

IACP STRATEGIC PLAN 2010 — 2013



Into the future...



Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy



**Irish Association for
Counselling and Psychotherapy**

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FOREWORD



Dear Members,

The Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (IACP) was established in 1981 as a National Organisation which sets, maintains and develops standards in the practice of Counselling and Psychotherapy.

Much has changed in society and in the counselling and psychotherapy profession in the intervening years since 1981. IACP's membership has grown from the original pioneering group of 20-30 counsellors to over 3,500 counsellors and psychotherapists today. Our task is to continue to support our members in meeting the increasingly complex demands of a rapidly evolving profession while holding a clear vision for the organisation over the next four years.

This Strategic Plan reflects extensive consultation and discussion over a six month period with our membership, staff, executive committee and support networks. The Plan sets out our Vision, Mission, Core Values and Objectives. It is a statement of intent which summarises our priorities and outlines the steps to be taken, by whom and within a set timeframe to achieve our goals.

One of the most far-reaching developments for both clients and therapists is the growing pressure to have the 'talking therapies' state-regulated. Ultimately we see counselling and psychotherapy as integral parts of healthcare provision and our new Strategic Plan addresses this fundamental development. In direct

response to the consultative process with our members, two further areas of particular focus will be raising the profile of IACP and the development of Member Services.

The next four years will have a significant impact on our profession not least because of the current difficult economic climate in which we work. Through the implementation of this Strategic Plan, which is now the responsibility of the IACP Board of Directors and the National Director and his team, it is my fervent hope that IACP will go from strength to strength in being a leader in the field of counselling and psychotherapy and in being a protector of the public interest within the profession.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone who has contributed in any way to the formation of this plan; members, staff, committee volunteers and in particular the members of the Strategic Planning committee for their generous contribution of time, experience, wisdom and patience in what was a challenging endeavour, to re-write for the future, the story of who we are and where we are going.

Margaret Chambers
Cathaoirleach IACP



INTRODUCTION



Dear Members,

I am very pleased to introduce our Association's first strategic plan "IACP – Into the Future".

This plan lays out the framework for the Association's development over the next 4 years. The strategic planning committee's aim was to produce an understandable, specific, realistic plan that builds on IACP's strengths and makes improvements where necessary. I believe that this

has been achieved and that this Strategic Plan expresses the Associations' continued commitment to ensuring IACP maintains standards of excellence in its work.

The plan benefits greatly from the contributions of members and represents a change in IACP's approach, in that it commits the Association to a medium to long-term strategic approach to what we do and how we do it. This commitment relates to both traditional areas of work, such as maintaining and developing standards, but also to new measures including planned public relations and counselling and psychotherapy research. The plan also includes a comprehensive review of how we operate in each area.

The IACP Mission, Vision and Values statements describe the overall purpose of the Association, present a view of the future we are working towards and describe the underlying principles that guide our work. They will serve as a useful tool to committees and individuals in their decision making and work.

There are 5 main Goal areas: Governance, Professional Services, Member Services, Resources and Public Relations. Each goal area contains specific objectives, their associated actions, identifies the main person/s responsible for delivery and the time frame.

Many thanks to all of the members who have supported the planning work. It is an exciting and interesting time of growth at IACP and I look forward to the plan's implementation over the coming years.

Naoise Kelly
National Director

IACP MISSION STATEMENT

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.

IACP VISION STATEMENT

A future where people who are in need of care and support can achieve greater wellbeing through the use of regulated professional counselling and psychotherapy services. Our vision is one where counselling and psychotherapy are an integral part of healthcare provision.

IACP CORE VALUES

The underlying values which guide our work are as follows:

- ◆ Integrity
- ◆ Respect and Inclusivity
- ◆ Valuing the Individual
- ◆ Professional and Ethical

Goal Area – Professional Standards	
Objective	Actions
Ensure IACP is at the forefront of Counselling and Psychotherapy developments in Ireland	<p>Maintaining momentum in the process of Statutory Regulation</p> <p>Use of PR / Media</p>
Ensure that IACP's Professional Accreditation system and practices continue to highest standards	<p>Improvement of regular and structured communication between IACP HO and Executive sub-committees</p> <p>Comprehensive internal review of Accreditation system and practices</p> <p>External assessment of accreditation practices and procedures</p>
Ensure greater State recognition of IACP's professional standards	<p>Review of current State recognition of IACP's professional standards</p>
Achievement of the highest level of professional standards in Supervision offered to members	<p>Establishment of a plan and budget to provide quality training opportunities</p>
Establishment of a research body within IACP	<p>Engagement of research personnel</p>

Who*	Assessment Criteria	Timeframe
EXEC, ND PSM	Continued high level of engagement with Psychological Therapies Forum PR/Media utilisation	End Year 1 End Year 1
PSM, ACCRED, SV, CRC ND, PSM, ACCRED, SV, CRC EXEC, ACCRED, PSM, EXTN	Recommendations implemented Review completed External assessment completed	End Year 1 End Year 2 End Year 3
EXEC, ND	Increased recognition	End Year 2
SV	Qualitative feedback from within the supervisory body	End Year 2
EXEC, ND, PSM, EDIT	Quality research available for members	End Year 3

Goal Area – Professional Standards (cont.)	
Objective	Actions
IACP policy relating to Counselling and Psychotherapy specialisation (e.g. children and young people)	Development of policy
Provision of high quality Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities to members	Research members' CPD requirements Increase support for those looking to provide or engage in CPD events
Establish stronger connections with other National and International Counselling and Psychotherapy Organisations	Develop formal relationships with other National and International Organisations

Who*	Assessment Criteria	Timeframe
CRC, ACCRED, SV	Policy completed	End Year 3
CPD, REGIONS, PSM	Support provided	End Year 2
ND, PSM	Members surveyed	End Year 2
EXEC, ND, PSM	Strong structure in place including mutual recognition and reciprocity where appropriate	End Year 3

Goal Area – Governance

Objective	Actions
Ensure that the optimal governance structure is in place for the Associations' size and expected growth	<p>Review of IACP organisational structure and development of plan to implement any necessary structural changes.</p> <p>Development of comprehensive terms of reference for all IACP committees and working groups.</p>
Ensure continuity of IACP's compliance with all legal and statutory requirements (internal and external)	<p>Review of the Associations' Memorandums & Articles, Bye-laws and Regulations.</p> <p>Review of compliance practices relating to financial, taxation, data protection, garda vetting and personnel legislation.</p>
Improved transparent communication of governance and governance related matters at all levels of the Association	<p>Revision of and improvement of current governance and decision-making related communication practices.</p>
Develop awareness of governance and practices at all levels	<p>Provision of training and support for all those involved with governance & decision making, at all levels of the Association.</p> <p>Clear definition of the duties and responsibilities, authority levels, lines of communication and reporting structure for all staff and voluntary personnel.</p>

Who*	Assessment Criteria	Timeframe
EXEC, ND	Review and plan completed	End Year 2
EXEC, ND & relevant sub-committees	Terms of Reference completed	End Year 2
EXEC, STND, PSM, COSEC	Review biennially	End Year 1
EXEC, ND, PSM	Review of practices biennially	End Year 3
EXEC	Review completed	End Year 3
EXEC, ND	Training and support provided	End Year 4
EXEC, HO	Responsibilities and duties defined	End Year 3

Goal Area – Member Services

Objective	Actions
Support Members with professional practice guidance	<p>Provide workshops / seminars regarding professional practice</p> <p>Regularly publish relevant updates on professional practices</p>
Improve information & communication process regarding professional accreditation	<p>Review current professional accreditation procedures (from a member perspective)</p> <p>Complete a “frequently asked questions” (FAQ’s) section for each area of IACP services on the IACP website with appropriate links</p> <p>Review of all professional documentation</p> <p>Have in place a national database of medical centres and libraries</p>
Develop and maximise utilisation of technological support	<p>Enhance user experience of IACP website</p> <p>Develop online payment facility for ease of use and efficiency</p> <p>Expand availability of criteria and information documents online</p> <p>Develop online electronic application facility</p> <p>Upgrade database system to better serve requirements of Members</p>
Provide IACP logo for Accredited Members	<p>Logo to be developed and provided to all Accredited Members for use in documentation, business cards etc.</p>
Develop & enhance quarterly Journal & Newsletter	<p>Review style & content of journal and newsletter and implement membership recommendations</p>
Represent Membership Nationally & Internationally	<p>Attend & report on international conferences relevant to counselling / psychotherapy</p>

* Explanatory note of abbreviations on page 21

Who*	Assessment Criteria	Timeframe
PSM, CPD	Workshops being provided	End Year 3
PSM, CPD	Regular updates published	End Year 2
PSM, ACCRED, SV, CRC	Procedures reviewed	End Year 2
PSM	FAQ sections completed	End Year 2
PSM	Documents reviewed and updated	End Year 1
PSM, HO	Database in place	End Year 4
PSM	Website user friendliness rated higher	End Year 2
FINC	Online facility in place	End Year 1
HO	Improved information	End Year 2
HO	Electronic application facility developed	End Year 4
HO	Database functioning	End Year 2
PSM	Logo provided	End Year 2
EDIT, HO	Review completed, recommendations implemented	End Year 2
EXEC, ND	Events attended and reported on to Members	End Year 1

Goal Area – Public Relations	
Objective	Actions
Raise IACP's Organisational Profile Nationally / Regionally	<p>Retain the services of a PR/Communications company to develop and raise the IACP's profile nationally & regionally</p> <p>IACP information material distributed to clinics, GPs, Garda/Police stations, libraries, community centres and other relevant venues nationwide</p> <p>Establish an ongoing national presence in print, radio, TV, cinema and digital media</p>
Maximise the use of the IACP website and digital media	Engage services of website management company to assist with maintenance and development of IACP website
Raise the IACP Profile and Public Awareness through Education	<p>Have in place an annual public talk, on a relevant mental health topic, sponsored by IACP, to be delivered in each IACP Region annually.</p> <p>Complete a "frequently asked questions" (FAQ's) section on counselling/psychotherapy for the public on the IACP website</p>

Who*	Assessment Criteria	Timeframe
EXEC, ND, PSM	IACP name and services widely distributed nationally, leading to increased public awareness and membership satisfaction rating on IACP profile	End Year 1
PSM	Material distributed	End Year 1
PSM, ND, EXTEN	Ongoing National presence established	End Year 4
PSM	Accurate, precise up-to-date information which can be quickly changed, reflecting the positive and professional image of the Association	End Year 2
PSM, REGIONS	Annual talks delivered in each region	End Year 3
PSM	FAQ sections completed	End Year 2

Goal Area – Resources	
Objective	Actions
Enhance the annual budgeting process to ensure clarity of criteria & consistency of funding decisions	Reform resources allocation to reflect & support Strategic objectives, being aware of, & responsive to, the economic climate
Establish contingency fund	Make provision for a contingency fund (percentage of annual budget)
Identify potential revenue streams	Scope, review and produce recommendations on potential revenue growth areas
Motivated, committed and knowledgeable employees	Provide relevant & specific training and support to all employees
Enthusiastic, committed & knowledgeable voluntary committee members	Provide training and support
Purchase Property	Identify suitable property

Who*	Assessment Criteria	Timeframe
EXEC, FINC, ND	Comprehensive annual budgeting process	End Year 2
EXEC, FINC, ND	Contingency fund established	End Year 4
FINC, ND	Revenue streams identified	End Year 3
HR Mgmt, HO	Ongoing employee appraisal. Training & support provided. Membership feedback	End Year 2
HR Mgmt, HO	Committee member feedback	End Year 3
EXEC, ND	Suitable property acquired	End Year 2

IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION

Strategic planning directs action towards a desired and forecasted result. It reinforces the resources and attributes of the IACP, making the Association progressively stronger. Both the IACP Executive Committee and staff are highly committed to its implementation. This is important as the successful delivery of the desired outcomes are dependent on strong cooperation between staff (both full and part-time) and our professional volunteers.

The Strategic Plan provides an invaluable blueprint for growth and revitalisation, enabling the Association to take stock of where it is, determine where it wants to go and chart a clear course to get there. The **Timeframes** for delivery of the **Actions** have been arrived at by carefully considering the relative resources available at each step. Some actions must be completed first in order to facilitate the successful completion of later actions. In some circumstances the establishment of additional working groups with specific terms of reference and reporting mechanisms will be necessary. Additional resources will need to be budgeted for to achieve some of the action points. This may include external consultants, training, contract staff and equipment.

The key to successful delivery of a Strategic Plan is ongoing monitoring and evaluation. A process for regularly reporting the progress of the Strategic Plan has been established. Performance indicators with clear assessment criteria have been developed as part of this process. The aim is to ensure that implementation is achieved through a cyclical accountability process comprising of review, evaluation, reporting and where necessary, re-planning.

We are confident that the “IACP Strategic Plan 2010–2013”, will be successfully implemented.

The Strategic Planning Committee

Abbreviations

ACCRED:	Accreditation Committee
COSEC:	Company Secretary
COMP:	Complaints Committee
CPD:	Continuing Professional Development
CRC:	Course Recognition Committee
EDIT:	Editorial Committee
EXEC:	Executive Committee
EXTN:	External Consultant / Agency
FINC:	Finance Committee
HO:	Head Office
HR Mgmt:	HR Management Group
ND:	National Director
PSM:	Professional Services Manager
PR:	Public Relations
REGIONS:	Regional Committees
STND:	Standards Committee
SV:	Supervision Committee

Strategic Planning Committee

Margaret Chambers, Cathaoirleach

Ray Henry, Leas Cathaoirleach

Geraldine Hallahan, Company Secretary

Bernie Hackett, Executive Committee

Seamus Sheedy, Executive Committee

Margaret Watchorn, Complaints Committee

Naoise Kelly, National Director

Shane Kelly, Professional Services Manager

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