

**ASSOCIATION OF REGISTERED COMPLEMENTARY HEALTH
THERAPISTS OF IRELAND (herein after called ARCHTI)**

Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures

The Objective of these procedures is to protect the public, uphold the reputation of ARCHTI and its Members and to ensure high professional standard.

All members are also subject to the Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures laid down by his/her own therapy Association/Register.

1. Every member is subject to the Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure and he/she is required to comply with these procedures. A member can adopt additional provisions provided they do not conflict with or lessen the impact of the ARCHTI's Code of Conduct or these procedures. If conflicting interpretations occur the rules of the ARCHTI will prevail.
2. Compliance with the ARCHTI Code of Conduct is compulsory for ARCHTI members as is compliance with the law as it applies to each therapy. Ignorance is not an excuse for failure to comply and membership of ARCHTI implies acceptance of and adherence to these Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures and any amendments to it which have been agreed by the Officers of the ARCHTI.
3. The facts of a complaint, investigation, the application of penalties against a member of ARCHTI by a member of the public will be, in the first instance, the responsibility of the member's own therapy organisation. If unresolved, the ARCHTI will undertake an investigation and its findings will be final.
4. Complaints against the management of ARCHTI as a whole or of one or more individual members, the investigation and imposition of penalties will be the responsibility of the ARCHTI.
5. Any complaint received verbally, electronically or in writing against a member will be verbally acknowledged by ARCHTI and recorded in the Complaints Register.
6. The ARCHTI will request that the complainant will put the said complaint in writing giving adequate details against the member together with supporting evidence. Written evidence should include the following:-
 - (a) Details of the actual situation including the date and time of the offence, statements made and how they were dealt with must be clearly and legibly written
 - (b) Any witness testimony must be documented including date and time and place.
 - (c) Details of any other person spoken to or from help was requested must include their name, designation and date they were approached and what the outcome of that approach was
7. In the event of no formal written complaint being made the entry in the Complaints Register will be erased.
8. Personal bias will not be accepted as a basis for complaint against a member, against an Officer or against the ARCHTI
9. As soon as the formal complaint is documented in sufficient detail, (and this should be done with urgency), a copy will be sent to the member who is the subject of the complaint requesting rebuttal or agreement within 21 days.
10. A panel will immediately be established by ARCHTI to deal with the matter and a copy of the complaint will be provided to the Chairperson of that panel.
11. The complainant will, at the same time, be sent written confirmation that the complaint is being investigated.
12. All information relating to disciplinary matters must always be treated in the strictest confidence and on a "need to know" basis and all relevant documentation must be kept in a secure place.
13. Matters covered by the Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures cover
 - a. breaches of the ARCHTI Code of Conduct
 - b. acts of conduct falling under the category of criminal offence
 - c. conviction of a criminal offence bringing ARCHTI into disrepute
 - d. fraud or dishonesty misrepresenting qualifications
 - e. fraud or dishonesty in applying for membership of ARCHTI
 - f. any other conduct by a member which in the opinion of the Officers of ARCHTI is likely to bring the ARCHTI into disrepute
 - g. failure to bring to the attention of ARCHTI a complaint by a member of the public against a member
 - h. conduct by an Officer or Officers of ARCHTI, which in the opinion of the body of Officers is likely to bring ARCHTI into disrepute
 - i. fraudulent or dishonest representation by officers of ARCHTI in their dealings with other organisations, members of the public or others which reaches the public domain and reflects badly on the ARCHTI and on complementary medicine in general.
14. On receipt of a reply from the member who is the subject of the complaint, the Chairperson of the Disciplinary Committee in consultation with one or more qualified members of the Committee will determine if there is a case to be answered.

15. The Disciplinary Committee can call witnesses, including the complainant and/or the member against whom the complaint was made. The complainant and the member may be accompanied by a friend or advisor if they are invited to give personal evidence.
16. Any costs involved in attending such a meeting will fall to the parties concerned.
17. If the circumstances are of a nature that should be referred to the member's own therapy association or register the member will be notified that the ARCHTI intends to refer the complaint. In the event of no action or unsatisfactory action being taken by the member's own therapy association or register the ARCHTI reserves the right to take disciplinary action against the member if in the opinion of ARCHTI the member has conducted him/herself in any way against the Code of Practice.
18. In the event that in the opinion of the Chairperson of the Disciplinary Committee and at least one member of the committee the matter of the complaint is in the nature of a criminal act the complainant will be advised to contact his/her local police authority and the member will also be informed of this decision.
19. If the Garda Siochana/ police lay actual criminal charges against the member, the ARCHTI will suspend the member from the ARCHTI pending the outcome. Regardless of the outcome the ARCHTI reserves the right to still take disciplinary action against the member if in the opinion of ARCHTI that member has conducted him/herself in any way against the Code of Conduct.
20. If the member's own therapy association/register does not take up the case or answers it insufficiently, if no insurance company has an interest in it, the matter can be taken up by the Chairperson of the Disciplinary Committee who will consult with other members of the Committee and/or Officers of the ARCHTI and within 28 days of that decision proceed to make its findings known to the complainant and to the member in writing.
21. If it is decided that there is no case to answer the person making the complaint will be informed in writing of the decision and the reasons for that decision. He/she will then have the right to appeal against the decision and the complaints procedure will continue.
22. All decisions of the Disciplinary Committee must be reported to the Officers of ARCHTI. The Officers shall not have the right to overturn any decision (other than through the process of Appeal) but they may advise the Chairperson of the Committee of their views.
23. The member against whom the complaint was made has the right of appeal to the Officers of ARCHTI who will then appoint an Appeal Committee panel.
24. Notice of appeal must be received in writing at the offices of ARCHTI within 14 days of the written decision in (20) above.
25. The appeals procedure may take up to 6 months depending on the justification for it and documentary evidence and circumstances involved in hearing the appeal.
26. The decision of the Appeals Committee, which will be submitted in writing, the ARCHTI, will be binding on all parties. Copies of the decision will be made available to the complainant and to the member.
27. There is no further appeal process with ARCHTI.
28. Members found to be in breach of the Code of Conduct of ARCHTI are liable to expulsion from the Association, other members will be informed of the expulsion, other organisations associated with ARCHTI and the insurance company of the member concerned can be informed at the discretion of the Officers of the Association. ARCHTI reserves the right to publish the fact that a member has been expelled in correspondence, newsletters, fax, telephone, emails and on their website and the reason for expulsion can be given at the discretion of the Officers of the Association.
29. ARCHTI will keep a list of individuals who, after full investigation, are expelled from the Association and shall make this list available to other associations, insurance companies, members, prospective members, members of the public and the medical profession either in Ireland or outside who may enquire regarding that individual's conduct.