Therapeutic Communities Association**

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The Australasian Therapeutic Communities Association (ATCA) was established in 1986 as a membership association whose purpose was to bring together Therapeutic Communities across Australia & New Zealand and to support and promote “Community as Method” as a model of treatment for substance dependency.

Until 2005 ATCA functioned as self funded Association managed by a Board of Management operating on a volunteer basis. Under this regimen the Association provided support and peer reviews to its members, published a magazine and sponsored an annual conference.

In 2006 the Association received a grant from the Australian Government’s Department of Health & Ageing which provided funding to operate a secretariat to; “provide information aimed at improving the quality of Therapeutic Community services in the areas of treatment, research, education and support”. This grant facilitated the employment of an Executive Officer to take responsibility for fulfilling these goals.

The Association’s membership currently consists of 33 agencies providing 64 Therapeutic Community programs across Australia & New Zealand.

Therapeutic Communities play a unique role in the treatment of dependency and co-morbidity. The “Community as Method” model focuses on the biopsychosocial, emotional and spiritual dimensions of substance use, with the use of the community to heal individuals and support the development of behaviours, attitudes and values of healthy living.

The holistic approach offered by Therapeutic Communities leads to significant improvement in many areas of individual functioning. A shift from problematic substance use, adoption of safe usage practices, improved work performance, reduced criminal activity, improved interpersonal relationships and increased self-esteem are all legitimate areas of success targeted by most TC programs.

### **ATCA’S Statement of Purposes**

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1. Advance the Therapeutic Communities Model in Australasia
2. Advocate for recognition and funding for therapeutic communities in Australasia
3. Encourage and support research into the Therapeutic Communities Model
4. Encourage capacity building in therapeutic communities by organising and disseminating information about development and funding opportunities.
5. Networking organisations and individuals interested in therapeutic communities.

## ATCA Membership

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**FULL MEMBERSHIP** is for organisations that provide a service embracing the values of “Community as Method” and whose practice identifies with standards as defined by the Association.

**Benefits:** Full Members receive notice of meetings, attend meetings, be heard and vote at meetings of the members of the Association. They can nominate and be nominated to stand for election to the Board.

**PROVISIONAL MEMBERSHIP** is for organisations that embrace the values of “Community as Method” but do not yet meet the standards of practice as defined by the Association. These organisations must express the intention of becoming a Full Member and work towards this over a two year period following the organisation’s training in the *National Standards for Therapeutic Communities*.

**Benefits:** Provisional Members have the same rights as Full Members except they cannot nominate or be nominated to stand for election to the Board. They may, however, be seconded onto the Board for a defined period.

**GROUP MEMBERSHIP** is open to organisations that have one registered office of administration (lead TC) and multiple TCs within one or more states or territories. The organisation will have one vote only held by the central office of administration as it sees fit. The group membership will be paid by the central office, with each TC site paying an affiliate or reduced ordinary membership fee. Group Affiliate members will be working towards Provisional and Accredited Member status in terms of the TC programs which they offer, but will not have full independent status (ie they will not receive all the benefits of full members, such as voting rights).

**Benefits:** Group Members receive notice of meetings, attend meetings, be heard and hold one Group Membership vote at meetings of the members of the Association. They can nominate one position and be nominated to stand for election to the Board.

**AFFILIATION** is a category for individuals and/or organisations who support and/or are interested in the “Community as Method” model but do not work within this regime.

Affiliates can not nominate or be nominated to stand for election to the Board. They may however be seconded onto the Board for a defined period.









Affiliates receive:

- Discounts when attending ATCA Conferences and workshops
- ATCA Newsletter

### ATCA Membership structure:

Membership Category	Fee	News-letter	Information updates	Voting rights	Standards documents	Nominate persons for the Board
Affiliate Member	\$110	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Provisional Member	\$220	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
Affiliate Group Member	\$110	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Group Member	Variable	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Accredited Member	Variable	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
Full Member	Variable	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

## Membership Pathways:

1. Affiliate  Affiliate
2. Affiliate  Provisional  Accredited Member
3. Affiliate  Provisional  Full Member
4. Provisional  Full Member
5. Group Affiliate  Provisional  Accredited Member

## SCHEDULE OF FEES

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### FULL MEMBERS:

The fee for Full Membership is related to the operational budget\* of the Therapeutic Community/ies operated by the member organisation.

Less than \$250,000:	\$220	\$250,001 - \$500,000:	\$440
\$500,001 - \$750,000:	\$660	More than \$750,000:	\$880

**PROVISIONAL MEMBERS:** \$220

**AFFILIATES (INC. GROUP AFFILIATES AND INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS):** \$110

*In this instance operational budget is defined as the combined income from governments, fees raised from residents and fund raising dedicated to the Therapeutic Community.*

### GROUP MEMBERS:

Group Members pay the full fee for membership (according to the above operating budget) of the key or lead TC and then a fee of \$110 for each of the Affiliate Group Members. Therefore, a Group Member with five TCs with an operating budget above \$750,000 would pay \$880 for the lead agency plus \$110 for each of the other four TCs – a total of \$1,320.

### APPLICATION AND FEES:

Applications for membership should be made on the appropriate form and be accompanied by the *Application for Membership – Organisational Details or Individual Details*. Please provide the supporting documentation as outlined in the form.

The Application Fee for Provisional Membership is set at \$110

The Application Fee for Affiliate Membership is set at \$55

Following a successful application, which will include a site visit from the ATCA Board and Secretariat (other than for Individual Membership), the Annual Fee, as detailed above, will be payable.