



Code of Ethics and Practice of The Clinical Hypnotherapy Professionals Association

This document is the code of ethics and practice for Hypnotherapist members of The CHPA. The scope of this Code is to govern the relationship between:

- a. hypnotherapist and clients;
- b. Hypnotherapist and other healthcare professionals;
- c. Hypnotherapist and the profession of hypnotherapy.

The CHPA is the leading professional organisation in Ireland for ethical hypnotherapists. We are dedicated to advancing the science and arts of Hypnotherapy by achieving the highest standards in facilitating positive, empowering and lasting personal change. Membership of Clinical Hypnotherapy Professionals Association (hereinafter The CHPA) is entirely subject to adherence by members to this code.

Interpretation

In this Code:

“Hypnotherapist” means a practitioner who holds current membership of The CHPA as a Hypnotherapist member

“Therapist” means a practitioner of hypnotherapy, who is a current member of The CHPA.

“Child” means a person under 18 years of age excluding a person who is or has been married

“Vulnerable Person” means a person who has a mental illness or dementia, or is intellectually disabled, or who has a physical disability, in any case which is “of such a nature or degree as to severely restrict the capacity of the person to guard himself or herself against serious exploitation or abuse, whether physical or sexual, by another person, or to report such exploitation or abuse to An Garda Síochána or both”.

“Client” means a person, a group of people, or a corporate person who seeks the assistance of the therapist and formally enters a relationship with the therapist to avail of the services offered by the therapist. As used in this code it is also to be understood as encompassing the terms “child” and “vulnerable person” in either singular or plural forms as the context indicates

“Competence” means the area of practise in which the practitioner has achieved and maintained certified qualification recognised by The CHPA

General Ethical Principles

As individuals offering services to the public, therapists are required to be ethically aware and are expected to act in accordance with the general ethical principles reflected in the mores of the society in which they practise. In addition to those generally accepted principles the therapist is required to follow a code which relates specifically to the profession in which he or she is engaged and the work he or she does with clients.

Code of Ethics and Practice of The CHPA

This professional ethical code is founded upon the three fundamental ethical principles of

- 1) the primacy of client welfare,
- 2) the competence of the therapist,
- 3) the integrity of the profession.

The primacy of Client Welfare requires that therapists

approach their work with the aim of resolving distress and promoting the well-being of their clients; use their abilities and skills to their clients' best advantage without prejudice and with due recognition of the value and dignity of every human being; understand and maintain within its limits the confidential nature of their relationship with their clients; ensure their clients are always fully appraised and in agreement with any professional action proposed.

The competence of the therapist requires that therapists

monitor and develop their professional skills and ethical awareness on a continuing basis; accept that their expertise is limited; recognise the limits of their own capacity; take care not to exceed these limits;

The integrity of the profession requires that therapists

in their professional activities, act in a trustworthy and reputable manner towards clients and the community; refer clients to colleagues and other professionals, as appropriate, to ensure the best service to clients; act appropriately to resolve ethical dilemmas and conflicts of interest.

personally take steps to manage personal stress, maintain their own mental health, and ensure that their work is professionally supervised; are honest and accurate about their qualifications and the effectiveness of the services which they offer; treat others in a fair, open and straightforward manner; honour professional commitments; act to clarify any confusion about their role or responsibilities; avoid using their professional relationship to exploit clients; deal appropriately with personal conflicts of interest; take action against harmful or unethical behaviour in colleagues

The Ethical Principles in Practice

1. The Primacy of Client Welfare

requires that the therapist and the client understand clearly from the beginning what their relationship involves, and what each brings to it. Therapists are bound to

a. Engagement

- i. only offer services in areas in which they have demonstrated their competence
- ii. 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.
- iii. give to clients or potential clients who request such information the details and evidence of their training and qualifications

Code of Ethics and Practice of The CHPA

- iv. never claim skills or training which are not possessed or evidenced,
- v. remain aware of their own limitations and, wherever appropriate, be prepared to refer a client to another therapist regardless of discipline;
- vi. ensure that wherever a client is seeking assistance for the relief of physical symptoms, unless having already done so, that the client be advised to contact a registered Medical Therapist
- vii. discuss with potential clients
 1. the client's own expectations of the outcome or preferred outcome of the consultation;
 2. the methods which will be involved in attaining that outcome;
 3. relevant relationships with supervisors or others to whom therapists owe accountability;
 4. the limits of confidentiality;
 5. methods of recording information including electronic means
 6. the fee levels, precise terms of payment and any charges which might be imposed for non-attendance or cancelled appointments
 7. the client's right of access to the complaints procedure of The CHPA
 8. the fact that there can be no guarantee of a 'cure'.
- viii. never offer their services under terms or conditions which might impair the free and complete exercise of their professional judgement and skill, reduce the quality of their service or risk exploitation.
- ix. use a written form of contract for their own protection and to minimise all potential for abuse, misunderstanding and conflict. The contract should include cost per session or whole course of therapy, confidentiality and its limits, and some form of consent by the client to a process which has been explained to him or her.

Code of Ethics and Practice of The CHPA

- b. In the provision of the service therapist is bound to
- i. 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 therapist.
 - ii. at all times, act in the client's best interests
 - iii. provide the client with the best possible service available irrespective of religion, nationality, gender, marital status, age, race, sexual orientation, membership of the travelling community, disability, politics, or social standing
 - iv. avoid touching the client in any way that may be open to misinterpretation. (Before employing tactile hypnotic induction or deepening techniques, both an explanation should be given and permission received from the client or the client's parent/guardian).
 - v. ensure that all therapeutic outcomes will benefit the client and not harm them
 - vi. avoid exploiting clients in financial, emotional, sexual or other ways
 - vii. avoid using the effects of suggestion in hypnosis to gain benefit to themselves from another.
 - viii. continually appraise for themselves and with their supervisor/s the effectiveness of their approach. Therapists have an obligation to seek appropriate advice if they feel unable to perform effectively and appropriately
 - ix. confirm as far as possible with their clients what other professional therapeutic relationships or methodology their clients may be undergoing or may have previously undergone. The Client's permission must be obtained by Therapist if he/she wishes to contact other professional workers regarding any such relationships.
 - x. accept that any client referred to them by a registered Medical Therapist (or other relevant agency) remains the clinical responsibility of the Medical Therapist (or agency) and thereby agree to keep that Medical Therapist (or agency) suitably informed of the client's progress
 - xi. never knowingly offer advice to a client which either conflicts with, or is contrary to that given, by the client's registered Medical Advisors. (If they have doubts or concerns with regard to a client's prescribed medication, they should, always with their client's permission, contact the medical advisor personally).
 - xii. act to stop (for example by reporting to the appropriate authorities such as the police or professional body) or offset the consequences of professional activities of a colleague or a member of another discipline which are clearly harmful or apparently unethical.

Code of Ethics and Practice of The CHPA

- xiii. should act in emergencies (for example, where a client threatens suicide) on the basis of their professional judgement, if necessary without consent, but if possible obtain fully informed consent at a later stage
- xiv. do everything reasonably possible to stop or offset the consequences or actions of others, when these actions are likely to cause serious physical harm or death. Action may include reporting to appropriate authorities (for example, the police) or an intended victim, and may be carried out even when a confidential relationship is involved.
- xv. familiarize themselves with the definitions of Child Abuse (Neglect, Emotional Abuse, Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse), the indicators signifying the possibility of risk to a child and the criteria for a “grounded child protection and welfare concern”.
- xvi. take responsibility to inform and update themselves in regard to current and ongoing developments in relation to child protection and welfare.
- xvii. comply with the laws regarding children and vulnerable people.
- xviii. when client disclosure indicates the possibility, to establish if there may be children at risk
- xix. discharge from treatment, at the earliest possible moment, consistent with the good care of the client, each and every client who presents him or herself for treatment
- xx. give full consideration to the efficacy of treatment, including the manner in which their rapport with the client may affect such efficacy. The therapist has the right to refuse or terminate any treatment if he or she has a reasonable belief that it will not be, or will not continue to be, efficacious. In refusing or terminating treatment due care must be given to fully explaining the rationale for refusal or termination to the client
- xxi. satisfy themselves that discontinuation of therapy will cause no harm to the client
- xxii. act throughout the provision of service and in perpetuity thereafter to preserve the confidentiality of the relationship with the client subject only to the laws of the Republic of Ireland and the therapist’s ethical and legal duty to prevent harm to the client and all other individuals.

2. The Ethical Principle of The Competence of the Therapist

means in practice that therapists

- a. through their skills and knowledge strive to ensure and maintain the highest standards of competence in their work
- b. remain in supervision to ensure that they exercise their skills only within their own capacity and remain open to constant improvement through the

Code of Ethics and Practice of The CHPA

supervision process by adhering to The CHPA Supervision policy as defined from time to time

- c. constantly update their knowledge and skill set through the supervision process and through ongoing education, adhering to the Membership requirements of The CHPA as defined from time to time in its policy on Continuing Professional Development (CPD).
- d. recognize the limits of their competence and expertise, providing only those services and using only those techniques for which they are qualified by training and experience. Competence includes being able to recognize when they are unable to offer a professional service
- e. recommend to or refer the client to, if appropriate, other hypnotherapists who are not members of The CHPA
- f. recommend to, or refer the client to, if appropriate, professionals from other disciplines
- g. give, where possible, a choice of other professionals for referral or recommendation. In making such a recommendation or referral, it is the responsibility of the therapist, as far as is reasonable, to verify the competence and integrity of the professional to whom the client is referred
- h. not illegally practise medicine or psychology and recommend that a client seek medical advice when this is prudent.

3. The Principle of The Integrity of the Profession

means in practice that therapists are bound to

- a. observe all laws, uphold the dignity and honour of the profession and accept its self-imposed disciplines.
- b. promote ethics and integrity in the art and science of hypnotherapy.
- c. 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 part of therapy.
- d. make every reasonable effort to ensure that hypnotherapy knowledge is not misused, intentionally or unintentionally, to harm others or infringe human rights.
- e. never be involved in or associated with, nor condone or promote any stage performance or similar situation where hypnosis is used solely to provide public entertainment and amusement
- f. not participate, condone, or allow themselves to be associated with dishonesty or fraud.
- g. not sell to clients products to such an extent that they derive a significant proportion of their hypnotherapy income from such sales.
- h. not accept any form of commission or split fee relating to a client referred to, or by, him or her, by, or to, another member of The CHPA or other professional.

Code of Ethics and Practice of The CHPA

- i. avoid conflict of interests and not exploit any professional relationship to further their own personal, political or business interests
- j. not solicit or in any way disclose the receipt of any testimonial or commendatory letter without the consent of the author of such document.
- k. ensure that all advertising, no matter in what form or medium it is placed, represents a truthful, honest and accurate picture of themselves, their skill base, qualifications and facilities and that any claims for the successful outcome of treatments (in whatever format) shall be based upon verifiable, fully documented evidence.
- l. desist from offering (advertising, communicating, suggesting, publishing, promising, etc.) lifetime guarantees, cures, or any guarantee, warranties or 100% (95%, 90%, etc) effective cures within the therapeutic process which commit the therapist to unrealistic expectations that cannot be scientifically verified.
- m. display only valid qualifications and certificates issued in respect of relevant training courses and events or certificates of memberships, registration, validation or accreditation as issued or awarded by relevant professional bodies.
- n. only use the title "Dr" if they are medically licensed or their title is both issued and accredited by a university recognised in Ireland and in a subject relevant to hypnotherapy (e.g. counselling, psychotherapy or psychology).
- o. only to use titles such as psychotherapist or psychologist if they hold a separate qualification entitling them to membership of that profession's professional body
- p. maintain at their own expense, a form of malpractice insurance known as Professional Indemnity Insurance, unless otherwise so insured by an employer for the practice of hypnotherapy.
- q. conduct a private practice in hypnotherapy ONLY upon receipt of clear evidence that they are being held covered by such insurance as mentioned in clause "p" above. Students of hypnotherapy who are student members of The CHPA need to have insurance coverage when working with clients and need to inform their insurance company once they become qualified.
- r. never visit the house of a client or potential client for hypnotherapy, unless such visit is with the knowledge and consent of a Doctor of medicine and only if an observer is present.
- s. not display any affiliation with or hold themselves out to be connected with an organisation in a manner which falsely or misleadingly implies the sponsorship or endorsement of that organisation
- t. to conduct all and any research only in compliance with the Ethical Guidelines for Research issued by The CHPA from time to time

Complaints

Complaints against therapists infringing this code can be made using the Complaints procedure of The CHPA.