

Dear Minister Harris,

My name is Joe Heffernan (William J. Heffernan). I am working in the area of counselling and psychotherapy for the past almost 20 years. I am accredited by IACP and I am also an approved instructor in the area of trauma with the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation (www.icisf.org) University of Maryland USA. I am an accredited supervisor with IACP.

I graduated from UCC with my BA in the 60's. I graduated also in UCC with my Masters in the 80's and once again I graduated from UCC in the 90's with my Counselling/Psychotherapy Higher Diploma.

I also was a secondary teacher for 28 years before retiring in 1997.

I feel very strongly that the area of Counselling and Psychotherapy should be regulated by statute in order to protect the vulnerable clients who come to our profession. At this point in time anyone who wishes to so describe himself or herself as a counsellor or psychotherapist can do so.

The IACP has thoroughly stringent criteria as to whom they accredit both by monitoring the teaching institutions who produce graduate counsellors and by insisting on proper supervision of counsellors and ensuring that counsellors engage in appropriate yearly Continuing Personal and Professional Development.

I would urge you to take on board this statutory regulation of the profession as a matter of urgency so that those who are being consulted by vulnerable people as well as people with mental health issues would be only seen by appropriately qualified professional persons.

Thank you,

Joe Heffernan