

# The Institute of Hypnotherapy & Psychotherapy Graduates Association

Inc. National Hypnotherapy Psychotherapy Register



## Code of Ethics, Practice & Standards

[www.ichp-hypnotherapy.com](http://www.ichp-hypnotherapy.com) - ICHP Graduates Association

[www.nationalhypnotherapyregister.ie](http://www.nationalhypnotherapyregister.ie) - National Hypnotherapy Psychotherapy Register

## The Code of Ethics, Standards and Practice of the Institute of Clinical Hypnotherapy & Psychotherapy Graduates Association

All members of the ICHP GA commit themselves to the full acceptance of the Code of Ethics, Standards and Practice, accepting the Code as a systematic set of regulations and procedures for the making of ethical decisions and the resolution of ethical issues in the therapeutic context. It is a condition of membership that each applicant for membership undertakes in writing to be bound by the terms of the Code of Ethics and Conduct.

Breach or violation of the terms of the Code may lead to termination of membership of the ICHP GA.

Professional Misconduct shall mean any action with regard to the pursuit of an ICHP GA member's profession which is unethical or which is contrary to the specific rules of conduct set out in the Code.

ICHP GA is not a multi-therapy organisation. It is primarily a Graduates Association of Hypnotherapists who have studied the Psychotherapies (talking therapies).

### RESPONSIBILITIES TO CLIENTS

1. ICHP GA Members are expected to approach their work with the aim of resolving distress and promoting the well-being and potential to their clients. ICHP GA Members should endeavour to use their abilities and skills to their client's best advantage without prejudice and with due recognition of the value and dignity of every human being.
2. ICHP GA Members are required to inform clients or potential clients who so request information as to their training and qualifications.
3. ICHP GA Members are required to discuss with clients the expected number and duration of sessions, the fees, if any, which will be charged and the method of payment.
4. ICHP GA Members are responsible for discussing with clients the client's own expectations of the outcome or preferred outcome of the consultation; the methods which will be involved in attaining that outcome; relevant relationships with supervisors or others to whom the ICHP GA Member owes accountability and methods of recording information including by electronic means.
5. ICHP GA Members who become aware of a conflict between their Obligations to a client as set out in this Code and any legal or

ethical obligation to another agency or organisation or other personal contacts will discuss with and make explicit to the client the nature of those loyalties and conflicts.

6. ICHP GA Members should confirm as far as possible with their clients what other professional therapeutic relationships or methodology their clients may be involved in or undergoing. The Client's permission must be obtained by the ICHP GA Member if he/she wishes to contact other professional workers regarding any such relationships. This is to ensure protection of the client's best interests.

7. ICHP GA Members must be aware at all times that there are limits to their own competence. ICHP GA Members have a Duty of Care towards clients, never claiming skills which are not in fact possessed, and never offering assistance unless the presenting problems falls within the scope of the therapy being offered. ICHP GA Members must therefore be prepared in consultation with the client to make an appropriate referral where necessary to another professional. Where possible, a choice of other professionals must be given to the client. In making such a referral, it is the responsibility of the ICHP GA Member, as far as is reasonable, to verify the competence and integrity of the professional to whom the client is referred.

8. If a client so requests, a chaperon may be present during the consultation. This is possible at all times, e.g. Introductory talk, Suggestion Therapy, Dynamic Therapy, EXCEPT Hypno-Analytical Therapy.

9. An ICHP GA Member shall not accept any form of commission or split fee relating to a client referred to, or by her/him, by, or to, another member of the ICHP GA or other professional relationship with the ICHP GA Member.

## CONTACTS WITH THIRD PARTIES AND PUBLICATIONS

1. The hypnotherapist relationship is confidential between the ICHP GA Member and the client in two ways.

a. The fact that a person is or had been a client, or has enquired about becoming a client must remain confidential.

b. The context of any interaction between the ICHP GA Member and client is confidential and must not be disclosed.

2. Clinical Records - Ensure that client notes and records be kept secure and confidential and that the uses of computer records remain within the terms of the Data Protection Act.

3. Confidentiality - Obtain written permission from the client (or if appropriate, the client's parent/s or legal guardian/s) before either recording

client sessions or discussing undisguised cases with any person whatsoever. (Recording in this context means cases in which material has not been sufficiently altered in order to offer reasonable anonymity to all relevant parties).

4. Contact by the ICHP GA Member regarding the client's therapeutic relationship with the ICHP GA Member with third parties including relatives or friends of the client should happen only with the express knowledge and consent of the client.

5. Exceptions may only be made in the following circumstances:-

a. Where minors (under 18) are involved.

b. In the case of clients who the ICHP GA Member has reason to believe would be a danger to themselves or to others.

c. If disclosure is ordered by a Judge, Coroner or other similar official having such powers.

6. Personal information about the client, whether obtained directly from the client, or indirectly or by inference, must at all times be regarded as confidential and where possible the client must be informed before any disclosure (as regulated by this Code) is made. Where the client is a minor, any action taken by the ICHP GA Member must be in accordance with applicable legislation. Death of the client shall not terminate this obligation. The sharing of anonymous case histories with supervisors and peer-support groups is not a breach of professional confidentiality. The sharing of open case histories with supervisors and any referring to a medical practitioner is also not a breach, in the context of the above, i.e., client's safety and duty of care etc.

7. ICHP GA Members must obtain where possible the verifiable consent of the client for the publication of clinical material. The anonymity of the client shall be preserved unless prior written consent has been obtained. The ICHP GA Member shall not publish or use material which the client has requested should not be so used.

8. ICHP GA Members are required to clarify with clients the nature, purpose and conditions of any research in which clients are to be involved and to ensure that information and verifiable consent is given before commencement.

9. Material about clients held in computer files shall be secure and conform to the requirements of relevant legislation.

10. Should the ICHP GA Member be faced with a conflict between responsibility to the client and any legal obligations, the ICHP GA Member must conform to legal requirements.

11. In a case where notes are kept about a client, the notes, including any

case history or correspondence, shall be retained in safe custody by the ICHP GA Member for not less than six years.

12. ICHP GA Members when making statements or when involved in public activity, or involved in the media, should make it clear whether they are acting as members of specific organisations, or groups, or as representations of a discipline of psychotherapy/hypnotherapy.

13. The ICHP GA Member's primary concern is to the client and to ensure that any third parties, e.g. families, etc., are aware of this.

14. Hypnotherapists seek to promote ethics, integrity in the art and science of hypnotherapy/psychotherapy. They shall not participate, condone, or allow themselves to be associated with stage hypnosis, dishonesty or fraud.

15. ICHP GA Members should act to stop or offset the consequences of professional activities of a colleague or a member of another discipline which are clearly harmful or apparently unethical. Where such activity comes to the therapist's attention in the course of a confidential client's relationship with the professional, they use their professional judgement on whether to break confidentiality. If there is any doubt they should contact their supervisor and/or disciplinary committee and ICHP GA

Administrator/Chairperson who will further advise the therapist on the best course of action given the facts presented.

16. ICHP GA Members should avoid conflict of interests and not exploit any professional relationship to further their own personal, political or business interests.

#### NON-EXPLOITATION

1. The client/ICHP GA Member relationship is a professional relationship, ICHP GA Members must not exploit clients in financial, emotional, sexual or other ways, or use the effects of suggestion in hypnosis to gain benefit to themselves from another. The Hypnotherapist must not touch the client in any way that may be open to misinterpretation. In social situations, a clear distinction between personal and professional relationships must be maintained and it is the responsibility of the ICHP GA Member to maintain that distinction.

2. ICHP GA Members shall not sell to clients products to such an extent that she/he derives a significant proportion of her/his hypnotherapy income from such sales.

3. During the professional relationship and on ceasing the professional relationship between the ICHP GA Member and the client, the ICHP GA Member should not have sexual relationships or sexual contact with the client.

4. ICHP GA Members should recognise the importance to them and to their clients of a good working relationship and, in addition, the power and influence which this relationship can give the ICHP GA Member. The ICHP GA Member must act accordingly in the client's best interests.
5. Physical violence must not be used against clients although, exceptionally, physical restraint is permissible for the protection of person or property in accordance with the law.
6. ICHP GA Members must continually appraise for themselves and with their supervisor/s the effectiveness of their approach. ICHP GA Members have an obligation to seek appropriate advice if they feel unable to perform effectively and appropriately.
7. An ICHP GA Member shall not solicit or in any way disclose without the consent of the writer receipt of any testimonial or commendatory letter.
8. ICHP GA Members must ensure, as far as reasonably possible, that whenever an aspect to the client's condition is either known or suspected of being the treatment of which is beyond their training and expertise, the client should be advised to seek medical or other appropriate advice.
9. ICHP GA Members must maintain strict confidentiality within the client/therapist relationship, always provided that such confidentiality is consistent with the laws of the land.
10. ICHP GA Members must not permit consideration of religion, nationality, gender, age, disability, politics, or social standing to adversely influence client treatment.
11. ICHP GA Members must take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of both the client and any person who may be accompanying the client.
12. Hypnotherapists should ensure that their workplace and all facilities offered to both clients and their companions, will be in every respect suitable and appropriate for the service provided.

#### PROVISION OF A CONTRACT

All therapy is undertaken as a result of a contract between the client and the therapist. It is preferable that this should not be a verbal contract which is loose and open to misinterpretation. It should preferably be a written contract. Such a contract should include statements of cost per session or whole course of therapy, confidentiality, the clients right of access to the complaints procedure of the ICHP GA and the fact that there can be no guarantee of a 'cure'.

## CODE OF PRACTICE AND ETHICS

1. ICHP GA Members should discharge from treatment, at the earliest possible moment, consistent with the good care of the client, each and every client who present themselves for treatment.
2. ICHP GA Members should never use hypnosis or the effects of suggestion within hypnosis to gain benefit to themselves from another, unless such other person has been clearly appraised of the implications of such suggestions.
3. ICHP GA Members should avoid dual relationships with clients and should never offer her/his services under terms or conditions which might impair the free and complete exercise of his professional judgment and skill, reduce the quality of his service or risk exploitation.
4. ICHP GA Members must never say, do, carry out, or otherwise perform any word or action by deed or by inference so as to bring into disrepute the use of hypnosis as a form of therapy or the good name of the above.
5. ICHP GA Members should preserve totally and absolutely the client's right to anonymity and privacy, unless she/he is required to do so by law, or to protect the client's welfare, or that of the community. She/he should never publish or declare any information relating to any client or ex-client in any form or manner which is likely to identify such persons, except with the expressed permission of such persons.
6. ICHP GA Members are not allowed to offer, advertise, communicate, suggest, publish, promise, etc., lifetime guarantees, cures, or any guarantee, warranties or 100% (95%, 90%, etc) effective cures within the therapeutic process that commit's the therapist to unrealistic expectations that cannot be scientifically proven.
7. ICHP GA Members should never be involved in any stage performance where hypnosis is used to provide solely a form of public entertainment and amusement.
8. ICHP GA Members should keep an interest in, or investigation of, the paranormal (para-physical matters) as totally separate from any work of therapy using hypnosis.
9. ICHP GA Members should freely consult with other professional hypnotherapists (peer support) on a regular basis and in difficult situations or when it seems that the quality of service may be improved. Hypnotherapists accept the principle of supervision and are committed to regular supervision with an ICHP GA supervisor. The primary purpose of supervision is to optimise the therapeutic purpose of addressing the client's needs and monitoring and supporting the therapist in her/his work. A therapist must not work without regular supervision of at least once a month.

10. Never to visit the house of a client for hypnotherapy/psychotherapy unless such visit is with the knowledge and consent of a medical Doctor and only if an observer is present.
  11. Never to induce hypnosis in a juvenile under the age of 18 years unless with the knowledge and approval of the parents/guardians and then only if an observer is present. No ICHP GA Member should treat a juvenile without Garda Clearance.
  12. ICHP GA Members should print on their brochures and have on their websites the following:-  
“If any client has a genuine cause for concern please contact the Administrator of the Institute of Clinical Hypnotherapy & Psychotherapy Graduate Association at [www.ichp-hypnotherapy.com](http://www.ichp-hypnotherapy.com)”.  
Any complaint made by a member of the public will be dealt with by the Administrator and two elected members of the ICHP GA.
  13. ICHP GA Members must have Professional Indemnity Insurance for Hypnotherapy/Psychotherapy. Each year, on renewing their membership, they must forward a copy of their insurance to the Membership Secretary.
  14. ICHP GA Members agree to participate in 60 hours of Continuing Professional Development over each 24 months in Hypnotherapy/Psychotherapy and to forward copies of their CPD with their renewal forms to the Membership Secretary.
  15. ICHP GA Members shall make no claim that they hold specific qualifications unless such claim can be fully substantiated. The title Doctor may only be used if the member has a medical qualification.
  16. ICHP GA Members must explain to clients in advance of any treatment the fee levels for treatment and any charges which might be imposed for non-attendance or cancelled appointments.
  17. ICHP GA Members should inform the Administrator in writing of any disciplinary action taken against them by any professional body, or by members of the public, The Administrator should also be informed of any criminal offence of which they have been convicted.
  18. A “research subject” should be considered synonymous with a “client” and consequently all relevant Clauses within the ICHP GA ‘Code of Ethics & Practices’ remain applicable.
- N.B. The psychological well-being of the individual subject is always more important than the research itself.