ICPHAA

Irish Counselling, Psychotherapy & Allied Healthcare Professionals Association

MEMBERS' PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Policy

What counts as continuing professional development, how much ICPHAA members must complete, and how CPD is planned, recorded, evidenced and audited.

REFERENCE	ICPHAA-POL-04	VERSION	1.0
EFFECTIVE	9 November 2026	NEXT REVIEW	9 November 2027
POLICY OWNER	ICPHAA Board of Directors		

MEMBERS' PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE · ICPHAA-POL-04

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Policy

APPLIES TO	All practising ICPHAA members in every membership category; Student Members are not required to complete CPD while in training.
VERSION	1.0 · effective 9 November 2026 · next review 9 November 2027
POLICY OWNER	ICPHAA Board of Directors
CONTACT	ICPHAA Registry · admin@icphaa.ie

AT A GLANCE

- CPD is mandatory for every practising member and is a condition of membership renewal.
- The annual CPD requirement for each membership category is set out in the ICPHAA accreditation requirements.
- CPD is a balance of structured, reflective and experiential learning, relevant to the member's own practice.
- Members keep a dated CPD log with reflections and evidence, and produce it at renewal or on audit.
- Members facing illness, bereavement or other exceptional circumstances can apply for a temporary adjustment.

CONTENTS

1 Purpose 3
2 Scope 3
3 What counts as CPD 3
4 The annual requirement 4
5 Planning and recording CPD 4
6 Renewal and audit 5
7 Adjustments, exemptions and catch-up 5
8 Responsibilities 6
9 Non-compliance and concerns 6
10 Monitoring and review 6

Irish Counselling, Psychotherapy & Allied Healthcare Professionals Association

1. Purpose

Continuing professional development (CPD) is the ongoing, structured process through which practitioners maintain, develop and extend their knowledge, skills and competence throughout their working lives. ICPHAA regards CPD not merely as a membership requirement but as an expression of each member's commitment to their clients, to their profession and to the standard of care the public is entitled to expect.

Counselling, psychotherapy and allied healthcare continue to evolve. New research brings new understanding of what helps, new models of practice emerge, and the social, cultural, legal and technological contexts of practice change. Practitioners who do not keep learning risk working from outdated knowledge, to the potential detriment of their clients.

CPD also supports practitioner wellbeing and resilience. New learning, contact with professional communities and reflection on practice reduce isolation and sustain motivation. This policy sets out what counts as CPD, how much is required, and how it is planned, recorded and checked.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all practising ICPHAA members, including Pre-Accredited Members, Accredited Members, Accredited Members & Supervisors, members holding accredited role categories and Allied Healthcare members.

Student Members are not required to complete CPD while they are in training, as their programme of study provides structured learning. The requirement applies from the point at which a member moves into a practising category.

Members who are temporarily not practising should contact the ICPHAA Registry, as their CPD requirement for that period may be adjusted under section 7.

3. What counts as CPD

CPD activities fall into three categories. A good CPD record draws on all three.

CATEGORY	EXAMPLES
Structured CPD	Training courses, workshops, seminars, webinars and conferences; postgraduate modules relevant to counselling, psychotherapy or the member's allied discipline; specialist short courses; online learning programmes from reputable providers; ICPHAA events.
Reflective CPD	Clinical supervision, where the accreditation requirements allow it to be counted; personal therapy; peer consultation; structured reflective writing on practice.
Experiential CPD	Reading professional books and journals; attending professional events and network meetings; contributing to professional groups; preparing and delivering teaching or presentations, where this involves new learning.

To count, an activity must be relevant to the member's area of practice and must address an identified learning need. Activities that are not relevant to the member's professional work do not count towards the requirement. Mandatory training required by law or by an employer, such as Children First training, data protection training or first aid, may count where it is relevant to the member's practice.

Activities that would not normally count include routine client work itself, ordinary administrative tasks, and general business, marketing or personal-interest courses with no clear link to the member's professional competence.

The Accreditation Department may publish guidance on how particular activities are classified. Where a member is unsure whether an activity counts, they should ask the ICPHAA Registry before relying on it.

4. The annual requirement

Every practising member must complete at least the annual amount of CPD set for their membership category in the ICPHAA accreditation requirements, published by the Accreditation Department. The requirement applies to each membership year.

- A minimum portion of the annual requirement must be structured CPD, as specified in the accreditation requirements. The balance may be drawn from reflective and experiential activities.
- Members who hold more than one accredited role category, or who also practise as supervisors, should include CPD relevant to each area of their work, including supervision practice.
- Whether any CPD may be carried forward from one membership year to the next, and how supervision may be counted, is set out in the accreditation requirements. The same activity should not be counted twice.

The requirement is a minimum. Members are encouraged to plan their learning around their clients' needs, their own development goals and any feedback from supervision, and to include, over time, learning in ethics, law and safeguarding, risk assessment, equality and cultural competence, and digital practice.

> **STATUTORY REGISTRATION**
>
> CORU, Ireland's regulator for health and social care professionals under the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005, is introducing statutory registration of counsellors and psychotherapists. Members who register with CORU will also need to meet any CPD requirements that CORU sets, and should follow CORU's own published guidance. ICPHAA CPD requirements continue to apply as a condition of ICPHAA membership.

5. Planning and recording CPD

Members are encouraged to begin each membership year by identifying their development needs, ideally in discussion with their supervisor, and planning activities to meet them.

Every member keeps a CPD log for each membership year. For each activity the log should record:

1. the date and duration of the activity;
2. its title and the name of the provider or facilitator;
3. the CPD category it belongs to (structured, reflective or experiential);
4. a brief personal reflection on what was learned and how it is relevant to practice;
5. evidence of completion, such as a certificate, receipt or attendance record.

Reflecting on learning

A reflection does not need to be long. It should show what the member learned, how it relates to their clients or setting, and what, if anything, they will do differently as a result. Reflections can be revisited in supervision, and patterns across a year's log are a useful basis for planning the following year. Attendance alone, without reflection, is weaker evidence that learning has taken place.

CPD logs and evidence are kept securely for the period set out in the ICPHAA accreditation requirements. Members should not include identifying client information in their CPD reflections.

6. Renewal and audit

Members confirm at each membership renewal that they have met their CPD requirement. ICPHAA checks compliance through audit, which may be carried out on a random basis as part of renewal or at any other time.

1. Members selected for audit are told in writing which period is being audited and what to provide.
2. The member is given a reasonable period to submit their CPD log and supporting evidence to the ICPHAA Registry.
3. The Accreditation Department reviews the evidence against the requirement for the member's category.
4. Where the evidence is incomplete, the member is told what is missing and given an opportunity to provide it or to agree a catch-up plan.
5. The member is informed of the outcome in writing.

ICPHAA aims to run an audit process that is fair, transparent and supportive of good practice rather than punitive.

7. Adjustments, exemptions and catch-up

Members who cannot meet the CPD requirement in a given year because of illness, bereavement, parental leave, caring responsibilities or other exceptional circumstances may apply for a temporary exemption or reduced requirement.

- Applications are made in writing to the ICPHAA Registry, with appropriate supporting information, ideally before the end of the membership year concerned.

- Applications are considered sympathetically and confidentially, and the outcome is confirmed in writing.
- Any adjustment applies only to the period stated.

Members who do not meet the requirement without an agreed adjustment may be required to complete catch-up CPD within a set timeframe before their membership is renewed.

8. Responsibilities

Members are responsible for planning and completing relevant CPD, for keeping an accurate log with evidence, for making honest declarations at renewal, and for telling ICPHAA early if they are unable to meet the requirement.

Supervisors are encouraged to help supervisees identify development needs and to discuss how learning from CPD is being applied in practice.

ICPHAA, through the Accreditation Department, is responsible for publishing the CPD requirement for each membership category and any guidance on activities, for running a fair audit process, for considering requests for adjustment, and for keeping this policy under review. The ICPHAA Registry is the point of contact for questions.

9. Non-compliance and concerns

Failure to meet the CPD requirement without an agreed adjustment, failure to provide evidence when audited, or a false declaration about CPD is a breach of the ICPHAA Code of Conduct for Members. Depending on the circumstances, it may lead to conditions on renewal, a delay in renewal, or consideration under the Fitness to Practise Policy or Disciplinary Procedures. A deliberately false CPD declaration is treated as a matter of professional integrity.

ICPHAA's first aim in any case of non-compliance is to help the member return to good standing. Members who are struggling to access suitable CPD, for example because of where they live, cost or caring responsibilities, are encouraged to contact the Registry, which can point them towards online and lower-cost options.

Questions about CPD can be sent to the ICPHAA Registry at admin@icphaa.ie.

10. Monitoring and review

The ICPHAA Board of Directors owns this policy and reviews it at least annually, with input from the Accreditation Department, or sooner where changes in law, regulation or professional practice require it. Learning from CPD audits informs each review. Changes to the CPD requirement for any membership category are published by the Accreditation Department and notified to members. The current version is available at www.icphaa.ie.

READ ALONGSIDE

- ICPHAA Code of Conduct for Members
- Supervision Policy
- Professional Standards & Accreditation Policy
- Events & Training Policy
- Fitness to Practise Policy

DOCUMENT CONTROL

VERSION	DATE	CHANGE	APPROVED BY
1.0	9 November 2026	Reissued in the ICPHAA policy framework (replaces the former ICPA version).	ICPHAA Board of Directors

Support · Develop · Empower

ICPHAA
SUPPORT · DEVELOP · EMPOWER
Irish Counselling, Psychotherapy & Allied Healthcare Professionals Association