

Press Release

World Mental Health Day Focuses on Mental Health and Older Adults

- Research reveals Over 65s are most concerned about health -

Tuesday, 07th October: The World Health Organization celebrates World Mental Health Day this Thursday, focusing on mental health and older adults. Recent research commissioned by the Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (IACP) shows that more than half (52%) of over 65s would be most likely to seek professional help for health worries, while more than 4 in 5 (84%) people aged over 65 said they felt it was more acceptable to talk about emotional problems than in the past.

“As World Mental Health Day approaches I’d encourage people to look out for older people in their area. Mental health concerns can have a serious impact on quality of life. If you know someone who is struggling with mental health concerns you should encourage them to talk to a doctor, pharmacist, or other healthcare professional, or the IACP who can direct you to an accredited counsellor or psychotherapist. Counselling and psychotherapy is highly beneficial for many people and it can help you to look at things in an objective way,” said Shane Kelly, Professional Services Manager, IACP.

Mr Kelly offers some simple steps you can take if you think an older person is struggling with mental health:

- Offer to listen. Sometimes people just need someone to listen to them
- Offer to go with them to a health care professional
- Help them to make a list of things that cause anxiety, and another list of all the good things in their life
- Keep in contact. Calling a friend once a week to see how they are doing can really help to lift someone’s mood

The recent research commissioned by the IACP looked at Irish people’s attitudes to mental health and showed many interesting results. Highlights from the research include:

- More than 4 in 5 (83%) of over 65s agree that seeking counselling before a problem gets out of hand is a good idea
- Only 23% of over 65s have consulted with a counsellor or psychotherapist in the last year

Every year on 10th of October, The World Health Organization joins in celebrating the World Mental Health Day. The day is celebrated at the initiative of the World Federation of Mental Health and WHO supports this initiative through raising awareness on mental health issues using its strong relationships with the Ministries of health and civil society organizations across the globe.

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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.

References:

The IACP research survey was carried out in 2013 by Behaviour and Attitudes Marketing Research Ltd