

Dublin Counselling & Therapy Centre



Code of Professional Ethics & Practice

Preamble

All counsellors and psychotherapists (hereinafter called 'practitioners') who work in the Centre are expected to be familiar with and, in their practice, to abide by the Code of Ethics and Practice (Bye-Law 3) of the Irish Association of Humanistic and Integrative Psychotherapy. This Code is available by visiting <http://iahip.org/professional-conduct> and clicking on the in-text link for 'Bye Law 3'. Separate Codes are also available at this link for Supervision and Training work. Practitioners who are accredited by another equivalent body such that they will also be eligible for Statutory Registration, are expected to comply with the Code of Ethics and Practice of their accrediting body.

The following Code of Ethics, which is additional to the Codes of the relevant professional bodies, is specific to work undertaken either in or under the auspices of Dublin Counselling & Therapy Centre, and reflects the philosophy and ethos of this organisation.

Relationship with the Centre

1. Practitioners working in the Centre are required to sign a Clinical Practice Agreement and to abide by the Terms and Conditions of this Agreement.
2. Practitioners are expected to be familiar with all policies and procedures relating to clinical practice in the Centre.
3. All personnel working in the Centre are asked to take into account the Centre's humanistic ethos during their time in the Centre.

4. Practitioners may not claim a relationship with the Centre other than that which exists as per their signed Practice Agreement.
5. Practitioners may not issue public statements about the Centre, or on behalf of the Centre, without prior permission from the Centre Director.
6. Practitioners should not arrange to meet with clients in a venue other than the Centre itself or a prescribed out-reach Centre, except with the prior agreement of the Centre Director.
7. Practitioners should make themselves aware of the network of social and community support services in the local area so as to be in a position to offer this information to clients where indicated.

Respecting the Client

1. The practitioner should show sensible regard for the moral codes and social expectations of the community.
2. The practitioner should be committed to a high standard of professional competence in his/her work, and should promote the welfare of clients, and assure their rights.
3. Practitioners should respect the dignity and worth of the individual. They should accord clients equality of personal status in the therapeutic relationship, and afford them personal responsibility for their part in the therapeutic process. Clients should always be afforded the right to self-determination.
4. The practitioner should be aware of his/her professional limitations and should refer clients to other suitable professionals when the best interests of the client so dictate.
5. The practitioner should be prepared to share the following with clients if requested so that clients may make informed choices:
 - The procedures, goals, and possible side-effects of counselling / psychotherapy.
 - Qualifications, policies and practices of the counsellor / psychotherapist.

- The available sources of help other than counselling / psychotherapy.
6. The practitioner should not make physical contact with a client **unless the needs (solely) of the client** are being served by such contact.
 7. The practitioner should seek to avail of appropriate continuing professional and personal development as a matter of respect for clients.
 8. Practitioners should not claim either directly or by implication professional qualifications that differ from his/her actual qualifications in counselling / psychotherapy and/or clinical supervision.
 9. Counsellors / psychotherapists should not offer their services to anyone who is already receiving counselling / psychotherapy from another practitioner, except in circumstances where there is an explicit agreement with the other practitioner, and where it is agreed that to so engage with the client will serve the client's best interests.

Confidentiality

1. The practitioner should treat with the utmost confidence all information obtained about clients through their clinical work. Such information may only be revealed to appropriate persons or agencies when the safety of a client or of a third party is clearly endangered, or when such a disclosure is in the best interests of the client. This limit to confidentiality should be made explicit to clients in situations where the practitioner believes it may be invoked.
2. Intruding on a client's privacy while they are either in the Centre or outside is considered a breach of confidentiality.
3. File records, reports and permissible discussions should contain only information which is pertinent to the case.
4. Written records should be carefully maintained and anonymity protected therein.
5. The fact of a client's attendance at the Centre is a private matter and should not be disclosed to a third party, except where to do so would serve the best interests of the client.