

## Press Release

### **4 in 5 (84%) Under 24s Support Free Counselling and Psychotherapy for Medical Card Holders**

#### **- Research shows 84% in favour of free Counselling and Psychotherapy for Medical Card Holders -**

**Thursday, 4<sup>th</sup> July 2013:** As many students in the under 24 age group prepare for exams, results and to make important career decisions, new research commissioned by the Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (IACP) shows that more than 4 out of 5 (84%) Irish adults under 24 think counselling and psychotherapy should be free for medical card holders. The research also showed that 84% of adults would support free counselling and psychotherapy for those with a medical card.

“While counsellors and psychotherapists try to facilitate those seeking professional help, there are people who simply can’t afford to pay for the service, and as a result they are dealing with tough issues by themselves. This can have a negative effect on their overall health. The new research shows that people are in support of free counselling and psychotherapy services to help those suffering,” said Naoise Kelly, National Director, IACP.

He continued “The support from the under 24 age group shows that they can relate to a need for counselling and psychotherapy. As many of them prepare to face exams and make decisions about their careers, stress or emotional problems may be more prevalent and if they are struggling to cope I’d urge them to contact the IACP to find a counsellor or psychotherapist in their area,”

New rules relating to the qualification for medical cards for under 70s include: Home Improvement Loan payments are excluded from the standard medical card means test assessment from April 2013 onwards and the €50 per week from Travel-to-Work expenses, which is allowed to cover standing charges such as car depreciation, is excluded from the standard medical card means test assessment from April 2013 onwards.

Some of the key findings of the new research include:

- 68% of people would be willing to pay for counselling or psychotherapy

- 75% of people would be more likely to pay for counselling and psychotherapy if they knew that their practitioner was fully trained and registered as a member of a recognised professional body

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**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 3,500 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](http://www.iacp.ie).

**References:**

The IACP research survey was carried out by Behaviour and Attitudes Marketing Research Ltd.