

Release

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Ahead of World Mental Health Day on Friday, October 10th, the Irish Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (IACP) has called on elderly people to discuss mental health issues.

The association, which is the professional representative body in Ireland for accredited psychotherapists and counsellors, is making the call as its own data shows that almost one in four (23%) of elderly people in Ireland keep their problems to themselves.

This rate, the IACP has said, is almost twice the rate of the general adult population – or 13% - who would not tell anyone about their problems.

The data was collected on behalf of the IACP by polling company Behaviour & Attitudes in 2012.

“Elderly people suffer from different types of stress and anxiety than younger people and mostly these relate to fears about their future, financial concerns post-retirement and loneliness and the pain of loss due to bereavement,” said Shane Kelly, Professional Services Manager at IACP.

“You are never too old to talk about your problems and discussing your personal issues with a professional counsellor or psychotherapist can be of great support in times of crisis or change.

“There’s no reason to feel embarrassed. The therapeutic process can help alleviate difficulties for people who are experiencing problems in a range of areas,” Mr Kelly added.

The IACP’s own figures also show that only half (49%) of over-65s would discuss their problems with a friend or family member, compared to 70% of all adults.

The association also expressed concern about the findings of a survey released last week by St James's Hospital and supported by Age Friendly Ireland, which showed that one-third of over-65 in Ireland were affected by loneliness.

“It’s good to talk, no matter what age you are and discussing your problems with friends, family or relatives can be of huge benefit,” Mr Kelly said. “In some cases, it can be helpful to get professional help and it’s important that people can trust their therapist.

“All accredited members of the IACP are fully trained and can deal with various issues confidentially. We represent over 3,500 therapists across every county in Ireland,” said Mr. Kelly.

For a list of qualified and accredited counsellors and psychotherapists, visit www.iacp.ie

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 3,250 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.