

**General Ethical Principles
and
Code of Conduct
of the
N.A.P.C.P.**

Introduction

The general principles outlined below are intended to guide members, associate members, and others (being individuals or incorporated bodies) responsible for operating training courses accredited from time to time by the N.A.P.C.P. towards the highest ideals and practices of pastoral psychology as counsellors and psychotherapists. Consequently they should be considered by members, associate members and those operating courses accredited by N.A.P.C.P to be guiding factors in arriving at an ethical course of action; furthermore, the Code of Ethics is to be interpreted by the Ethics Committee in the light of these General Principles.

The Code of Ethics of the N.A.P.C.P. is presented as a set of enforceable rules of conduct and practice for members of this organisation (and where reference is made hereafter to 'members' it is to be understood that this includes associate members and others (being individuals or incorporated bodies) responsible for operating training courses accredited from time to time by the N.A.P.C.P). However, the fact that a given conduct is not specifically treated in what follows does not mean that it is either ethical or unethical. The application of the General Principles is meant to allow issues of dispute in the Code of Ethics to be brought to resolution and new articles to be appended whenever such seems desirable or necessary by the competent authorities of the N.A.P.C.P.

It is clearly to be understood that membership of the N.A.P.C.P. (and for this purpose membership shall be understood to include those individuals or directors of businesses responsible for operating training courses accredited from time to time by the N.A.P.C.P.) commits those concerned to adhere to the Code of Ethics and to the rules and regulations used to implement it. There are also legal and insurance related aspects of this Code, which may be applied by outside agencies, e.g. courts, civil boards, or other state bodies. The Code applies to members' work-related activities, i.e. activities that are part of their professional pastoral counselling and psychotherapy work. Included in this are private practice, group work, teaching, supervision of trainees and other professional interventions. The purely

private and personal conduct of members does not ordinarily fall within the remit of this Code, unless such conduct brings the profession itself and/or the N.A.P.C.P. into public disrepute. It should also be noted that compliance with or violation of the Code of Ethics may be admissible as evidence in certain legal proceedings, depending on circumstances.

In effect, then, members must also consider this Code of Ethics even when it lays down standards of conduct that are higher than that required by law. Where a conflict between Law and the Code of Ethics occurs, members will make known their commitment to the Code of Ethics and take steps to resolve the conflict in a reasonable manner.

The Procedures for instigating, investigating and resolving complaints of unethical conduct are set out in the prevailing *Rules and Procedures of the N.A.P.C. Ethics Committee*. Actions which may be taken include reprimands, censures, termination of membership, as well as referral to other bodies and sanctions on the part of those other bodies. Action to terminate membership may be taken on foot of conviction for a felony, legal precedent, expulsion from another professional organisation, or other such suspension.

Preamble

The term “Pastoral” highlights the characteristic philosophy of the N.A.P.C. P. It has to do with caring for the whole person. This is done in one-to-one or small group relationships which are aimed at enabling, healing, empowerment and growth to take place within individuals and their wider network of relationships to others, and the human and natural environment in which they live.

Pastoral Counselling is defined as a therapeutic intervention by a counsellor to help people cope with their problems and crises in a way that enables growth and the healing of brokenness. It has a remedial function when growth of persons is seriously jeopardised or blocked by the crises that may occur throughout the life cycle. Pastoral counselling may be indicated at times of severe crisis, or at times of painful transitions, usually on a short-term basis.

Pastoral Psychotherapy is defined as the utilisation of long-term reconstructive and integrative therapeutic methods when a person’s psyche is deeply and/or chronically diminished by early life experiences, or by multiple crises in adult life.

Pastoral counsellors and psychotherapists are defined as people who recognise that their work requires a wholistic or unitary approach to the person that includes the spiritual, emotional and social aspects of human life and functioning.

Members of the N.A.P.C.P. recognise that the general methods in which they work tends to derive from the Western Christian tradition of transcendental values. Members of N.A.P.C.P. are acutely aware of the psychological make-up of the contemporary individual. They must have the requisite training and experience necessary to help people who are psychologically unprepared to assume the fullness of life. In effect, they must be in a position to demonstrate to those who avail of their services an ability, not only to listen

empathically, but also to accept them unconditionally regardless of their level of development, according to the honest respect and dignity that help to break down the barriers to genuine spiritual and emotional growth. Pastoral counsellors and psychotherapists espouse transcendental and transpersonal values as a priority in their practice. They encourage, empower and nurture wholeness, facilitate reconciliation within the person, the family, community and society itself, in a way that promotes more positive personal feelings.

The task involved in pastoral counselling and psychotherapy is also associated with the ancient concept of 'doctor of the soul'. Hence, issues of soul and spirit, their wounding and blocking, are of concern to members of N.A.P.C.P. In this context, we distinguish between soul and spirit. Soul refers to the immanent dimension of the human being and points to in-depth personal issues, issues often unconscious yet organising factors in individual's lives and experience.

Spirit refers to the dimension of transcendence and has to do with issues around purpose, meaning and destiny. This places on members an ethical demand regarding professional competence, not only in terms of initial study and training, but also in terms of continuing formation, both theoretical and practical. Members respect the uniqueness of each person with whom they work, valuing individual characteristics, core experiences personal values and meanings. In this way the misuse of power will be avoided. Respect for the person lies at the core of our ethical stance.

The goal of wholeness which characterises our work, and the professional relationship which serves it, requires a conscious ethical stance ultimately rooted in the ancient rule 'do not harm'. We favour mindfulness, awareness, respect for the mystery of the human person, of pain, of the ultimate questions of life and destiny. We encourage the beginner's mind, the ability to see things afresh, to recognise when religion is used defensively, to recognise the shadow side, so as to help growth take place. Ultimately, we believe that everyone deserves the change to experience the liberation of the heart as it emerges from the pain of destruction.

General Principles

1. Competence

Members are committed to high standards in their work. This means that they recognise the boundaries imposed by their own competence, experience and present level of training. Hence, they provide only such services and use only those techniques in which they have been qualified by education, training and experience. This is a context that requires careful judgment. Members take appropriate steps to protect the welfare of those with whom they work and relevant supervision, issues of central importance.

2. Integrity

Integrity is a core value for all pastoral counsellors, psychotherapists and supervisors (trainees). This also applies to supervising and teaching people in training. This raises issues of fairness, honesty and respect for others. Hence, in describing their qualifications, experience, services and fees, they avoid all statements that are false, deceptive or misleading. It also means that they are aware of their own belief systems, values, needs and limitations and how these impinge on their work. In this context, members must be prepared to clarify these factors to relevant parties. They will also avoid improper relationships that may put the therapeutic alliance at risk.

3. Respect

Members grant appropriate respect to the basic rights, dignity and self worth of all people. This respect reaches out to people's privacy, confidentiality, autonomy, religion, spirituality, morality, responsibility and self determination. However, it is important to be mindful that, from time to time, legal and other obligations may lead to conflict and other difficulties with the exercise of these rights. Members need to be aware of individual, cultural, ethnic, role and other differences such as, those due to age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, race, disability, involvements and socio-economic status. Biases and prejudices which derive from such differences require self-awareness and a commitment from members to try honestly to eliminate them from their working relationships. It also requires that they do not knowingly participate in or condone any kind of discrimination on whatever grounds.

4. Concern

Pastoral counsellors and psychotherapists are concerned to contribute to the welfare of those with whom they work professionally. This means that members always have regard to the welfare of others and do everything they reasonably can to perform their roles in a way that minimises or avoids harm. The therapeutic task requires a safe context in which issues of power and other forms of manipulation and exploitation play no part.

5. Social Responsibility

Pastoral counsellors and psychotherapists work to mitigate and bring healing into areas of human suffering. Hence, use of their skills and education outside of this context needs to be prudently weighed. They are also encouraged to contribute of their time for little or no personal or financial advantage to the best of their ability when circumstances permit.

6. Professional Responsibility

Pastoral counsellors, psychotherapists, supervisors and teachers of trainees, will uphold high standards of professional conduct in their work. This means that they are clear about their professional roles and obligations. This requires that they accept appropriate responsibility for their professional behaviour. Members' moral standards and conduct are personal matters, except where these may compromise professional responsibilities or reduce people's trust in pastoral counselling and psychotherapy. Members are also concerned about colleagues' professional conduct and, when appropriate, consult with them in order to avoid or prevent unethical conduct. The welfare of the client is paramount.

ETHICAL STANDARDS

1. In General

1.01 Applicability

Members' activities may be reviewed under these standards only when work-related issues are concerned. Personal activities having no bearing on their roles as Pastoral Counsellors and Psychotherapists are not subject to this code.

1.02 Ethics and law

Where a conflict arises between the Code of Ethics and Law, members will make their commitment to this Code known and then take responsible steps to resolve the conflict.

1.03 Professional Relationship

Members provide therapeutic, teaching, supervisory and related services in the context of a defined professional role.

1.04 Boundaries of Competence

- (a) Members work within the boundaries of their competence. This is based on their education, training, supervised and/or other appropriate experience.
- (b) Movement into new areas that involve further skills will be undertaken only in foot of appropriate study, training, supervision and/or consultation with those who are competent.
- (c) In newly emerging areas where appropriate training does not yet exist, members will take personal responsibility to protect the welfare and dignity of those with whom they work, and will consult others in the field, as appropriate.

1.05 On-going Formation

Members are committed to maintaining reasonable levels of awareness of current issues and concerns in the area of Pastoral Counselling and Psychotherapy and its related disciplines. They will also make an ongoing effort to maintain and update their skills and competence.

1.06 Human Differences

Where human differences (age, gender, race, nationality, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, occupation, disability, social status, role, employment and the like) significantly affect members' relationships and attitudes towards those with whom they work, they will undertake the personal work, supervision, and/or further training needed to ensure their competence. While this is in process, they may make referrals. (cfl.ll below).

1.07 Respect for others

- (a) In their work-related activities, Pastoral Counsellors and Psychotherapists will respect the process through which persons become aware of spiritual, religious, moral or other values. They will respect people's rights to hold values, attitudes and opinions that differ from their own. They will be aware that their own judgement may be influenced by personal complexes and other considerations. It is crucial there, that they have worked through their own spiritual, religious and personal moral issues, sufficiently to recognise and be aware of their potential influence in the helping process. In this way, they will avoid judgmental and defensive stances in the clear awareness of their own commitments and beliefs, and the capacity these have to create forces of bias and prejudice.
- (b) In continuity with this respect, members will not, in their work-related activities, engage in any form of unfair discrimination.

1.08 Sexual Harassment

- (a) Members do not engage in sexual harassment i.e. solicitation, physical advances and verbal or non-verbal conduct that is sexual in nature that occurs in the context of their work as a pastoral counsellor or psychotherapist. Two forms of this are particularly of concern:
 - (i) that which is unwelcome, and the member is informed of this
 - (ii) that which is sufficiently severe or intense to be abusive to reasonable people. Clearly, such abuse, particularly of children or adolescents, will be treated with the utmost seriousness.
- (b) Sexual harassment, as defined in (a) may consist of one intense or severe act or of a number of persistent or pervasive acts. Such acts should be brought to the attention of the Ethics Committee and other concerned bodies as a matter of urgency for the appropriate investigation. Complainants will be afforded every respect and dignity without prejudice. (cf 4.04, 4.07 below).

1.09 Other Forms of Harassment

Members do not knowingly engage in forms of behaviour that is harassing or demeaning to persons with whom they work.

1.10 Misuse of influence and Multiple Relationships

- a) Members will take reasonable steps to avoid harming those with whom they work and to minimise and contain it as much as possible when it is unavoidable. Consequently members are alert to, and guard against misusing their influence on those with whom they work in any way that is to their own advantage and the other's harm.
- b) Members will also take due care in regard to dual or multiple relationships with clients and students, particularly if such non-therapeutic relationships have a potential to impair the pastoral counselling or psychotherapeutic relationship (cf 2.03, 2.04, 2.05, 2.09, 2.10 below). Members do not engage in business or other financial affairs or advisory roles with clients or students, nor do they suggest or promote training courses to their counselling or psychotherapy patients, or suggest to others to do the same to their clients.
- c) When, due to unforeseen factors, such multiple relationships have arisen, the member will take all such steps as are necessary to observe this Code of Ethics and bring any conflicts of interest to a prompt end.
- d) Members will not exploit persons over whom they hold supervisory or training influence.
- e) Members do not engage in sexual relationships with their students or trainees whose work they supervise.

1.11 Referrals

Members arrange for appropriate referrals when these are in the best interest of the client, have their consent, and respect the principles of confidentiality. (cf section 3 below).

1.12 Third Party Requests

Members will be circumspect about third party referrals.

1.13 Records

Such records as members keep are done in accordance with the Code of Ethics. (cf 3.08 below).

1.14 Fees

Agreement should be reached as soon as possible with regard to fees and the arrangement for collecting them. All will be done with respect to the law. In payment of counselling and psychotherapy sessions fees shall be charged at the end of each session or in arrears and not for a number of sessions in advance in payment of counselling and psychotherapy for sessions. Members shall not suggest borrowings of any sort. Members shall never in any circumstances pursue or harass clients for outstanding fees apart from sending invoices in the usual way.

1.15 Advertising

Members will advertise in a way that is prudent and discreet. They will avoid false claims and/or deceptive statements. They do not solicit testimonials from current clients or other vulnerable persons. Use of testimonials is forbidden.

2. THERAPEUTIC STANDARDS

2.01 Structures

- (a) members discuss with clients at an early stage the structure of the working relationship; the nature and the course of therapy, confidentiality, fees (cf. 1.14 above and Section 3 below). Mention must also be made of supervision when this is relevant, the supervisor's name may be put on record, and issues of contractual responsibility discussed.
- (b) When the psychotherapist is a trainee working under supervision, this must be mentioned.
- (c) Information about therapy may be given in either oral or written form.

2.02 Consent to Psychotherapy

- (a) Members seek informed consent to psychotherapy using language that is understood by the client. This generally implies that the person is in a position to give this consent, has been given all the significant information about the procedures to be followed, has expressed this consent freely and without undue influence, and this consent has been made clear to the psychotherapist who may document it in a suitable fashion. In all of this the client's interest and freedom are paramount.

- (b) Special care must be taken in the case of consent of couples and family relationships in order to clarify the nature of the therapeutic relationship. When it comes apparent that conflicting roles may be called forth in the therapist, the member will proceed with due prudence, especially if called upon to give testimony in a court action.

2.03 Sexual Intimacy with Clients

Pastoral counsellors and psychotherapists do not engage in sexual intimacies with current clients.

2.04 Psychotherapy with sexual partners

Members do not engage in therapeutic work with persons with whom they have or are engaged in sexual intimacy.

2.05 Sexual Intimacy with Former Clients

Members do not engage in sexual intimacy with consenting former clients for at least five years after the completion of therapy.

2.06 Interruptions of the Therapeutic Relationship

Members make reasonable efforts to plan for client care in the event that the therapeutic service be interrupted by factors such as psychotherapist's illness, unavoidable absence, holidays, relocation, or other forms of reasonable unavailability. In the case of the client's relocation, or financial difficulties, issues of confidentiality and referral will be handled with care and respect.

2.07 Termination of the Therapeutic Relationship

Members do not abandon clients. (cf 1.14 above). Termination is indicated when it becomes clear that the client no longer needs the service, is not benefiting from it, or is being blocked or harmed in some way by it. Whatever the reason for termination, provided it is not due to the client's own conduct and choice, the member will discuss the issue, taking into account the client's needs and views, and will suggest such other helps or services that may seem appropriate.

2.08 Particularly in psychotherapy, bringing the unaware to awareness, reconciling elements in painful conflict, and dealing with defence mechanisms among many similar factors, should only be done if it is possible without harmful effects. Given the paramount nature of the concern for the client, psychotherapists are responsible for stopping the process if it is dangerous to proceed, and for terminating the relationship when this is necessary. (cf 1.11, 2.06 and 2.07)

2.09 Members should be aware of the problematic nature of dual relationships and recognise that while it is not always possible to avoid them (e.g. when offering services in a small community, or engaging in training), where possible, counsellors shall avoid such relationships; where it is not possible they shall take active steps to safeguard the interests of those involved.

Where a member believes any part of this Code of Ethics is being breached, whether by a member or non-member, in an establishment running a training course accredited by the N.A.P.C.P. they shall have a duty to inform the N.A.P.C.P. of such suspected breaches in writing as soon as possible.

3.0 PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

3.01 The Issue of Confidentiality:

It is understood by pastoral counsellors and psychotherapists that confidentiality and trust are the twin pillars of the therapeutic relationship. As such they demand an appropriate response from the therapist. This issue is clearly discussed at the outset of the therapeutic relationship and will be clearly understood and honoured by those concerned. It is to be noted that electronic recording of interviews requires specific consent.

3.02 Maintaining Confidentiality

Members have an obligation to take reasonable precautions to respect the right to confidentiality of those with whom they work. Such other laws as may from time to time enforce this norm must be respected.

3.03 Keeping Records

(a) To minimise intrusions on privacy, care will be taken in keeping records. Only such information as is essential for the process is to be kept in written form. Reports to others will contain only what is required and then only with the express permission of the client. Those who teach will use case material only with the client's permission and then only when all reasonable care to protect personal identity has been taken.

(b) Confidentiality is appropriately maintained in storing, accessing and disposing of records. This is done in accordance with civic laws.

(c) The above applies particularly to any confidential information contained in databases. Means of deletion must be available to protect privacy and confidentiality.

(d) The civil laws concerning ownership of records will be observed.

(e) Members will make prudent arrangements to see that confidentiality is preserved in the event of death, incapacity, retirement, or other form of withdrawal from their work as pastoral counsellors and psychotherapists.

3.04 To safeguard clients in respect of possible medical or organic factors, members are advised to talk with clients about the value of making their medical doctor aware that they are undertaking a therapeutic process. When in doubt, members may suggest a medical examination and should advise clients who do not have a doctor to contact one.

4. RESOLVING ETHICAL PROBLEMS

4.01 Familiarity with the N.A.P.C.P. Code

Members have a responsibility to be familiar with this Code and such other legal and ethical standards and obligations that apply to their professional work. Lack of awareness is not in itself a defence to charges of unethical conduct.

4.02 Ethical Doubts and Conflicts

In situations of doubt or conflict regarding the ethical course of action, members will consult others held to be knowledgeable in the field of ethics and, where necessary, of law. The Ethics Committee and other similar bodies may be approached provided all due care for confidentiality is taken.

4.03 Conflicts between this Code and other Organisational Demands

if the demands of another organisation to which members are affiliated conflict with this Code of Ethics, members are required to clarify the nature of the conflict, make known their professional commitment to this Code, and then seek a way to resolve the conflict so as to permit adherence to this Code and maintain the paramount importance of a client's welfare.

4.04 Resolution of Ethical Violations

(a) Informal

When members believe that a colleague has transgressed against this Code, they attempt to resolve the issue informally by bringing it to that person's attention, particularly when no violation of rights may be involved.

(b) Formal

If the informal procedure in 4.04 (a) is not appropriate, or is not satisfactorily resolved, members take such further action as is appropriate to the situation, unless such action conflicts with confidentiality rights which cannot be ignored. Such action may include referral to the N.A.P.C.P. Ethics Committee or other relevant bodies.

4.05 Co-operation with the Ethics Committee

Members co-operate in ethics proceedings and investigations, as well as with the resulting requirements of the N.A.P.C.P. In all such cases reasonable efforts will be made to resolve any issues to do with confidentiality. It is to be noted that failure to co-operate in such processes is itself a violation of this Code.

4.07 Making Formal Complaints

Formal complaints regarding the ethical conduct of members of the N.A.P.C.P. should be made in writing to the Chairperson of the Ethics Committee, if the issues around confidentiality rights of a client have been resolved. Those complaints will then be brought to the attention of the Council and will be discussed in the presence of the respondent with all due regard to natural justice. It is recommended that intense procedures be followed before more public processes are set in train. In all of this the welfare of clients remains paramount.

5. OTHER ISSUES

5.01 members are personally responsible for keeping up with national and international legal requirements as these bear on the therapeutic relationship.

5.02 Members who have doubts about their ability to work as Pastoral Counsellors and Psychotherapists under the Code of the N.A.P.C.P. are required to take competent advice and if possible resolve their conflict.

5.03 Unless there are valid reasons, a member taking on a self-referred client currently working with a colleague, should do so only when the previous arrangement has been properly terminated (cf 2.07 above).

5.40 Members should be aware of the ways in which they may be drawn into the drama of cause and purpose underlying a client's complex, crisis or trauma. Issues around the member's own unrecognised and/or resolved personal process may be activated under these circumstances. When such is the case, members will take responsibility to re-enter personal therapy.

6. RESEARCH

In conducting and presenting research, members will hold the clients' interest as paramount in keeping with confidentiality rights. Permission to use material arising from case work must be obtained in writing.

Rules and Regulations
of the
National Association for Pastoral Counselling
and
Psychotherapy Limited

Clause I

The name of this Association is National Association for Pastoral Counselling and Psychotherapy Limited.

For reference purposes the term 'counselling' in these Rules and Regulations includes both counselling and psychotherapy.

Clause II

The objects for which the Association is established are:

To carry on the service and to promote high standards of professionalism amongst its members who are pastoral counsellors and psychotherapists. It is a self-governing, non-profit-making organisation promoting a professional Code of Ethics and discipline amongst its members. The N.A.P.C.P. will represent its members in Ireland and in Europe, with other counselling organisations and with civil and church authorities. On behalf of its members it will address directives insofar as these refer to the counselling and psychotherapeutic professions. It is intended to regulate pastoral counselling and psychotherapy for its members through accreditation and credentialling.

Clause III Classes of Membership

- (i) Accredited Counsellors and Psychotherapists
- (ii) Associate Members
- (iii) Trainee Pastoral Counsellors and Psychotherapists

All classes of membership are renewable after a period of five years unless membership has already been withdrawn or rescinded.

A member is deemed to have voting rights provided always that s/he is a fully paid up Accredited Member for the year in which a vote is taken. As a condition of membership all members are required to continue in regular supervision for as long as they practice in the counselling field.

Clause 1V Founder Members

The founder members are those whose names are appended to the official certificate of incorporation dated 9th day of November 1995, and Dr Brian McCaffrey, who was co-opted to the Board of N.A.P.C.P. on 31st January 1996.

Clause V Accredited Counsellors and psychotherapists

Full membership and accreditation will be open to those who:

- (a) make application to the Secretary of the Board for such membership on the official application form, and
- (b) satisfy the criteria as laid down in Clause 1X of this document,
- (c) are willing to support and abide by the ethical principles for Pastoral Counselling and Psychotherapy set out in the N.A.P.C.P. Code of Ethics.

Only such members as have satisfied Clauses a, b and c above may use the letters M.N.A.P.C.P. or the words Member of the National Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy in any advertisement, C.V., or other communication or published medium.

Clause VI Associate Members

Associate membership of the N.A.P.C.P. is open to all those in the field of counselling/psychotherapy who

- (a) have completed the required class contact hours in a counselling/psychotherapy programme, but who have not yet completed the supervised practicum requirement
- (b) apply for associate membership on the official application form of the N.A.P.C.P., and
- (c) are willing to support and abide by the ethical principles for Pastoral Counselling and Psychotherapy which are set out in the N.A.P.C.P. Code of Ethics.

N.B. Associate Members may NOT use the title A.M.N.A.P.C.P.

Clause VII Trainee Membership

Trainee Members are those who are currently participating in a recognised programme of training in counselling or psychotherapy.

Clause VIII Board Membership

The Board of the N.A.P.C.P., hereafter called the 'Board', shall consist of a Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and Education Officer and as many members as is agreed at the Annual General meeting, which shall take place in February of each year. It shall be the responsibility of the Board to uphold the memorandum and Articles of Association, the Code of Ethics and the Constitution in the interest of the members of N.A.P.C.P., their clients and the public at large.

Officers of the Board shall hold office for a period of three years, after which they may be deemed eligible for re-election.

An Ethics Committee shall also be elected at this time to deal with issues of ethical practice. This Committee shall hold office for a period of three years, after which they may be deemed eligible for re-election.

Clause IX Criteria for Fully Accredited Membership

The following are the paths by which a person may gain accreditation for the practice of Counselling from the National Association for Pastoral Counselling and Psychotherapy:

1. By University Graduation in a recognise counselling\psychotherapy programme.
2. By a Substantial Course of Training over two years full-time or three years part-time.
3. By accumulation over ten years of courses that together can be shown to constitute a Substantial Course of Training. This has been discontinued since January 2002.

A Substantial Course of Training will normally include:

- (a) Learning Group Contact Hours:

A minimum of 450 learning group contact hours, facilitated by a reputable and qualified tutorial faculty.

- (b) 50 hours personal counselling

- (c) 100 supervised client hours

Supervision

According to N.A.P.C.P. the term supervision refers to the conduct of a process in a formal contractual session in either a personal or group setting and which includes the following: exploring and assessing counsellor practice; facilitating counsellors so that they can develop and improve their professional competence, offer new perspectives, set goals,

intervene and evaluate more efficiently and effectively both the personal and professional development of the counsellor. Client welfare is always the core issue of supervision work.

For accreditation, one third of the hours of formal contractual supervision must be time spent in a one to one setting, and a minimum of one third in group work. The rest may be spent in either personal or group supervision.

One hour of supervision is required for every ten hours of formal counselling intervention.

Counselling/Psychotherapy

According to the N.A.P.C.P., counselling is defined as a formal contractual counselling session, understood as such by both counsellor and client. It refers to a way of relating and responding to another person so that the person is helped to explore personal thoughts, feelings and behaviours, to reach a clearer self-understanding, and is helped to find and use his/her strengths so that s/he copes more effectively with hi/her life by making appropriate decisions, or by taking relevant action. In other words, counselling is a purposeful relationship in which one person helps another to help him/herself.

For accredited membership applicants are required to have completed 450 hours of supervised counselling within three years of graduation from an approved Course of Training.

As a condition of membership all members are required to continue in regular supervision for as long as they practice in the counselling field.

It is taken for granted that applicants will have due regard for, and commitment to their own personal development.

Areas of Study expected to be covered in a recognised Programme of Study/Training include:

- (a) An Introduction to Counselling /Psychotherapy
- (b) Theory and Practice of Counselling/Psychotherapy
- (c) Group Counselling/Psychotherapy
- (d) Professional Aspects of Counselling/Psychotherapy
- (e) Skills Development – Practical
- (f) Psychology
- (g) Abnormal Psychology
- (h) Family, Marriage and Child Therapy
- (i) Addiction Studies
- (j) Personal Awareness, Growth and Spirituality

Clause X Criteria for Continued Membership

Compliance with the following conditions is necessary for those who wish to retain membership of the Association:

- (a) Fees must be paid annually and in full in January of each year.

- (b) Members must uphold, support and conform to the Articles of this Constitution and to the Code of Ethics of the N.A.P.C.P.
- (c) Members are required to attend in-service development, training, workshops and/or conferences on a regular basis.
- (d) Members must have regular supervision and may be asked by the supervisor to discontinue professional practice when it is deemed necessary for the member to do so in the interest of the member's client or clients, or in the interest of the member him/herself.

Clause XI Renewal of Accreditation

Members are required to apply for renewal of membership of the Association every five years.

Clause XII Indemnity

Members will be required to indemnify themselves and the N.A.P.C.P. against all claims arising out of negligence, malpractice or public liability.

Clause XIII Breach of Ethics

A member deemed by the Ethics Committee to have breached the Code of Ethics or these Rules and Regulations may be asked to account to the Committee for any improper conduct or breach of the N.A.P.C.P. Code of Ethics.

The Ethics Committee will report to the Board of Directors which may direct the Ethics Committee to instigate a formal investigation in accordance with the *Rules and Procedures of the N.A.P.C.P Ethics Committee* (see Appendix 1). On completion of such formal investigation, the Ethics Committee will formally report its findings in writing to the Board, and in particular will specify which if any parts of the Code of Ethics and/or Rules and Regulations of the N.A.P.C.P. the member has been found to be in breach of and what if any sanctions the Ethics Committees recommends. The Board of directors shall, within a month of receipt of this communication, send a copy of the report, together with the decision of the board as to which of the recommendations of the Committee it has decided to implement, to the relevant member(s) informing them also of their right to appeal. The Board of Directors has the power to suspend the relevant member's membership for the duration of an investigation and any subsequent appeal process.

According to the recommendations of the Ethics Committee, the Board has the power to impose one or some of the following sanctions: to write to all or some complainants informing them of the findings and recommendations of the Ethics Committee, to provide any further material that any complainant reasonably requests to pursue a civil action pursuant to their allegation, to suspend the member's membership, to issue a reprimand, to cancel the member's membership, to stipulate a period of time within which a reapplication from the expelled member will not be considered (including an indefinite period of time), to publish any reprimand, findings and sanctions in the media (printed,

broadcast and electronic), to prepare a file and forward it to any relevant private or public competent authority the Board considers appropriate (bearing in mind the public interest) including the Garda Síochána, other Counselling or Psychotherapy associations, or government bodies. Should the Ethics Committee find a complaint to be not only unfounded but also vexatious and or malicious, the Board shall be entitled to take what steps including some of the above in the interests of restoring the reputation of the member.

Appendix 1

Rules and Procedures of the N.A.P.C.P Ethics Committee

On being directed by the Board of Directors to commence a formal investigation into an allegation of a breach of the Code of Ethics and/or the Rules and Regulations of the N.A.P.C.P. the committee shall in the first instance write to the relevant member (or members) and inform them of this development, will outline the allegation in writing, attach a copy of the Code of Ethics and Rules and Regulations and these Rules and Procedures of the N.A.P.C.P. Committee, and send all this to the relevant member(s) by registered post and will ensure as soon as possible thereafter that these have been received and the address details for the relevant member(s) are up to date.

The Ethics Committee will examine all complaints and allegations against the member(s), requiring all to be put in writing and signed; the Committee may make such enquiries as it thinks fit to discover if there are further allegations and complaints yet to lodged formally. It also has the power to speak and meet with complainants to satisfy itself with regard to the authenticity, scale, gravity and extent of any complaints. It also has the power to provide copies of the Code of Ethics and Rules of Regulations to anyone who has or is considering making a complaint against a member, and to answer any questions that arise about the meaning of any part of these documents.

The Ethics Committee is entitled to publicise to the media and any other public or private body the fact it is conducting an investigation into a named member (or members) if it deems it to be in the public interest so to act.

The Ethics Committee will have the right to establish a deadline after which it will be entitled to consider no further complaints, but such deadline will be no later than three calendar months following the date on which the Board directed the Committee to commence the formal investigation.

At the end of this period the Ethics Committee will examine all the signed complaints received, and (provided the complainants give their written consent) shall no later than two calendar months following the closing date for receipt of complaints, forward copies of all such complaints to the relevant member(s) together with a written advice from the Ethics Committee to the member(s) as to which parts of the Code of Ethics and/or Rules and Regulations appear to have been breached in relation to the allegations made in the complaints. The member(s) shall be given one calendar month to respond, such notice commencing from the date of postage by registered mail of this material.

Should the relevant member(s) have failed to respond within a month, the Ethics Committee shall meet as soon as possible but in any case no later than two months following the date on which copies of the allegations were sent to the member(s) to consider the allegations and agree findings and recommendations to the board. Should the relevant member(s) respond within a month, then the Ethics Committee may if it deems fit forward copies of the response to the complainants requesting comment and/or take

professional advice, but shall in any case meet no later than three months following the date on which copies of the allegations were sent to the member(s), to consider the allegations and agree findings and recommendations to the board.

If the Ethics Committee cannot agree on findings and recommendations at such meeting, it may with the consent of the Board defer such decisions for a further month during which it may make such enquiries, take advice or interview further either complainants or the relevant member(s) as it sees fit. Then a majority decision will apply.

The Ethics Committee shall at all times be guided in its actions by the principles of natural justice, the Rules and Regulations of the N.A.P.C.P., a desire to bring the investigation to a close as quickly as possible as is consistent with fairness and justice, the public interest, the reputation of the N.A.P.C.P, the reputation of all its members, and reputation of counsellors and psychotherapists.

During the investigation the Ethics Committee may issue recommendations to the Board as to whether the suspension of membership of the relevant member(s) should be continued or ceased.

The Ethics Committee shall provide in writing to the Board of Directors its findings with regard to any complaints or allegations, and in particular will specify which if any parts of the Code of Ethics and Rules and Regulations of the N.A.P.C.P. have been breached. They shall further specify what if any sanctions they recommend. If the Ethics Committee considers any complaint unfounded, vexatious and/or malicious it shall advise the Board to this effect in its findings, and may issue recommendations on a course of action in relation not only towards the member but also towards a complainant.

Clause XIV Appeals

The member shall be notified of the right to appeal this decision to the Board of the N.A.P.C.P. The name and address of the Secretary with whom the appeal may be lodged shall be conveyed in writing to the member.

In the event of an appeal being lodged it shall be made in writing within three weeks of receipt of the letter of cancellation of membership.

The decision of the Board shall be conveyed in writing to the member concerned within three days of the meeting of the Board.

No member of the Ethics Committee may be a member of the Board of Appeal.

The decision of the Board shall be final

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