

Dear Members

IACP representatives (Bernie Darcy - Cathaoirleach, Shane Kelly - Professional Services Manager, Naoise Kelly - National Director) attended a private meeting with Minister Kathleen Lynch (Minister of State, Department of Health and Children with responsibility for Disability, Older People, Equality & Mental Health), at her office in Leinster house on the 11th of June, 2014. The meeting took place between 2pm and 3.15pm and was also attended by Officials from the Regulatory and Mental Health units of the Department of Health & Children.

IACP representatives updated the Minister on our recent work and informed the Minister, in detail, of IACP's aims relating to the Statutory Regulation of Counselling and Psychotherapy. The Minister and her Officials showed themselves to be well informed on developments within the profession and were aware of IACP's work and profile in the area.

The Minister said that Counselling and Psychotherapy will definitely be regulated and that she sees this as a priority. Importantly, the Minister and her Officials stated that regulation may happen before the regulation of the current list of 12 professions (being regulated by CORU - the Health and Social Care professional Council) is complete. This is a welcome change to the timeline for regulation, which previously, was dependent on the 12 other professions regulation being complete. The Minister said that the aim is to have the regulatory process started within a year (i.e. by June 2015). This process will involve many considerations (by the Department of Health and CORU) including: Study of the QQI award standards, a public consultation process through a forum, more consultation with professional bodies and the scoping & assessment of education and training standards. The grand-parenting standards requirements will also need careful consideration and the Department of Health and CORU will also consult with stakeholders before deciding on the standards that need to be met during the transition (grand-parenting) period.

The issue of title/s (i.e. Counsellor/Psychotherapist) and how this applies to regulation was also discussed. Department officials stated that if any differentiation between Counselling and Psychotherapy was to be made, it would be based on evidence. The officials were interested to hear that, following IACP's release of our position paper, the Psychological Therapies Forum (PTF) now intend to properly address the matter of definitions and differentiation. The officials were pleased to hear that, putting aside the difficulties relating to the issue of differentiation, all members of the PTF (which was founded by IACP) are keen to work together towards regulation.

The Minister was particularly interested to hear of International regulatory developments and was encouraged by IACP's strong connections to other National Associations. The Minister was also informed about IACP's higher level of quality control of course accreditation through our new course assessment process. Course assessment will also be carried out by CORU under regulation. IACP representatives also offered IACP as a resource, in the area of Counselling and Psychotherapy, to the Minister and her department.

For more information on CORU and regulatory developments in other professions (designated under the "Health and Social Care Professionals act, 2005") please see: <http://www.coru.ie/>



*Photo Caption: Bernie Darcy (Cathaoirleach), Kathleen Lynch (Minister for Mental Health) Naoise Kelly (National Director) & Shane Kelly (Professional Services Manager) meeting in the Dáil to progress the introduction of the regulation of Counselling & Psychotherapy in Ireland - June 11th, 2014.

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