



AACPI

Association for Agency-Based Counselling
& Psychotherapy in Ireland Ltd

EVALUATION FORM FOR ORGANISATIONAL STANDARDS/CRITERIA & BEST PRACTICE

CORE PRINCIPLES OF AACPI

The AACPI and its members are committed to Professional Standards and best practice through the following Principles.

- That counselling & psychotherapy is best practiced within an agency-based professional community committed to developing centres of excellence.
- That counselling & psychotherapy is provided on a community-based and not-for-profit basis regardless of client's social, cultural, economic or domestic disadvantage.
- That member agencies have clear 'Clinical' and 'Corporate Governance' accountability structures.
- That member agencies are committed to on-going organisational development.
- That member agencies are supportive of each other and collaborate with each other in the development of standards within the sector.
- That member agencies have on-site systems of record-keeping & data collection; and continuous quality development.
- That member agencies are community-based and strive to be of benefit to these communities within the limits of their competency.

PLEASE SIGN HERE

(As well as the end of this document)

We have read, understood, and accept the core principles of the AACPI.

Name of Organisation:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

Contact person:

*Director/CEO:

*Chairperson:

Signed on behalf of:

Date:

*Please note: All points with * must be signed by the relevant persons*

Please provide the following information

No. Paid Staff No. of therapists in placement/internships No. Part-time Staff No. full-time staff

Agency Management Structure

Is your Agency registered with the Charity Regulator Authority?
If not please state why

Yes

No

Is your agency compliant with the Code of Governance?
If not please state why

Yes

No

Is your agency GDPR compliant?
If not please state why

Yes

No

Which Professional Body's Code of Ethics do you adhere to?

What is your Mission Statement?

List Services Offered

Any other information on the ethos of your organisation.

AGENCY-BASED PRINCIPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE: EVALUATION CHECKLIST

The checklist on the next few pages presents the specific criteria, in line with the core principles of the AACPI that are associated with the agency-based approach to counselling and service delivery.

The AACPI approach recognises the key role that all levels of the organisation play in the maintenance of best practice and in the provision of services to the community. Best practice requires that participation of the Board of Management, administrators, supervisors, practitioners, office staff and volunteers in creating a climate of care and professional excellence. This checklist identifies the key criteria that define best practice within community agency-based organisations.

Please read through the specific criteria and tick the following options:

'Yes' to indicate that you meet the criteria.

'No' to indicate that you don't meet the criteria.

'N/A' Not applicable, please provide information as to why criteria is not applicable to your organization.

This form will be useful for highlighting any areas for development within your organisation and for the sector in general.

AACPI does not require any documentation to demonstrate that your agency meets the criteria as highlighted by you; it accepts you completed the form with benignancy and AACPI shall not be held responsible for any false information provided. Tick box to acknowledge this statement.

Part 1: Organisational criteria

- 1 The Board of Management of the agency is committed to the agency-based principles of practice. The organisation therefore strives to create a working climate that supports staff and clients in providing services of excellence.
- Yes No N/A
- 2 That Management & Staff works within a system that emphasises support, accountability and transparency where all elements of the system are involved in the care of clients.
- Yes No N/A
- 3 The Board values the high standards of operation necessary to support service delivery.
- Yes No N/A
- 4 The Board agrees to the principles & practice (outlined in this document) as being central to an agency- based counselling approach.
- Yes No N/A
- 5 To ensure good governance and that the agency is supporting the necessary organisational & administrative structures under the following:
- | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| Articles of Association | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A | In-house document outlining policies & procedures regarding the practice of counselling within the agency | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
| A Mission Statement | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A | | |
| A Statement of Service Objectives and Limitations | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A | An in-house code of ethics & practice familiar to staff | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
| Annual Audited Accounts | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A | A financial management system consistent with good accounting practice | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
| Professional Indemnity Insurance for agency & therapists | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A | | |
| Strategic Plan | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A | There are no dual roles held by the board of directors within the agency that could present a conflict of interest | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
| Publicity materials that summarizes its services | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A | | |
| Complaints Procedure for Staff and Clients | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A | | |

Part 2: Staff

- 6 The organisation complies with Employment Law to include clearly defined staff roles, responsibilities with appropriate contracts and procedures.
- Yes No N/A
- 7 The organisation complies with Health & Safety. That this statement is visible to all in the organisation.
- Yes No N/A
- 8 While emphasising an agency-based approach to good practice, the organisation ensures staff are appropriately qualified & trained to deliver the particular service offered. This includes therapists in placement who are in training.
- Yes No N/A
- 9 Unpaid roles/volunteers have clear responsibilities and roles through appropriate contracts and disciplinary procedures
- Yes No N/A
- 10 Unpaid staff/volunteers are appropriately qualified and trained to deliver services offered as required.
- Yes No N/A

Part 3: Professional boundaries

- 1 The organisation ensures that there is a clear professional boundary around the service of counselling. This ensures best practice in the following areas:
- | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| Initial contact by client through phone, email for an appointment. | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A | Waiting rooms are discreet and private | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
| Ensures that all points of contact by the client are done so professionally and ethically. | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A | Counselling rooms are suitably furnished | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
| The environment within which counselling is provided is discreet, private and quiet. | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A | An atmosphere of professional care is created. | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |

Part 3: Professional boundaries contd.

2 To ensure that an appropriate boundary is kept around the practice of counseling and supervision, appropriate efforts are made to ensure that organisational management and administrative issues are separate to supervisory and clinical issues.

Yes	No	N/A
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3 The role of staff are clearly defined and understood to ensure that people work within their areas of competence.

Yes	No	N/A
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4 Professional boundaries between clients, staff, therapists and management are respected and maintained.

Yes	No	N/A
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Part 4: Record keeping

5 All recorded information, the keeping of up-to-date records and data is kept confidentially and with anonymity and in accordance to Data Protection Guidelines and in keeping with GDPR Guidelines.

Yes	No	N/A
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6 All clients' files are deemed to be the property of the organisation; therefore all client files are stored on the premises of the organisation.

Yes	No	N/A
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Part 5: Administrative back-up

7 Administrative staffs are valued as key practitioners and are seen as an integral part of service delivery in dealing with clients, members of their family and of the public in appropriate ways.

Yes	No	N/A
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Part 6: Professional standards criteria

The Role Of director/supervisor

1 Within the organisation there is a person who is contractually and 'clinically' responsible for service delivery standards.

Yes	No	N/A
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2 This person is suitably qualified to assume direct responsibility for issues pertaining to the quality of the service delivered.

Yes	No	N/A
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3 This person can assume full clinical responsibility for the work undertaken at the organisation.

Yes	No	N/A
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4 This person is responsible for the reviewing of records/files, the provision of case-management consultations with staff, and facilitating the development of teamwork.

Yes	No	N/A
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5 This person facilitates on-going organisational development, corresponding on behalf of the organisation with outside professionals and the building of inter-agency relationships.

Yes	No	N/A
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6 This person uses appropriate procedures to assess and monitor the competence of staff to work with certain clients; to assess the nature of services being delivered; to assess the degree to which the services provided are consistent with service objectives.

Yes	No	N/A
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7 The organisation strives to ensure that counselling staff feels supported and appropriately challenged in their work.

Yes	No	N/A
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8 The Director/Supervisor remains accountable to the Board of Management regarding the organisations operations and governance depending on the organisational structure.

Yes	No	N/A
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9 The organisation complies with the Children's First Bill 2015 and works to the Children's First Guidelines 2017. Has an appropriate policy for all staff to follow and suitable training is provided.

Yes	No	N/A
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Part 7: Assessment

10 The organisation has professional case-management procedures including and intake/evaluation/ referral process that is respectful of clients and the limits of counselling available.

Yes	No	N/A
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11 The assessment has two objectives; to ensure the client is suitable for counselling and that the therapist has the ability to meet the client's particular needs.

Yes	No	N/A
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12 Appropriate distinctions are made between various forms of counselling; e.g. Crisis counselling, supportive counselling, short & long term counselling, consultation, information giving and educational work. Clients are appropriately informed of the difference when required.

Yes	No	N/A
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Part 8: In-house procedures

13 Child Protection and Vulnerable Adult Policy

Yes No N/A

14 Mandatory Reporting Policy, including defining the role of the mandated person within the organization

Yes No N/A

15 Supervision Policy for all staff (clinical and administrative)

Yes No N/A

16 Suicide & high risk policy

Yes No N/A

17 Data Protection Policy, GDPR Guidelines

Yes No N/A

18 Confidentiality and Case Management Policy

Yes No N/A

19 Intake and assessment procedures for new clients

Yes No N/A

20 Termination and case-closure procedures

Yes No N/A

21 Requests by clients for release of information under the Freedom of Information Act & GDPR Guidelines

Yes No N/A

22 Referral Policy to and from third parties

Yes No N/A

23 Report Writing Policy in dealing with litigious clients and/or their solicitors for court appearances/subpoenas

Yes No N/A

24 Complaints Procedure

Yes No N/A

25 Policy for clients with prescribed Mental Health issues when commencing therapy

Yes No N/A

26 Client Care Policy when dealing with abusive clients and family members

Yes No N/A

27 Health & Safety Policy Accident and Incident Policy

Yes No N/A

28 Accident and Incident Policy

Yes No N/A

Part 9: Client care

29 The organisation is clear about its limitations and competencies and is therefore responsible, assertive, and transparent in communicating this to clients.

Yes No N/A

30 There is a competent understanding of the complexity and range of family related problems and the levels of care required by family members.

Yes No N/A

31 Given the complexity of cases, the counselling and office staff has access to immediate support, consultation and supervision if needed.

Yes No N/A

32 On arrival at the organisation all clients are provided with information on confidentiality and its limits, fees/donations, mandatory reporting and GDPR Guidelines.

Yes No N/A

33 Clients are informed if they are attending a 'Student Therapist'. (Where applicable)

Yes No N/A

34 The professional boundaries of the therapist client relationship are respected and honoured while engaging in supervision and case-management.

Yes No N/A

Part 10: Supervisory and accountability systems

35 Decisions made about the nature of help offered to clients are made within the supervisory structures of the organisation.

Yes No N/A

36 There is annual assessment of staff competence through evaluations and feedback.

Yes No N/A

37 The organisation is transparent and confident in communicating its supervisory structure to clients when appropriate.

Yes No N/A

38 The organisation has a supervision policy that ensures best practice.

Yes No N/A

39 Within the supervisory structures of the organisation the maintenance of client anonymity is absolute and guaranteed and fully complies with Data Protection & GDPR Guidelines about who has access to sensitive client data and why.

Yes No N/A

Part 11: Professional standards

40 The organisation encourages appropriate professional development for staff on an annual basis.

Yes No N/A

41 All counselling staff willingly collaborates with on-going evaluation of their work.

Yes No N/A

42 The organisation supports its staff and counselors should any difficult, intimidating or litigious issue arise.

Yes No N/A

43 The organisation does not permit dual roles between staff and management where there might be a conflict of interest for either party.

Yes No N/A

TYPES OF MEMBERSHIPS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

Is open to organisations whose sole purpose is to provide therapeutic services to the community. That they sign up to the Core Principles and meet all the Standards and Criteria of the AACPI. They are community based, are nonprofit and have voluntary or charitable status.

€200 Per Annum

ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

Is open to organisations that are not eligible for Full membership, but could sign up to the principles of the AACPI and meet specific operational requirements. They provide a service to the community that includes therapeutic services and/or are a national therapeutic organisation. They are community-based, are nonprofit and have voluntary or charitable status.

€100 Per Annum

AFFILIATE MEMBERSHIP

Is open to organisations not eligible for Full or Associate membership, but operating in an allied profession or have an interest in or support for community/voluntary based therapeutic services.

€50 Per Annum

PLEASE SIGN HERE

Name of Organisation:

*Director/CEO:

*Chairperson:

Signed on behalf of:

Date:

Please mark which membership you are applying for or renewing:

FULL MEMBERSHIP

ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

AFFILIATE MEMBERSHIP



AACPI

Association for Agency-Based Counselling
& Psychotherapy in Ireland Ltd

Send Application Form to:

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Harcourt Road, Dublin 2, D02VH94.

Tel 087 7391794

Email Coordinator@aacpi.ie

Web AACPI.ie