



*Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy*

## **CODE OF ETHICS AND PRACTICE FOR SUPERVISORS OF COUNSELLORS AND PSYCHOTHERAPISTS**

### **Introduction**

Supervision is a formal mutually agreed arrangement within which the supervisee discusses work regularly with the Supervisor.

The term “supervision” encompasses a number of functions concerned with monitoring, educating, developing and supporting individuals in their counselling / psychotherapy work. To this end supervision is concerned with:

- a. The relationship between Supervisee and Client, to enhance its therapeutic effectiveness
- b. Monitoring and supporting the Supervisee in the counselling / psychotherapy role,
- c. The relationship between the Supervisee and the Supervisor so as to enable the Supervisee to develop and enhance professional skills and abilities through reflection and exploration on the work.
- d. Ensuring that ethical standards are maintained throughout the counselling / psychotherapy work and that it is conducted in an appropriate setting.

### **A. Code of Ethics**

- A1. The purpose of this Code of Ethics and Practice is to establish and maintain standards for Supervisors in their supervision work with Counsellors / Psychotherapists, hereinafter referred to as Supervisees, and to inform and protect Supervisees seeking supervision.
  - A1.1 Ethical standards comprise such values as integrity, responsibility, competence and confidentiality.
  - A1.2 Supervisors in assenting to this Code of Ethics and Practice reaffirm their assent to all other Codes of Ethics and Practice of the IACP and accept their responsibilities to supervisees and their clients, their agencies, to colleagues, the wider community and this Association.
  - A1.3 There are various models of supervision. This Code of Ethics and Practice applies to all supervision arrangements.

## **A2. Issues of Responsibility**

- A2.1 Given that the primary purpose of supervision is to ensure that the Supervisee is addressing the needs of the client:
- a) Supervisees are responsible for their work with the Client, and for presenting and exploring as honestly as possible that work with their Supervisor;
  - b) Supervisors are responsible for helping supervisees reflect critically upon that work.
- A2.2 Supervisors and Supervisees are both responsible for setting and maintaining clear boundaries between supervision, consultancy, therapy and training.
- A2.3 Supervisors and Supervisees must distinguish between supervising and counselling the Supervisee.
- A2.4 Supervisors are responsible for adhering to the principles embodied in this Code of Ethics and Practice for the Supervision of Counsellors / Psychotherapists, and the Code of Ethics and Practice for Counsellors / Psychotherapists.
- A2.5 Supervisors must recognise the value and dignity of Supervisees and clients as people, irrespective of origin, status, sex, sexual orientation, age or belief.
- A2.6 Supervisors should not exploit Supervisees financially, sexually, emotionally or in any other way.
- A2.7 Supervisors are responsible for establishing clear working agreements, which indicate the responsibility of Supervisees of their own continued learning and self-monitoring.
- A2.8 Both are responsible for regularly reviewing the effectiveness of the supervision arrangement, and changing it when appropriate.
- A2.9 The Supervisor and Supervisee should consider their respective legal liabilities to each other, the employing or course provider, if any and to the client.

## **A3. Supervision of Trainees.**

- A3.1 Supervisors must ensure, when working with student Counsellors / Psychotherapists, that the supervision contract includes assessment of the client work / contact hours. Such assessment is in the interests of clients, the profession and those responsible for the training of the Supervisee. The criteria by which assessments are to be made must be agreed between Supervisees and the course provider, or other bodies responsible for the accreditation of student Counsellors / Psychotherapists.
- A3.2 All External Supervisors must supply reports on student work to the course provider's

assessment panel, and these reports should be co-evaluated by the student and Supervisor.

#### **A4. Issues of Competence**

- A4.1 Supervisors should continually seek ways of increasing their own professional development, including, wherever possible, specific training in the development of supervision skills.
- A4.2 Supervisors are expected to make arrangements for their own consultancy and support to help them monitor and evaluate their supervision. This includes having supervision of their supervision work.
- A4.3 Supervisors have a responsibility to monitor and maintain their own effectiveness. There may be a need to seek help and / or withdraw from the practice of supervision, whether temporary / permanently.
- A4.4 All supervisors should maintain a practice in counselling / psychotherapy.

#### **B. Code of Practice.**

##### **Introduction**

This Code of Practice is intended to give more specific information and guidance regarding the implementation of the principles embodied in the Code of Ethics and Practice for Supervision of Counsellors / Psychotherapists.

#### **B.2 The Management of the Supervision Work**

- B2.1 Supervisors should ensure that their Supervisees subscribe and adhere to the IACP Code of Ethics and Practice for Counsellors / Psychotherapists or an equivalent Code of Ethics and Practice.
- B2.2 Supervisors should be explicit regarding practical arrangements for supervision, paying particular regard to the length of contact time, the frequency of contact and the privacy and safety of the venue.
- B2.3 Fees required should be agreed in advance and any increase in fees should be negotiated.
- B2.4 Supervisors and Supervisees should make explicit the expectations and requirements they have of each other. This should include the manner in which any formal assessment of the Supervisee's work will be conducted. Each party should assess the value of working with the other and review this regularly.
- B2.5 Supervisors should ensure that their supervisees are aware of the supervisor's

qualifications, theoretical approach and method of working.

