ICPHAA

Irish Counselling, Psychotherapy & Allied Healthcare Professionals Association

GOVERNANCE OF THE ASSOCIATION

Vision Statement & Ethos

The vision, mission, core values and ethos of ICPHAA, which shape its standards, governance, member support and every decision the Association makes.

REFERENCE	ICPHAA-POL-27	VERSION	1.0
EFFECTIVE	9 November 2026	NEXT REVIEW	9 November 2027
POLICY OWNER	ICPHAA Board of Directors		

Vision Statement & Ethos

APPLIES TO	Every ICPHAA member, and the Association's Board of Directors, Registry, Accreditation Department, staff and volunteers.
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

- Vision: a society in which mental health and emotional wellbeing are valued, protected and supported for everyone in Ireland.
- Mission: to promote excellence, integrity and ethical practice, support practitioners and protect the public.
- Four core values guide the Association: excellence, integrity, compassion and justice.
- The wellbeing of practitioners is valued equally with the wellbeing of clients.
- The Association's motto, Support · Develop · Empower, sums up what ICPHAA offers its members.

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1. Purpose

This statement sets out what the Irish Counselling, Psychotherapy & Allied Healthcare Professionals Association (ICPHAA) exists to achieve, the values it holds and the ethos that shapes how it works. It is the foundation of the Association's policy and procedure framework: every other ICPHAA policy should be read in its light, and every significant decision of the Association should be capable of being explained by reference to it.

The statement is not a set of rules. It describes a shared commitment. It is offered to members, to clients and to the public so that they can understand what ICPHAA stands for and hold the Association to it.

2. Scope

The vision, mission, values and ethos apply to the whole Association: to its Board of Directors, Registry and Accreditation Department, to staff and volunteers, and to every member in every membership category, from Student Members to Accredited Members & Supervisors, members in the accredited role categories and Allied Healthcare members. Members are asked to read this statement on joining and to reflect its values in their professional lives.

The statement also informs the Association's relationships with others: accredited training providers, partners, statutory bodies and the public. Those who work with ICPHAA can expect to be treated in line with these values, and the Association expects the same commitment to honesty, care and fairness in return.

3. Our vision

ICPHAA's vision is **a society in which mental health and emotional wellbeing are valued, protected and supported for every person in Ireland, and in which counselling, psychotherapy and allied healthcare are recognised as essential, evidence-informed and ethically grounded contributions to individual and community health.**

The vision is inclusive, compassionate and forward-looking. It places mental health at the heart of the Association's identity and purpose, and it looks beyond the Association's own membership to the wider health of Irish society.

4. Our mission

To pursue that vision, ICPHAA's mission is to:

- **promote** excellence, integrity and ethical practice in counselling, psychotherapy and allied healthcare in Ireland;
- **support** the professional formation and continuing development of practitioners throughout their careers;
- **protect** the public through clear standards, fair accreditation and accountable processes for addressing concerns;
- **advocate** for fair and equitable access to good-quality mental health support across Irish society.

The Association believes that ethically practised counselling and psychotherapy can transform lives. It wants as many people as possible to be able to reach competent, ethical and caring practitioners when they need them.

5. Our core values

Four values guide every aspect of ICPHAA's work, from its membership standards and governance to its communications and member support. They are not abstractions; they are commitments the Association tries to live out in each decision it makes and each interaction it has.

VALUE	WHAT IT MEANS FOR ICPHAA
Excellence	A commitment to high standards of practice, professional conduct and governance. Excellence is a continuing journey rather than a destination, and the Association supports members in ongoing professional and personal growth.
Integrity	Honesty, transparency and consistency in all dealings. The Association holds itself to the same ethical standards it asks of its members, and is accountable to members and the public for the quality and fairness of what it does.
Compassion	Genuine care for the wellbeing of clients and practitioners alike. Both those who seek help and those who provide it deserve dignity, respect and understanding.
Justice	Equity, fairness and inclusion. The Association works to remove barriers to participation, to welcome diversity within the professions and to make support accessible to everyone who needs it, whatever their background, identity or circumstances.

6. Our ethos

The therapeutic relationship

At the heart of ICPHAA's ethos is a deep belief in the power of the therapeutic relationship. Everyone who seeks counselling, psychotherapy or allied healthcare support deserves to be met by a practitioner who is not only technically competent but genuinely present, compassionate and committed to their welfare. The Association supports members to cultivate these qualities throughout their professional lives, and it tries to model, in its own culture, the care, honesty and respect it hopes to see in therapy.

Practitioner wellbeing

A defining feature of ICPHAA is the equal value it places on the wellbeing of practitioners and clients. Practitioners who are well supported, cared for and professionally nourished are better able to care for others. ICPHAA therefore invests in its members' development not only as a means to better client outcomes, but as an expression of real care for the people at the centre of the Association's community.

Support · Develop · Empower

The Association's motto expresses its promise to members: to **support** them in their practice and in difficult moments; to help them **develop** through training, supervision and CPD; and to **empower** them to practise with confidence, integrity and independence of judgement.

Values in decision-making

The values are meant to be used. When the Board, the Accreditation Department, the Registry or a panel faces a significant decision, it should be able to answer four questions: Does this protect clients and the public? Is it honest and open? Does it treat everyone involved with care and dignity? Is it fair, and does it widen rather than narrow access? Where these questions point in different directions, the protection of clients and the public comes first, and the reasons for the decision are recorded so that the Association can be held to account for it.

A professional association, honestly described

ICPHAA is a voluntary, not-for-profit professional membership association. It is not a statutory regulator and membership is not statutory registration. Being honest about what the Association is, and is not, is it-self part of its ethos.

7. Strategic commitments

The vision and values are given practical expression through a set of strategic commitments. These guide the Association's priorities and the use of its resources, and provide a framework against which members and the public can judge its performance. ICPHAA commits to:

1. developing and maintaining clear, fair accreditation standards that support members to be well trained and ethically grounded;
2. building a connected and mutually supportive professional community that sustains practitioners throughout their careers;
3. maintaining a governance and accountability framework that earns and keeps the trust of clients and the public;
4. engaging constructively with the statutory regulation of counselling and psychotherapy by CORU and helping members to prepare for it;
5. advocating for equitable access to mental health support in Ireland;
6. welcoming practitioners from diverse backgrounds and helping the professions reflect the communities they serve.

8. Living the values

What members can expect of ICPHAA

- Clear standards and guidance, explained in plain language.
- Fair, timely and respectful handling of applications, renewals and concerns.
- CPD, events and resources that support professional and personal growth.
- Honest communication about the Association, its standards and its limits.

What ICPHAA asks of members

- Practise in line with the ICPHAA Code of Conduct for Members and the values in this statement.

- Put the welfare of clients first, while looking after their own wellbeing through supervision, CPD and, where appropriate, personal therapy.
- Treat colleagues, clients and the Association with respect.
- Represent their membership accurately and help uphold the reputation of the professions.

9. Concerns, monitoring and review

Anyone who believes the Association or a member is acting in a way that is inconsistent with this statement may raise it with the ICPHAA Registry at admin@icphaa.ie. Concerns about a member's conduct are handled under the Complaints Procedures.

The ICPHAA Board of Directors owns this statement. The Board reviews it by the date shown on the cover, and whenever the Association's strategy is renewed, so that it continues to express what ICPHAA stands for. Members are invited to contribute their views to each review.

READ ALONGSIDE

- ICPHAA Code of Conduct for Members
- Organisational Governance
- Organisational Integrity
- Ethical & Clinical Governance Policy
- Environmental & Social Governance Policy
- Public-Facing Transparency 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