



*Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy*

## **Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (IACP) Pre-budget Submission.**

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.

What we do:

IACP represent 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. IACP also partners other National and International Counselling and Psychotherapy Associations to advance the development of Counselling and Psychotherapy worldwide.

The Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy is calling for the following items to be taken into consideration in the budget 2019:

- 1. Increased investment in talking therapies and specifically, IACP is seeking support for a feasibility study that would appraise an evidence-based National Health Service (NHS) counselling treatment for low to moderate depression, in an Irish healthcare setting***
- 2. Expanding the existing supports which provide tax relief for medical expenses and a range of health-related benefits under the PRSI system to include Counselling and Psychotherapy***
- 3. The same VAT Exemption for Counsellors and Psychotherapists as available for other allied health professionals***

## ***1. Increased investment in talking therapies and specifically, IACP is seeking support for a feasibility study that would appraise an evidence-based National Health Service (NHS) counselling treatment in an Irish healthcare setting***

Earlier this year, the Oireachtas Health Committee launched a report on mental health services in Ireland which recommended an increased use of counselling. The report pointed out that in Ireland €400 million is spent each year on drugs by the mental health services while only €10 million is spent on counselling.

The IACP's proposal to support this call for an increase in use of talking therapies is to introduce an initiative which advocates a 'stepped model' of community-based mental health care. IACP is proposing a new initiative - A Person-Centred Experiential Counselling for Depression Programme (PCE- CfD)- using tried and trusted methods that have been proven to work and to be cost-effective in Britain. IACP are proposing an alliance with the State, to develop a new programme that will - if funded and structured correctly - tackle depression by integrating existing mental health resources with primary care.

Our UK equivalent, the British Association for Counsellors and Psychotherapists (BACP) developed the programme at the request of the NHS following the introduction in Britain of the national 'Improving Access to Psychological Therapies' (IAPT) programme. This programme aims to make therapy free on the NHS for low-intensity mental illness, where previously medication was almost the only option. The IACP is proposing that an initiative similar to Person-Centred Experiential Counselling for Depression Programme (PCE-CfD) be developed in Ireland and that the IACP would partner with the HSE in developing a tailor-made solution for the Irish system.

According to Prof. Pim Cuijpers: "Four decades of outcome research on psychotherapies for depression: an overview of meta-analyses":

- psychotherapies were found to be equally as effective as pharmacotherapy and combined treatments were found to be more effective than either of them alone
- depression is a public health challenge and issue. The prevalence of depression is at 4.4% worldwide and depression is a mental health disorder affecting primarily the adult age group – that is to say, people of working age
- psychotherapy effects last longer than those of pharmacotherapy

## **Person-Centred Experiential Counselling for Depression Pilot Proposal**

### **Feasibility Study**

A feasibility study is required to see how PCE-CfD programme could work effectively within the Irish setting.

There are six groups that provide PCE-CfD training in England and these work closely together. In Ireland, once feasibility has been established by the study, the objective would be for publicly funded training to be provided for counsellors via IACP in collaboration with an educational provider.

## Funding details

The funding required for the study would cover 5 areas:

- Training of therapists
- Cost of the Counselling sessions
- Cost of the Supervision of work
- Recruitment and Administration
- Assessment tools and software for data analysis

## Training Programme Details

**Programme title:** Person-Centred Experiential Counselling for Depression (PCE-CfD)

**Qualification:** Person-Centred Experiential Counselling for Depression (PCE-CfD)

**Duration:** 30 hours taught (including pre-reading), Min. 3 full days in the class, 3-12 months post-course practice

### Description

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The University of Nottingham is a British Association for Counseling and Psychotherapy (BACP) Approved Provider, delivering training in the East and West Midlands and East of England regions since January 2013.

PCE-CfD is an innovative development in counselling and psychotherapy. The qualification is recognised by the NHS and enhances career prospects for qualified therapists.

### Training Overview:

Person-Centred Experiential Counselling for Depression (PCE-CfD) was formerly called Counselling for Depression (CfD). The name change has been made to ensure there is clarity and consistency.

PCE-CfD training deepens understanding of the connection between research, theory and practice. Research into person-centred practice that engages with emotional processing has shown to be effective with clients who are anxious and depressed.

IACP is looking to recruit 20 IACP Accredited Members, who would have a qualification in Person-Centred or Integrative Counselling and Psychotherapy and have a minimum of 2 years' experience in working with clients.

## **Client work Details**

IACP estimate that the minimum number of clients who need to complete the programme for the purpose of this study should be over 100. Therefore, after taking into consideration the dropout rate of clients, we propose 160 as a client number in this trial.

160 clients would equal 8 clients per each therapist, with 16 to 32 client sessions per month, and a minimum of 1 hour of supervision required on a monthly basis.

Client sessions would be on a weekly basis for the first 4 weeks, after that these would move to bi-weekly sessions.

Estimated overall amount of client sessions required: 1600 (average of 10 sessions per client)  
This estimation is based on the CfD research – positive results are shown after 6-8 sessions but a maximum amount of sessions available is 20.

## **Supervision of client work**

20 therapists will be required to work on a monthly basis with a trained Supervisor. We would require at least 5 Supervisors to conduct this work (they would have to supervise 4 therapists each, this number of supervisors takes into consideration a dropout rate).

Supervision sessions required for 1600 client hours:

1 hour of supervision required monthly, trial will take approx. 6 months.

Approx. amount of supervision sessions required for a 6-month long trial (6 months x 20 therapists): 120

## **Additional Supervisor Training**

Initially, we will engage already trained supervisors in CfD in Ireland or would offer online supervision with trained CfD Supervisors in the UK to complete the pilot study.

After 20 therapists are fully qualified, we would recruit 5 potential Supervisors out of 20 CfD trained therapists, who would complete the CfD Supervision Training and be able to engage in supervision contracts with other CfD trained therapists post completion of the pilot.

## **CORE Net System**

The annual license will be required for CORE Net for client management including registration, letters, SMS appointment reminders, case notes. The same system is used to manage Counselling in Primary Care service in the HSE.

## Overall Estimated Feasibility Study Funding Required

€250,000.00

## Estimated Trial Time frame

Recruitment of Admin Staff, appropriate Therapists and Supervisors – 4 months

Training of therapists and client recruitment – 6 months

Client work and data collection – 8 months

Post-trial data analysis and dissemination of results– 6 months

Project time frame approx. 24 months.

### ***2. Expanding the existing supports which provide tax relief for medical expenses and a range of health-related benefits under the PRSI system***

Another 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 and a range of health-related benefits under the **PRSI system**, to include support for mental health services such as counselling and psychotherapy.

### ***3. The same VAT Exemption for Counsellors and Psychotherapists as available for other allied health professionals***

Under current rules, Counsellors and Psychotherapists have to 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.

## **Conclusion**

Investing more money in treating mental health problems earlier would mean fewer people are likely to require more costly crisis care services. Untreated, mental health problems impose a significant cost on the health service, as symptoms escalate, and more costly treatments are required to address the consequences. The impact on individuals, families, schools and businesses is also considerable. Many forms of talking therapies achieve good outcomes but patients are potentially losing out, as they are unable to get access to these effective treatments.

Provision of talking therapies such as counselling and psychotherapy is a largely low-cost activity in Britain's NHS. Providing the right talking therapy interventions has consistently been shown to improve recovery rates.

The WRC (Work Research Centre) estimated that 600,000 people, who might have a common mental health condition such as anxiety or depression, could benefit from talking therapies. WRC go on to say that every €1 added in increasing easy access to counselling and psychotherapy would give a €4 return on the investment because of lower healthcare costs for the rest of the health system, lower social welfare payments and increased productivity with people getting back to work more quickly.

Choice is also a fundamental part of delivering good quality healthcare and it is also associated with better response to treatment. Experience in the NHS shows people are more likely to report therapy helped them recover, if they have been able to choose their type of treatment, where they access appointments and when. IACP is calling for the state to facilitate improved access for the people of Ireland to talking therapies such as counselling and psychotherapy.

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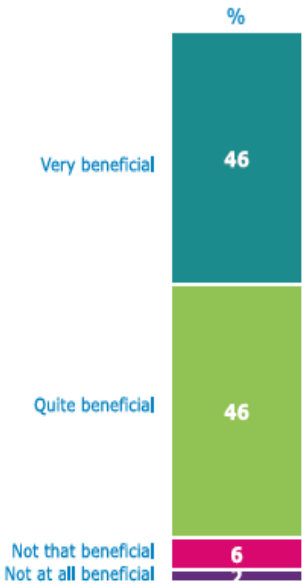
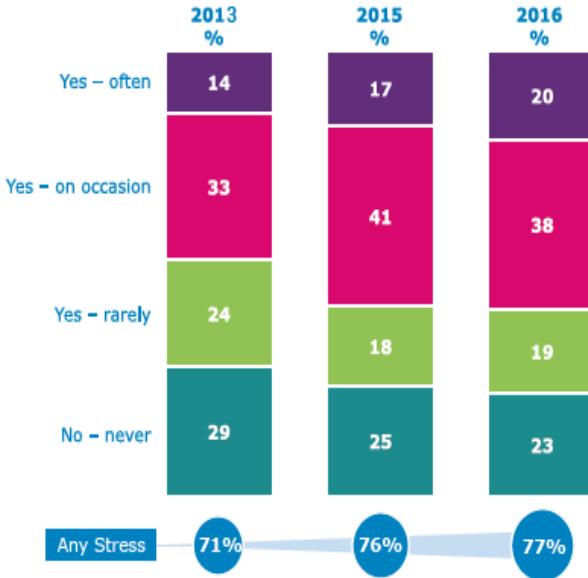
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# IACP Research

OVER THESE 3 YEARS  
LEVELS OF STRESS AMONG  
ADULTS IN IRELAND HAVE

**Increased  
by 6  
percentage  
points**

THIS INCREASE HAS BEEN  
DRIVEN BY THOSE CLAIMING  
TO EXPERIENCE STRESS  
OFTEN/ON OCCASION



**9 IN 10  
92% of Irish  
Adults**

**BELIEVE SPEAKING TO A COUNSELLOR  
OR PSYCHOTHERAPIST WOULD BE  
VERY/QUITE BENEFICIAL**

**THOSE LIVING IN RURAL AREAS ARE MORE  
STRONGLY IN AGREEMENT WITH THE BENEFITS OF  
SPEAKING TO COUNSELLORS/PSYCHOTHERAPISTS**

# IACP at a Glance



**130**

**Volunteer  
Members**

**GIVE THEIR TIME  
FREELY TO BENEFIT  
THE IACP**



## **Awareness of IACP**

**A Quarter of The  
Adult Population of Ireland  
Have Heard of The IACP**

**THAT'S APPROXIMATELY  
940,000 IRISH ADULTS**

**WOMEN AND THOSE IN THE MIDDLE CLASS ARE THE MOST LIKELY TO HAVE HEARD OF THE IACP PREVIOUSLY. AWARENESS OF THE ORGANISATION IS LOWEST AMONG UNDER 25s.**