



RESEARCH ON THE PRACTICE OF COUNSELLING BY GUIDANCE COUNSELLORS IN POST PRIMARY SCHOOLS

NCGE has commissioned researchers Prof. Mark Morgan and Dr. Claire Hayes to undertake the above research on behalf of NCGE and the Department of Education and Science. The research aims to provide the guidance community with a snapshot of the practice of counselling by you as guidance counsellors in post primary schools i.e. to capture the breadth and depth of the counselling work you undertake with students. The findings of the research will inform the provision of future support that is responsive to your needs.

The research will commence in February 2010 with the distribution of a questionnaire to approximately 300 guidance counsellors working in post-primary schools. In order for us all to get a better understanding of and insight into your practice of counselling as guidance counsellors in a wide range of contexts (rural/urban school, school type and size etc) it is important that you participate in the research if you are selected and sent a questionnaire. Completing the questionnaire should take just 20-30 minutes and you can do so either in hard copy or electronically.

What are the expected outcomes of the research?

It is envisaged that we will learn the following from the research:

- Your training and support needs – e.g. your experience of the training you have received to date and future supports you require.
- The practice of counselling in schools – e.g. the counselling models/methodologies you employ when working with students, the challenges that you are presented with, the range of problems presented by students, how you employ referral.
- Your perceptions and expectations of counselling – e.g. your expectations of your counselling role, your perceptions of the challenges to your counselling role and your expectations of the counselling process.

When will the research be undertaken?

The research will commence in February 2010 with the distribution of the questionnaire to approximately 300 guidance counsellors working in post primary schools. Focus groups will be convened in April. It is envisaged that the report on the research will be completed by the end of 2010.

What is the research methodology?

The research is a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods.

- A questionnaire will be distributed to approximately 300 guidance counsellors working in post primary schools on the 2nd February, 2010. Guidance counsellors participating in the research will have the option of completing the questionnaire in hard or soft copy.
- Six focus groups will be convened nationally in April. This will provide opportunities for guidance counsellors to discuss further issues that have arisen from the findings of the questionnaire.
- Interviews will be held with key personnel from the IGC, the providers of initial education programmes in guidance counselling, the Department of Education and Science and NCGE.

Who is coordinating the research?

The research is coordinated by NCGE with support from a steering group comprising of representatives from the IGC, the Directors of Studies in Guidance Counselling (providers of initial education programmes in guidance counselling), the Department of Education and Science, a research psychologist and NCGE.

Where will the research report be available?

It is expected that the research report will be available from the NCGE website (www.ncge.ie) from early 2011.

More information on the research is available from NCGE.