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Press Release

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CHRISTIAN THERAPISTS PROVIDING HELP FOR CLIENTS WITH UNWANTED SAME- SEX ATTRACTION SEEKS PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AUTHORITY ACCREDITATION

AN umbrella body which oversees Christian therapists providing support for clients experiencing unwanted relational and sexual behaviours, attractions and patterns has applied for accreditation by the Professional Standards Authority (PSA).

The International Foundation for Therapeutic and Counselling Choice (IFTCC) is a project of Christian charity Core Issues Trust, a registered charity based in Northern Ireland. IFTCC reaches into 34 countries, and advocates for the rights and freedoms of individuals to seek and to receive professional and pastoral help to achieve their primary values concerning their sexuality and gender identity and practises.

With supporters in the UK and worldwide, IFTCC therapists and pastoral care workers are increasingly asked to provide support for individuals who opt to pursue their choices in the area of sexuality and gender identity. This is their personal choice.

The Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care is a government body set up to protect the public by improving the regulation and registration of people who work in health and social care. It reviews the work of the regulators of health and care professionals, accredits organisations that register practitioners in unregulated occupations, gives policy advice to Ministers and others, and encourages research to improve regulation.

The IFTCC says it has applied for PSA accreditation to provide extra confidence to members of the public accessing their therapist' services, via an even greater sense of accountability and supervision in the therapeutic field which, they say, sadly often contains practitioners not equipped to help those with unwanted same-sex attractions and/or gender incongruence.

Dr Mike Davidson, director of the IFTCC said: *“Many of our therapists have graduate or post-graduate degrees in psychology or counselling, and decades of experience in providing one-to-one therapy. However, the advantage of PSA accreditation is that members of the public will feel confident that our therapists, and our supervisory practices, meet the Authority’s rigorous standards. Plus for many therapists, accreditation will mean that they can access Public Liability Insurance which is becoming common practice in the therapeutic field.*

“The PSA application progress is detailed and lengthy, and a core aspect is their ‘Share Your Experience’ Protocol. This process enables those with experience of the applicant to share their views. We look forward to the PSA accreditation panel being given the opportunity to hear directly from the public about the therapeutic benefit hundreds of clients have experienced over decades of professional care.

A key IFTCC document, An *International Declaration on 'Therapeutic and Pastoral Choice'* comes at a time when 'conversion therapy' is a political 'hot potato' in the UK, states "everyone has the right to reduce and change unfulfilling or undesired sexual feelings or behaviours, regardless of their motivations, goals or values." The Declaration says: "The right to align one's feelings and behaviours to biological sex, in order to live according to the values and beliefs that bring them true happiness, is a human right. No one should take these freedoms and rights away from any individual. People should be free to make their own choices – politicians, activists, and mental health practitioners, should not dictate their actions."

Dr Davidson added: *The IFTCC has developed a worldwide collegial network of highly-skilled practitioners, counsellors and therapists in offering research-based, scientifically grounded practise. We are dedicated to maintaining accountability and the highest professional and ethical standards and look forward to becoming accredited by the PSA.*"

- For further information about the IFTCC, visit www.iftcc.org

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Editor's Notes:

For information regarding the Professional Standards Authority, visit www.professionalstandards.org.uk

For Information about the IFTCC Declaration, visit <https://iftcc.org/the-declaration/>