



SEPTEMBER 2020 CIRCULAR

Dear Member,

The year is running its course and Christmas lights are starting to shimmer in the distance. The year 2020 was indeed a very challenging time that reminds of the words of the opening lines of the Charles Dickens' novel, *A Tale of Two Cities* "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity..." This time, only, it is the Tale of Corona. Oftentimes, though, crises serve as catalyst to break open new avenues of doing business and accordingly many of our counsellors have learned the value of social media and Internet for the counselling enterprise. The ASCHP has also procured two platforms for CPD training, namely *Videolearn* on the TechDesi page and *Nooslogia* and at the end of this circular we have pleasure in making the links available to you for access.

Hallmarks of professionalism

During the past decade we have toiled endlessly to fulfil our vision which is the professionalization of the 'lay counselling' sector on primary healthcare level for the purpose of job creation. It is only through the manifestation of true professionalism in counselling that we can establish its integrity as an occupation that is worthwhile. I have pleasure in sharing some thoughts with you on this important topic.

Professional counsellors not only create a good impression with the public, but ensure that they are competent and accountable care givers. Accountability, in respect of which a learner is able to demonstrate the ability to take full responsibility for his or her work, decision-making and use of resources, and limited accountability for the decisions and actions of others in varied or ill-defined contexts. Professional counsellors behave ethically, by conserving the privacy and rights of their clients. Many of our disciplinary matters orbit around unethical conduct such as counsellors that fail to do decent take-ins of clients and who fail to preserve client confidentiality and respect. Hence, duly completed take-in forms, consultation fee invoicing, therapeutic schedules and estimated time lines, consent forms and disclaimers are not optional documents.

The formalisation of training is also another hallmark of professionalism. We encourage our members to follow a learning pathway to upgrade as far as possible in terms of accredited counselling and wellness healthcare programmes. The ASCHP has designed a system of RPL credentialing to make the most of the informal and non-formal learning and work experience of our members towards optimum credits for furthering training and education. A pre-assessment form, to commence the process, is available for this purpose at our offices from miggie@synergetica.co.za

This opens the avenue for specialised knowledge that consists of theoretical, practical and counselling techniques.

Through training and experience counsellors manage to gain autonomy as another hallmark of professionalism. One of the cross critical skills on higher levels of training include “problem solving, in respect of which a learner is able to demonstrate the ability to identify, analyse, evaluate, critically reflect on and address complex problems, applying evidence-based solutions and theory-driven arguments.” This enables counsellors to manage and control their own affairs based on the acquired knowledge and professional skills and this includes ethical decision making, problem solving, the accessing, processing and management of information and the ability to produce and communicate information.

All these aspects bring counsellors in line with the five main key principles recognised in the services professions such as human dignity and worth, social justice, service to humanity, integrity and competence.

We invite you as our co-partners to help us expand this vision of professionalism to a mission so that together we can build wellness counselling into a force of empowerment in South Africa for all. Already many of our members participate in CPD production and training initiatives, but let us do what we do professionally. This is the only kind of investment that really pays off.

CPD links

www.nooslogia.co.za

<https://www.videolearn.co.za/Home/InstructorCourses/254f33d0-2834-4565-b82f-01e119cc970f>