

Codes of Conduct and Ethics for Members

It is the duty of every Member to inform the Company Secretary or Chairman of any alleged or suspected breach by any Member of any part of the NACHP's Codes of Conduct and Ethics.



**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNSELLORS
HYPNOTHERAPISTS AND PSYCHOTHERAPISTS**

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1 Definitions

NACHP	The term 'NACHP' is used to refer to the National Association of Counsellors, Hypnotherapists and Psychotherapists Limited.
Clinical Psychotherapy	In the context of this document the single term 'Clinical Psychotherapy' is used to represent every discipline associated with the treatment of all or any psychological conditions including both counselling and hypnotherapy.
Clinical Psychotherapist	The term 'Clinical Psychotherapist' is used to refer to any Member of the NACHP with responsibility for the provision of Clinical Psychotherapy as described above.
Client	The term 'Client' is used to refer to the recipient of any of these services. The Client may be an individual, family, couple, group or organisation.

2 Standards of Practice

All Clients are entitled to the highest standards of practice and care from their Clinical Psychotherapist. Standards of practice and care require both professional competence and observance of the professional ethics of the NACHP.

2.1 Maintaining a Qualified Practice

- Clinical Psychotherapists are urged to review their need for professional and personal support.
- Clinical Psychotherapists must be aware of the need for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and ensure that this is an integral part of their practice. Records of such CPD and other training should be kept for scrutiny by the NACHP if required.
- Regular monitoring and review of work is essential to maintain a professional practice.
- Clinical Psychotherapists should keep up to date with the latest knowledge and respond to the changing circumstances of the profession.
- Clinical Psychotherapists must take reasonable steps to be aware of current law as it applies to their practice.

2.2 Terms and Conditions of Therapy

- The Clinical Psychotherapist is responsible for clarifying the terms upon which their services are being offered in advance of the Client incurring any financial obligation or costs.
- It is recommended that the Client is provided at the outset of treatment with a standard, simple form detailing fees and duration of sessions, as well as the Clinical Psychotherapist's practise with regards to cancellations, missed appointments, late arrivals and 'after care' or 'between sessions' contact. It will be in the interest of both parties to have the Client sign the form to indicate agreement.
- All information regarding therapy services should be honest, accurate, avoid unjustifiable claims and be consistent with maintaining the standing of the profession.
- Care should be taken when presenting qualifications and professional standing.
- The Client should be informed of the likely number of sessions that the Clinical Psychotherapist judges to be required as early as possible in the course of treatment.

2.3 Confidentiality and Client Records

- It is fundamental to the proper practice of Clinical Psychotherapy that all personal details of the Client, the nature of the problem presented, the therapy given and the identity of the Client remain confidential between the Client and the Clinical Psychotherapist.
- All records (with the exception of the Clinical Psychotherapist's private notes), personal details, documentation, copies of letters etc., referring to the Client must be fully available to that Client on demand unless it is believed that the imparting of such information would be detrimental to the Client.
- Details of the Client and the therapy given will normally be disclosed only to an appropriate third party (e.g. a doctor) as part of the Client's overall treatment. This should only be undertaken with the written consent of the Client, except where the Client presents a danger to themselves or to others, or the Clinical Psychotherapist is legally required to do so by the appropriate authorities.
- If discussion of the Client's case takes place with another Clinical Psychotherapist for advice or supervision purposes the Client's identity must be fully protected. The Client should be informed if such discussion is likely to take place.
- All Client records and personal details should be kept in a secure (preferably locked) place accessible only to the Clinical Psychotherapist.
- Arrangements should be made for safe disposal of Client records in the event of the death, retirement or incapacity of the Clinical Psychotherapist.
- If any information is to be used in case studies, reports or other publications, the Client's informed consent must be obtained, and their identity must be effectively disguised.
- Should the Client be asked to take part in research, then the Clinical Psychotherapist must ensure that the ethical guidelines as laid down by the NACHP must be observed. (Further information can be obtained from the Head of Ethics).
- Working with young people under the legal age of consent requires particular ethical awareness, sensitivity and competence. The Clinical Psychotherapist is required to consider and assess the boundary between the imparting of information to the carer and the Client's need for confidentiality. However, the Clinical Psychotherapist must also take into consideration the issues concerning the Client's capacity for consent to receiving therapeutic services independently of their carer.

2.4 Referrals and Second Opinions

- Referrals to colleagues or other services should be discussed with the Client in advance and the consent of the Client obtained prior to the referral.
- Reasonable care should be taken to ensure that any confidential information disclosed will be protected by all parties.
- Referrals should only be made if the referral is likely to benefit the client.
- Clinical Psychotherapists must not undermine a colleague's relationship with a client by making unjustifiable comments.
- All communications between colleagues or other services about clients should be strictly limited to a professional basis.
- Clinical Psychotherapists shall not offer treatment or advice to any client who is, in their knowledge, under the care of another Clinical Psychotherapist without that Member's knowledge.

- The notification to that Member of this therapeutic involvement should take place, if possible, prior to treatment and providing that (a) permission has first been obtained from the client and (b) in the opinion of the consulting Clinical Psychotherapist the potential value of therapy will not be compromised by such action.

3 Standards of Care

3.1 Quality of Care

- Good quality of care demands competently delivered services that meet the Client's needs.
- Clinical Psychotherapists are obliged to give careful consideration to any limitations in their training and experience and should always work within these boundaries. If at any time the Clinical Psychotherapist is unsure of their experience in a given area they should take advantage of the available professional support.
- If working with a Client who requires additional services operating in conjunction with Clinical Psychotherapy, the availability of such additional services should be taken into account.
- It is recommended that the Clinical Psychotherapist clarify and agree the responsibilities of both parties at appropriate points in their working relationship.
- No therapy should be offered to the Client for which the Clinical Psychotherapist is not fully qualified and insured to practice.
- Where the Clinical Psychotherapist is qualified to practice a therapy not directly related to Counselling, Hypnotherapy or Psychotherapy (for instance, reflexology, aromatherapy, etc.) and judges that the Client would benefit from such therapy, that therapy should be administered in completely separate sessions from the Counselling, Hypnotherapy or Psychotherapy.
- The Clinical Psychotherapist should avoid giving advice to the Client on any matter other than that directly related to the therapies offered, even if separately qualified to give this advice (e.g. in medical, legal or financial matters).
- The Clinical Psychotherapist should ensure that the premises in which the therapy takes place provides comfort and privacy. There should be no opportunity for the sessions to be overheard or disturbed unnecessarily.
- Clinical Psychotherapists are encouraged to keep appropriate records of their work with Clients, unless there are extenuating circumstances for not keeping records.
- All such records should be accurate, respectful of Clients and protected from unauthorised disclosure.
- If records are kept on computer, the Clinical Psychotherapist must be aware of the provisions of the Data Protection Act as applied to such records. The Company Secretary should be notified if the Clinical Psychotherapist registers under the Act.

3.2 Duty of Care

- It is fundamental to the therapeutic process that Clinical Psychotherapists do not exploit their Clients financially, sexually, emotionally or in any other way.
- Sexual relations with Clients are prohibited. 'Sexual relations' include intercourse, any other type of sexual activity or sexualised behaviour.

- The relationship between Clinical Psychotherapist and client is to be kept strictly professional.
Note: 'Strictly professional' denotes that there should be no purely social contact outside of the therapy sessions. However, there are occasions when the Clinical Psychotherapist may find themselves in a 'social' situation with a client outside of the therapeutic sessions. Sometimes this is by chance, however, there may times when it is done because of the therapeutic benefit to the client when the presence and support of the Clinical Psychotherapist is of great value to the well-being and progress of the client. This must be done with the greatest sensitivity and judgement so that the professional boundary between practitioner and client is not only maintained but there is no suggestion that it is being overstepped. It is recommended firstly that the Clinical Psychotherapist consult a trusted colleague for his or her advice if there is the slightest doubt and secondly that the Clinical Psychotherapist keeps a written record of the circumstances. By the same token, neither should there be any contact with the client's friends or relations for any reason except as part of the therapeutic process and then only with the express permission of the client. The exception to this would be if such friends and relations are also clients of the Clinical Psychotherapist in which case there must be strict adherence to the rules of client confidentiality.
- Sensitivity to the beliefs, ethnic/race origins, gender and/or sexual orientation of the Client must be demonstrated at all times.
- Clients should be informed about the nature of the services being offered.
- The course of treatment should be designed to achieve the desired outcome in the smallest number of sessions possible.
- Clinical Psychotherapists have a responsibility to monitor and maintain their fitness to practice at a level that enables them to provide an effective and professional service. If their capacity to provide such service becomes impaired for any reason, including health or personal circumstances, they should seek the advice of the NACHP and, if required, withdraw from practice until such time as their capacity to practice returns. Arrangements should be made for any Clients who are affected.
- It is recognised that some limited disclosure of the Clinical Psychotherapist's personal background and/or positive experiences can be beneficial to the Client, particularly by way of motivation or encouragement. However the greatest discretion and judgement must be exercised in this to prevent there being the slightest implication that the Clinical Psychotherapist is gaining any therapeutic benefit from the treatment sessions. Such would be a gross abuse of the Client and the therapeutic process.

4 Professional Conduct and Complaints Procedures

Such procedures are designed to afford protection to the public, the profession of Clinical Psychotherapy and to protect the name of the NACHP. These procedures form an integral part of the NACHP's commitment to the protection of the public.

If the Client wishes to make a complaint or express a grievance over the treatment or conduct of the Clinical Psychotherapist, the Clinical Psychotherapist must advise on how to obtain further information relating to these procedures. All information relating to such procedures is available from the Company Secretary.

- Clinical Psychotherapists must respond promptly and aptly to any complaint received from a Client.
- If a Clinical Psychotherapist deems that they have acted in accordance with the codes of conduct contained within this document, this should be stated to the client who should be given sight of the document. If, however, the Client remains unsatisfied with their treatment, the Client must be given details of the NACHP's complaints procedures.
- All members of the NACHP share a common duty to take part in any professional conduct or complaints procedures whether as the Member about whom the complaint is made, as the provider of relevant information, support and assistance or as an expert witness.