

THE IRISH ASSOCIATION
FOR
COUNSELLING AND PSYCHOTHERAPY

PRE-BUDGET SUBMISSION 2020

IACP.IE



Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy



ABOUT IACP

The Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (IACP) was established in 1981, to identify, develop and maintain professional standards of excellence in counselling and psychotherapy.

Our work promotes best practice and the development of the profession as well as safeguard the public. As a registered Charity (CHY 6615) representing over 4,300 members, we are the largest Counselling and Psychotherapy Association in Ireland.

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**PROMOTING SAFE
AND EFFECTIVE
COUNSELLING/
PSYCHOTHERAPY**

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WHAT WE DO

The IACP represents the interests of both client and Counsellor/Psychotherapist in Ireland. We are a link between those who are looking for Counselling/Psychotherapy and those who provide Counselling/ Psychotherapy.

In addition, we provide information and set and maintain practice and training standards. We represent Counselling/Psychotherapy at both national and international level.

Much of our work involves developing high standards in the profession of Counselling/Psychotherapy. The IACP has established a comprehensive Code of Ethics and Practice. The IACP also partners other National and International Counselling and Psychotherapy Associations to advance the development of Counselling and Psychotherapy worldwide.



THE IACP IS CALLING FOR THE FOLLOWING ITEMS TO BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION IN THE BUDGET 2020:

1. Increased investment in talking therapies and specifically, IACP is seeking support for a feasibility study to introduce counselling supports for second-level school children.
2. Expanding the existing supports which provide tax relief for medical expenses, a range of health-related benefits under the PRSI system and medical card services to include Counselling and Psychotherapy.

“INCREASED INVESTMENT IN TALKING THERAPIES”



3. The same VAT Exemption for Counsellors and Psychotherapists as available for other allied health professionals.
4. Increased investment in mental health and talking therapies - an overall increase in the mental health budget towards 10% of the total health budget within the next 10 years.

1. INCREASED INVESTMENT IN TALKING THERAPIES AND SPECIFICALLY, IACP IS SEEKING SUPPORT FOR A FEASIBILITY STUDY TO INTRODUCE COUNSELLING SUPPORTS FOR SECOND-LEVEL SCHOOL CHILDREN.

Irish children and adolescents are experiencing anxiety, self-harm and suicidal ideation at an alarmingly high rate. An RCSI (Royal College of Surgeons Ireland) study reveals that by the age of 13, 1 in 3 Irish children will experience a mental health difficulty. Demand for support in schools is also rising for issues of self-harm and suicidal ideation.

On 8th May, at a presentation in Leinster House, the IACP outlined a proposal for the expansion of existing mental health supports to secondary schools, via the introduction of a State funded, on-call counselling support service for children who need onward referral from schools. Although these types of supports are available in many other countries there is no such established national support system in Ireland. The IACP proposes that the first step in this process will be to run a feasibility study as follows:

- 6 secondary schools will be selected in areas with longest waiting lists for mental health assessment and supports – currently CH04, Cork and Kerry.
- These 6 schools will be provided with access to therapists on an on-call basis for a period of six months (January 2020-June 2020).
- The IACP will select the therapists for the panel of counsellors based on their training and experience and meeting the requirements listed in IACP Standards for working with under 18s.
- Based on data gathered from the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) and Irish case study statistics, the IACP estimate that 10% of pupils in each school would require on average 6 counselling sessions for the duration of the trial.

Average pupil numbers per school = 500
(IrelandStats.com)

50 pupils attending average of 6 sessions each = 300 sessions per school @€50

Total: €15,000 funding required per school for counselling sessions

Supervision costs of the feasibility study counselling hours: 300 sessions supervised in ratio 1:20 @€70 per session = total per school €1000

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The IACP will fund the initial counsellor recruitment costs and post-study data analysis for the purpose of evaluation:

The evaluation of the feasibility study will include the pre and post-therapy assessment by each therapist. Also, each school will complete a monthly report on the sessions to indicate progress and the amount of sessions attended. Post-study reports will be completed within the participating schools to seek overall feedback from the pupils who attended counselling and staff working within the schools.

**Total amount of funding required for the study:
6 schools x €16,000 = €96,000**

The IACP is seeking Government support to fund this feasibility study. Therapeutic counselling for school going children is a proven cost-effective early intervention, with the ability to alleviate distress for young people as well as pressure on overstretched mental health services

Overall Estimated Cost: €96,000.



2. EXPANDING THE EXISTING SUPPORTS WHICH PROVIDE TAX RELIEF FOR MEDICAL EXPENSES AND A RANGE OF HEALTH-RELATED BENEFITS UNDER THE PRSI SYSTEM

The recent public survey carried out by Behaviour & Attitudes B&A on behalf of the IACP found that while 92% of Irish adults think it's a good idea to seek counselling/psycho-therapeutic support if struggling with mental health, affordability is a barrier to actually seeking this support. A way to increase accessibility not only for people on low income but also for the generality of the people in Ireland is to make counselling and psychotherapy services more affordable. We urge that serious consideration be given to expanding the existing supports which provide tax relief for medical expenses, a range of health-related benefits under the PRSI system, and medical card services to include support for mental health services such as counselling and psychotherapy. The B&A research has shown that there is very strong support among Irish adults for a move towards universal availability and State funding of counselling/psychotherapy.

3. THE SAME VAT EXEMPTION FOR COUNSELLORS AND PSYCHOTHERAPISTS AS AVAILABLE FOR OTHER ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Under current rules, Counsellors and Psychotherapists must register for VAT once their total income /turnover for services exceeds the threshold of €37,500 per annum. This rate of VAT is the reduced rate of 13.5%. However, other allied health professionals such as Psychologists qualify for the exemption as it is deemed a medical service. Psychologists along with other professionals such as – Dietician, Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist, Speech & Language Therapist, Orthoptist, Radiographer, Chiropodist, Chiropractor and Osteopath have had this VAT exemption in place for a considerable amount of time, including prior to being regulated. IACP requests that Counselling & Psychotherapy receive the same VAT exemption status as other allied health professionals.

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4. INCREASED INVESTMENT IN MENTAL HEALTH AND TALKING THERAPIES - AN OVERALL INCREASE IN THE MENTAL HEALTH BUDGET TOWARDS 10% OF THE TOTAL HEALTH BUDGET WITHIN THE NEXT 10 YEARS

As an organisation member of Mental Health Reform, the IACP is supporting the call to secure funding of €55M in 2019 with an eye to develop and maintain existing levels of service and the development of new mental health services. Specifically, funding should be used in part to:

- Increase levels of staff in mental health services, in line with Mental Health Reform's A Vision for Change recommendations.
- Develop 24/7 crisis intervention mental health services across the country.
- Implement a national, electronic mental health information system.
- Increase capacity of national advocacy services for both children and adults with mental health difficulties in hospitals, day centres, training centres, clinics, institutional-based settings and throughout the community, building on existing services.

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