



The European Association for Psychotherapy
Association Européenne de Psychothérapie
Europäischer Verband für Psychotherapie

Member of the World Council for Psychotherapy (WCP)

NGO with consultative status to the Council of Europe

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TEMPLATE FOR A NATIONAL PSYCHOTHERAPY LAW

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Section 1. Definition of Profession

(1) The exercise of psychotherapy shall be the comprehensive deliberate and planned treatment or therapeutic intervention on the basis of a general and special training of disturbances of behaviour and states of disordered condition, or wider personal developmental need, connected with psycho-social and also psychosomatic factors and causes, by means of scientific psychotherapeutic methods, in an interaction between one or several treated persons, and one or several psychotherapists, with the objective of mitigating or eliminating the established symptoms, to change disturbed patterns of behaviour and attitudes, and to promote a process of maturing, development, sanity and well-being in the treated person.

(2) The independent exercise of psychotherapy shall consist in the practical implementation, at the therapist's sole responsibility, of the activities described in paragraph 1, irrespective of whether the activities are exercised on a self-employed basis or in the framework of an employment relationship.

Section 2. Educational and Training Requirements

The independent exercise of psychotherapy shall require completion of preparatory and specialised training programs, both of which shall include theoretical and practical components.

(1) Basic Training in Psychotherapy

(1)a. The theoretical component shall cover a total period of 750 hours minimum and shall include:

1. basic principles of psychotherapy, personality theories, general and developmental psychology, rehabilitation, psychological diagnosis and evaluation, and psychosocial intervention;
2. basic principles of somatology and medicine;
3. basic methodological principles of research and science;
4. an understanding of ethical practice; and
5. an understanding of the relevant social and legal framework.

(1)b. The practical component shall cover a total minimum period of 550 hours and shall include:

1. self-experience, as individual or in a group;
2. practical experience in a health or psycho-social facility, with professional instruction and supervision; and
3. attendance of supervised practical exercises.

At the end of such training, the trainee must be able to demonstrate the basic functional competencies of the profession.

(2) Advanced Training in Psychotherapy

(2)a. The theoretical part shall cover a total period of a minimum of 300 hours and shall specifically address the following topics:

1. theory of the normal and pathological personality development;
2. methods and technique;
3. personality and interaction theories; and
4. In-depth familiarisation with psychotherapeutic literature.

(2)b. The practical part shall cover a total period of a minimum of 1,600 hours and shall specifically address the following topics, with a minimum of 100 hours dedicated to one priority area, depending on the speciality and its specific methods:

1. self-experience as individual or in a group;
2. familiarization, via supervised observation and assistance, with persons with behavioural disturbances and illnesses, in a health or psycho-social facility;
3. attendance of practical exercises under supervision; and
4. supervised independent psychotherapeutic experience with behaviourally disturbed or ill persons.

At the end of such training, the trainee must be able to demonstrate the advanced functional competencies of the profession.

(3) Requirements to Begin Psychotherapy Training

(3)a. Only those persons may begin basic training in psychotherapy, who

1. have the appropriate social, educational and literary capacities and have the appropriate legal status, and
2. have passed the school-leaving examination (hold a high school diploma) either domestically or from abroad

(3)b. Only those persons may begin advanced training in psychotherapy, who

1. have the appropriate social, educational and literary capacities and have the appropriate legal status, and and
3. have completed successfully the preparatory instruction in psychotherapy according to Section 2 (1)

Section 3. Modalities Recognised

Psychotherapeutic modalities that fall into the following groups shall be recognised:

1. psychoanalytic/ psychodynamic modalities;
2. behavioural psychotherapy modalities;

3. systemic/ family psychotherapy modalities;
4. humanistic psychotherapy modalities;
5. hypno-psychotherapeutic modalities;
6. body-oriented psychotherapy modalities;
7. relaxational psychotherapy modalities;
8. integrative psychotherapy modalities

Section 4. Certification

Completion of the preparatory instruction in psychotherapy and of the special instruction in psycho-therapy shall be evidenced by certificates, which shall contain an evaluation of the respective training objectives according to Section 2.

Section 5. Professional Title

(1) Persons authorized to exercise psychotherapy independently, shall hold the professional title "Psychotherapist".

(2) Any title shall be prohibited that may create the pretence of having the authorization to exercise independently the profession of psychotherapy.

Section 6. Registration

(1) There shall be a mandatory public Register (list) of persons authorized to exercise psychotherapy independently. Psychotherapists shall apply for admission to the Register and shall submit all required proof of their qualification prior to beginning to exercise psychotherapy independently.

(2) The Register may be requested and inspected by all interested persons and shall function in the following capacities:

1. as a means for consumers to obtain adequate information about psychotherapists; and
2. as a quality control instrument for psychotherapy services.

Section 7. Exercise of Profession

(1) Prerequisites to the Practice of Psychotherapy

Those persons shall be authorized to **practice** psychotherapy independently, who

1. have completed successfully the preparatory and specialised training in psychotherapy,
2. have the appropriate legal capacity,
3. practice according to the ethical standards of the profession

4. have been admitted on to the Register of Psychotherapists

(2) Professional Duties of Psychotherapists

1. Psychotherapists shall exercise their profession to the best of their knowledge and belief, according to the ethical standards of the profession, with appropriate continuing professional development, giving due consideration to the development of research findings by means of regular participation in conferences and training activities domestically or abroad.

2. Psychotherapists may perform psychotherapeutic activities only with the approval of the treated person or his/her legal representative, and according to the ethical standards of the profession.

3. Psychotherapists shall be obliged to provide the treated person or his/her legal representative with full information on the treatment, including its type, scope and costs.

4. Psychotherapists who wish to withdraw from the exercise of their profession, shall inform the treated person or his/her legal representative in due time so that he/she can obtain continuous psychotherapeutic treatment.

(3) Obligation of Confidentiality

Psychotherapists, as well as their auxiliary staff, shall be obliged to keep confidential all secrets shared with them or becoming known to them in the exercise of their profession.

(4) Expiry of the Authorization to Exercise the Profession

The authorization to exercise psychotherapy independently shall cease to be valid:

1. if a prerequisite for the independent exercise of psychotherapy is no longer complied with,
2. if the independent exercise of psychotherapy has been discontinued for a period of more than 5 years.

Section 8. Advisory Council

A Psychotherapy Advisory Council shall be set up with government or statutory authorisation, which shall advise the government on all matters relating to the Psychotherapy Law.