

IACP Press release March 2013

4 out of 5 (80%) People Think Counselling and Psychotherapy Should Be Regulated, Research Reveals

Friday 22nd March 2013: GP and author Dr Harry Barry will speak about the importance of regulation in the counselling and psychotherapy professions at this weekend's AGM of the Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (IACP) in Portlaoise. Over 200 IACP members will attend the Association's 32nd AGM. A new nationwide study undertaken by Behaviour & Attitudes for IACP shows that 4 out of 5 (80%) Irish people believe Counsellors and Psychotherapists should be regulated by the Government. The research also revealed that almost two thirds (60%) of Irish people believe it is more acceptable to talk about their problems than it was in the past.

"The new research provides some very interesting facts about the value that Irish people attach to counselling and psychotherapy services. It highlights the fact that 4 out of 5 (80%) of people believe the industry should be regulated. In many cases special listening therapies such as counselling and psychotherapy can be hugely beneficial for dealing with their problems," says Dr Barry.

The study was carried out in order to better understand the value that Irish people attach to counselling or psychotherapy services.

"This research shows that nearly two thirds (60%) of Irish people believe it's more acceptable to talk about their problems than it was in the past," says Naoise Kelly, National Director at IACP. "This is a very positive shift and means people are more likely to talk to a Counsellor or Psychotherapist about their problems, which further emphasises the need for regulation in this area.

"Currently, there is nothing to prevent someone doing a three-week course and hanging a sign outside their door," says Kelly. "An individual is not qualified to deal with sensitive and potentially complex issues after such a course. If you are going to work with a counsellor or psychotherapist, ensure they are appropriately qualified. On average, it takes 5 to 6 years to achieve accreditation as an IACP registered counsellor or psychotherapist. Our accredited members must also fulfil further requirements, including ongoing professional development, to maintain their accreditation."

The IACP develops and maintains professional standards of excellence in counselling and psychotherapy through education, training and accreditation in Ireland. Both professions provide trained help to people who are experiencing personal issues, in order to help alleviate those difficulties. It is the largest regulatory body in Ireland to encourage development in these areas and to protect clients and therapists alike.

An online directory of IACP counsellors and psychotherapists is available at www.iacp.ie.

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About IACP:

Established in 1981, the IACP identifies, develops and maintains professional standards of excellence in counselling and psychotherapy through education, training and accreditation. In promoting best practice and the professional development of its members, IACP holds at its core the protection of the public. Representing both the interests of clients and practitioners (over 3,500 nationwide), IACP provides a telephone referral helpline, an information service and an online counsellor / psychotherapist / supervisor directory. IACP is a registered Charity (CHY 6615).

More information is available from the IACP's website www.iacp.ie.