

Carr, A. (2013). The development of family therapy in Ireland. *Contemporary Family Therapy*, 35, 179-199.

DEVELOPMENT OF FAMILY THERAPY IN IRELAND

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Submitted in December 2012 and revised and resubmitted in January 2013 to: Russell Crane russcrane@byu.edu, editor of ***Contemporary Family Therapy***

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Running head: Family therapy in Ireland

ABSTRACT

In Ireland family therapy is a small profession, with under 200 registered therapists. The Irish family therapy movement began in the mid-1970s. By 1980 the Family Therapy Network of Ireland in the Republic of Ireland and the Northern Ireland Branch of the UK Association Family therapy had been founded. At present there are three main family therapy training centers in Ireland: two in the south (the Mater University Hospital, affiliated to University College Dublin and Clanwilliam Institute) and one in the north (at Queen's University Belfast). There is no statutory registration and licensing of family therapists in Ireland. Accredited professional family therapy programs in Ireland are 4-year part-time courses culminating in masters level qualifications. A primary degree in medicine, nursing, psychology, social science or education is a prerequisite for entry. Family therapists in Ireland work in both private practice and the public health service. Most family therapists in the public sector are employed as social workers, psychologists, psychiatrists or nurses, and conduct family therapy as part of their broader professional roles. Couple therapy in Ireland is provided by family therapists, and also by voluntary couple counselors based in networks of local centers, some of which were originally religiously affiliated, without a formal connection to national family therapy associations. The three major future challenges for Irish family therapy are creating a research infrastructure, developing a career structure in the public health service, and introducing statutory registration.

(The abstract is 233 words)

INTRODUCTION

In Ireland family therapy is a small profession, with about 150 registered family therapists in the south and approximately 40 in the north. (The island of Ireland is divided into two jurisdictions: the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland usually referred to as ‘the south’ with a population of 4.5 million and ‘the north’ with a population of 1.7 million). The seeds of the Irish family therapy movement were sown in the mid-1970s. By 1980 family therapy was established as a discipline with a national association in the south – the Family Therapy Network of Ireland (FTNI); a branch of the UK Association for Family Therapy in the north (AFT NI); and a professional training program at the Mater Hospital in Dublin. By 2000, 3 professional family therapy training programs had been established, 2 in Dublin (at the Mater Hospital and Clanwilliam Institute) and one in Belfast (at Queen’s University). These masters level programs were fully accredited by national and European professional psychotherapy associations. Today these three centers are still the main providers of professional masters level family therapy training, and family therapy supervisor training. In the public health services family therapy is provided largely by professionals employed as social workers, psychologists, psychiatrists or nurses. Designated family therapy positions are rare.

In this paper an account will be given of the development of family therapy in Ireland, north and south. This account will draw on previous papers on the topic (Allison, O’Neill, & Reilly, 2008; Byrne, 2011; Kearney, 1993, 2005; McCarthy, 1980; McHale et al., 1996; O’Sullivan, 2011; Sheehan, 1996; Speed, 2011), and on recent interviews and correspondence with key figures from the Irish family therapy movement. These include Isobel Reilly, Stephen Coulter, Jim Sheehan, Imelda McCarthy, Phil Kearney, Ed McHale, Jo Kennedy, Bernadette O’Sullivan, Corry de Jongh, Aileen Tierney, Padraic Gibson, John Sharry, Brendan Madden, Trish Murphy, Innes Collins, and Fiona McNicholas, to whom I am very grateful.

The following issues will be addressed: the establishment of professional associations; the main institutions that supported the growth of family therapy training and practice; the key founders of the profession; the accreditation of family therapy training programs and training costs; the place of family therapy in health service provision; the relationship between family and couple therapy in an Irish context; and future directions for family therapy in Ireland. A timeline of the development of family therapy in Ireland is given in Table 1.

DEVELOPMENT OF FAMILY THERAPY IN THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

In 1975 Barbara Kohnstamm, a Dutch social worker, who had settled in Ireland, inspired a handful of colleagues in the Eastern Region Branch of the Irish Association of Social Workers (IASW) to join an informal family therapy interest group (O'Sullivan, 2011). This occurred in the wake of 1974 being designated the 'Year of the Family' in Ireland. Barbara's interest in family therapy arose from her encounter with Montreal-based family therapist, Fred La Belle, at the Ackerman Institute in New York. Fred had initially trained with Virginia Satir and later at the Ackerman (La Belle, 2009). The group that Barbara Kohnstamm formed, and the membership of which changed from time to time, included Imelda McCarthy, Phil Kearney, Jim Sheehan, Angela Walsh, Susan Lindsay, Katie McGing, and Josaphine Glynn most of whom went on to become highly influential figures in the development of family therapy in Ireland. Imelda, Phil and Jim, along with Nollaig Byrne and myself, who were not members of this founding group, gained international recognition. Imelda, Phil, and Nollaig developed a team-based family therapy model - the Fifth Provence approach - inspired by the Milan systemic family therapy group (Byrne & McCarthy, 1988, 1995, 1999, 2007; Hyden & McCarthy, 1994; Kearney, Byrne & McCarthy, 1989; McCarthy, 1990, 2001, 2005, 2011; McCarthy & Byrne, 1988, 1995, 2008; Young, 2002). They presented their work in 23

countries and it was translated into 8 languages. Jim developed a narrative approach to family therapy based on the work of the French philosopher Paul Ricoeur (Sheehan, 1995, 2007) and has a family therapy chair at the Diakonhjemmet University College, Oslo, Norway. I developed an integrative approach to systemic practice (Carr, 1995, 2000c, 2006a, 2012), imported systemic ideas into clinical psychology training and practice (Carr, 1999, 2006b), championed the family therapy research agenda in Ireland and elsewhere (Carr, 2000a, 2000b, 2009a, 2009b, 2009c) and hold a chair of clinical psychology at University College Dublin (UCD). In 1975 Barbara Kohnstamm's group separated from the IASW and constituted itself as the Family Therapy Network of Ireland (FTNI).

Between 1975 and 1980 quite a few international family therapy experts were invited by FTNI to present training workshops in Ireland. These included iconic figures such as Virginia Satir and Salvador Minuchin and others, notably Fred LaBelle from Montreal; Don Bloch, Patricia Pegg and Phoebe Proskey from the Ackerman Institute in New York; and David Wilmot from London.

The young Irish professionals attracted to the family therapy movement had grown up in a conservative, repressed, predominantly Catholic culture. Probably influenced by the 1960s youth movement, they were ready for a new approach to psychotherapy that loosened the constraints of traditional conservative family dynamics and values, and that opened up the possibility of personal growth and liberation. These factors may explain the enthusiasm with which young family therapists engaged in the series of experiential personal growth-oriented family therapy workshops facilitated by Fred La Belle; their admiration for the inspirational Virginia Satir; and their appreciation of the technical brilliance of Salvador Minuchin.

While FTNI was informally constituted in 1975, it was not until 1980 that it was formally established. The official inaugural meeting of FTNI was held in September 1980 in

Dublin. Phil Kearney was elected the first chair and Imelda McCarthy, the first vice-Chair of FTNI. From humble beginnings with 11 members in 1980, in 2012 the Family Therapy Association of Ireland (FTAI) now has over 300 Members of whom about 150 are registered family therapists. FTNI changed its name to FTAI in 1997.

The Mater Hospital

In 1980 the first Irish professional family therapy training program was established at the Mater Hospital Child Guidance Clinic, Eccles Street, Dublin (the same street where James Joyce set the opening scene of his famous modern novel – *Ulysses* (Joyce, 1922)). The Mater is affiliated to UCD, and currently has five multidisciplinary teams, three outreach clinics, and close links with a pediatric hospital, and inpatient and outpatient units for young people with mental health problems and developmental disabilities. The Mater is a national center of excellence which runs the longest standing Irish professional family therapy training program. The current program directors are Jane Williams, a psychiatrist and Margaret Gill, a social worker, both of whom were trained as family therapists at the Mater.

The Mater Hospital was founded in 1861 by the Roman Catholic Sisters of Mercy. The child guidance clinic was founded in 1962, jointly funded by the Sisters of Mercy and the Irish public health service (McCabe, 2003; Stack, 2003). The clinic was set up to meet the mental health needs of disadvantaged families in the north Dublin inner city and suburbs. As part of its innovative and progressive ethos the Mater developed satellite clinics, the first of which was established in 1974 in the shopping precinct of a high-rise social housing development for disadvantaged families in the north Dublin suburb of Ballymun. Imelda McCarthy, one of the founders of Irish family therapy was appointed as a social worker in that outreach clinic in 1974.

In the 1970s the Mater adopted a multidisciplinary team-based practice model for

casework. Usually team members saw family members separately. For example social workers and psychiatrists typically interviewed parents, while psychologists, speech and language therapists or occupational therapists conducted standardized assessments with children. Treatment involved offering parents counseling and children individual or group interventions. Conjoint family sessions were rarely convened. However, under the leadership of Dr Paul McQuaid who was medical director from 1964 until 1999, and Sister Jo Kennedy, speech and language therapist and clinic administrator, the management of the Mater child guidance clinic was open to innovation. In the mid-1970s there was a receptivity to conjoint family therapy when its introduction to the Mater was proposed by junior staff including Ed McHale, a psychologist, and Phil Kearney, Imelda McCarthy and Jim Sheehan who were employed as social workers. Ed, Phil, Imelda and Jim were all encouraged by their senior colleagues at the Mater to obtain family therapy training abroad as detailed below. In 1979 the Mater appointed Nollaig Byrne, a child psychiatrist with family therapy training, to strengthen the emerging family therapy clinical service and contribute to the development of the first Irish family therapy training program.

The Pioneers

There is widespread acknowledgement that Nollaig Byrne, Imelda McCarthy, Phil Kearney, Ed McHale, and Jim Sheehan were the founders of family therapy in Ireland. They trained abroad, and established training programs when they returned to Ireland. In the early 1970s Nollaig Byrne trained in family therapy at the newly established Family Institute at the Jewish General Hospital in Montreal with John Sigal, Vivian Rakoff and Nathan Epstein. Nathan Epstein went on to develop the problem-focused McMaster approach to family therapy (Ryan et al., 2005). In the mid-1970s Nollaig taught and supervised novice family therapists at the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario. She worked under the direction of Freda Martin, a

psychoanalytically trained structural family therapist previously from the Tavistock. Nollaig returned to Ireland and was appointed to a psychiatry post in the Mater in 1979 (Byrne, 2011).

In 1977, during a 3-month internship Imelda McCarthy trained in structural family therapy at Saint Christopher's Child Psychiatry Clinic in North Philadelphia with Braulio Montalvo. Later Imelda completed an intensive brief training in structural family therapy with Judy Landeau at Salvador Minuchin's Philadelphia Child Guidance Clinic.

Phil Kearney completed his masters degree in family therapy with Ivan Böszörményi-Nagy's at Hahnemann University, Philadelphia between 1978 and 1980. He was introduced to a variety of family therapy models, and was taught structural family therapy by Charles Fishman, mediation by Florence Kaslow, and while in the US also spent a week observing Milton Erickson in clinical practice. In the 1980s he spent time in London with R. D. Laing who he regards as his mentor (Kearney, 2005).

Between 1979 and 1982 Ed McHale was trained in family therapy on a doctoral program at the California Professional School of Psychology. He also did an internship at the Redwood Centre with Robert Jay Green, and trained in family mediation for separating couples with Joan Kelly.

In the 1970s Jim Sheehan attend the Cambridge family therapy conferences in the UK which were jointly run by family therapists associated with the Tavistock in London and the Ackerman Institute in New York (Speed, 2011). These conferences inspired Jim to train at the Ackerman Institute in New York between 1981 and 1983, where he was strongly influenced by the strategic-systemic team approach adopted by Peggy Papp, Stanley Segal and Olga Silverstein (Keeney & Silverstein, 1986; Papp, 1983).

Others who trained abroad include Corry de Jongh and Noelle O'Hanlon who went to the Ackerman Institute, Angela Walsh who trained in Boston with Bunny and Fred Duhl, and

myself who trained in Canada.

The Mater Hospital family therapy training program

Starting in the winter of 1979-1980 Nollaig Byrne and Imelda McCarthy ran an informal program on Friday mornings at the Mater's family therapy training suite. This was equipped with a one-way mirror and video recorder. The program included live or videotaped demonstration family therapy sessions and experiential exercises. At that time I was doing a locum clinical psychologist job at the Mater, filling in for Ed McHale who was training in California, and attended this program. Observing Nollaig's clinical brilliance in those live sessions, contributed in no small way to my enduring interest in family therapy.

The Mater launched the first Irish professional family therapy training program in October 1980 (Sheehan, 2003). It was initially run by Nollaig Byrne, Imelda McCarthy, Jim Sheehan and Phil Kearney. The program was a 2-year part-time diploma level course with the first year devoted to seminars and experiential exercises and the second to live supervision of family therapy practice. Experienced clinicians, employed as health professionals were enrolled in the program and included psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, social workers and speech and language therapists. The academic element of the program covered tuition on all of the major schools of family therapy. Personal genograms, family reconstruction, family sculpting and other experiential exercises were used to promote personal development. The Milan five-part session, and the practices of hypothesizing, circularity and neutrality were the cornerstone of the model taught in live supervision (Selvini-Palazzoli et al., 1980).

Don Bloch, Director of the Ackerman Institute was appointed as a formal consultant to the course and visited annually to advise on program development. Lynn Hoffmann, an informal consultant to the program, visited regularly and contributed in particular to the

evolving style of team practice used in live supervision. With Nollaig Byrne and Monica McGoldrick, Lynn Hoffman played a key role in organizing the first Irish Systemic Teams Conference in Ballymaloe House County Cork in 1983. It was attended by teams from the USA, UK, Italy, Norway, Sweden and Ireland. The Ballymaloe team conference and subsequent similar conferences were a fruitful context for the development of new ideas about systemic family therapy team practices at the Mater.

As the international field of family therapy evolved, and as Mater program faculty exchanged ideas with other family therapy teams, innovative elements were integrated into the basic Milan systemic therapy framework used on the Mater training program. These included Gianfranco Cecchin's ideas about curiosity and irreverence (Cecchin, 1987; Cecchin, Lane, & Ray, 1992), Tom Andersen's (1991) reflecting team practices, the Ackerman Institute's three-way debate practices (Papp, 1983), Harlene Anderson and Harry Goolashian's (1988) collaborative conversational practices, Steve de Shazer's (1985, 1988) solution-focused practices, Michael White's narrative therapy practices (White & Epston, 1989), and practices derived from social constructionism and postmodernism (Anderson, 2003; McNamee & Gergen, 1992).

The academic status and management of the Mater family therapy training program, and related programs have evolved over more than 3 decades. In 1988 the Mater diploma in family therapy was converted to a UCD masters program. In 2008 it was expanded from a 2-year to a 4-year part-time program to meet accreditation criteria of the European Association for Psychotherapy (EAP) detailed below. In the 1990s the Mater, initially in collaboration with Clanwilliam Institute, developed a family therapy supervisor training program. Also for a period in the 1990s, the Mater and Clanwilliam Institute ran a joint foundation one-year part-time introductory family therapy program.

The Mater program was jointly directed by Jim Sheehan and Nollaig Byrne in the late

1980s, and then Jim Sheehan was appointed sole director of the program in the 1990s, a post which he retained until he retired in 2012 at which point Jane Williams and Margaret Gill were appointed joint directors. Jane trained as a psychiatrist and then as a family therapist at the Mater program in the early 1980s. In the mid-1980s she was a founding member of a Dublin-based constructivist and systemic psychotherapy practice - the Vico Consultation Centre in Dunlaoghaire - where she continues work. Margaret Gill trained as a social worker and then as a family therapist at the Mater in the late 1980s and has practiced as social worker in Clare Care, a social services organization in the west of Ireland. Both Jane and Margaret joined the Mater family therapy training program team in 2003, played a central role in developing the 4-year part-time masters program to meet EAP accreditation criteria. They also continue to run the Mater family therapy supervisors program.

While Don Bloch from the Ackerman Institute was the external examiner for the Mater diploma program, the external examiners for the Mater program since it evolved to a Master's level course have been Chis Dare from the University of London, David Smail from the University of Nottingham, Peter Stratton from the University of Leeds, and Peter Rober from the Catholic University in Leuven. The external examiners for the Mater family therapy supervisors program have been Barry Mason from the Institute of Family Therapy in London and Paula Boston from the University of Leeds.

Clanwilliam Institute family therapy training program

Clanwilliam Institute is currently the only independent Institute of Family Therapy in Ireland providing FTAI accredited professional training in family therapy (Kearney, 2003). It is a registered charity committed to making psychotherapy services accessible to all. It receives government funding to subsidize services to low-income clients. For regular clients it operates a sliding fee scale and provides family, couple and individual therapy. For corporate

clients it offers an employee assistance program. For health professionals it provides training in family therapy and family therapy supervision. Currently Aileen Tierney is the CEO and director of training. There are 36 clinical staff members at Clanwilliam all of whom are registered family therapists and most of whom work on a part-time basis.

Clanwilliam evolved from two previous organizations: the Dublin Institute of Marital and Family Therapy (DIMFT) which ran from 1982 to 1984 and the Marriage and Family Institute (MFI) which operated from 1984 to 1988. Ed McHale and Phil Kearney initiated these developments in 1982 after they returned from training in family therapy in the US. In 1985 MFI established a family therapy training program. It was a 2-year diploma course, with a similar structure and curriculum to that at the Mater. Bill O'Hanlon was the international consultant to this program.

In 1989 Mary Robinson, a lawyer with an interest in family mediation, launched Clanwilliam Institute. The following year Mary was elected as the first female president of Ireland, and later was appointed the UN commissioner for Human Rights. Clanwilliam has always maintained a high public profile in Irish society. Through the press it contributed to the national debate on the introduction of divorce legislation into the Republic of Ireland in 1997 following two referenda. Clanwilliam highlighted the benefits of divorce to children and partners trapped in families characterized by chronic conflictual marital relationships.

In the 1990s Clanwilliam ran professional family therapy training programs at rural centers outside Dublin including Nenagh and Dundalk, and in recent years has run a program in Galway in the west of Ireland. Clanwilliam also developed satellite clinics in disadvantaged Dublin suburbs including Corduff, Tallaght and Crumlin. Of these, the Corduff Counseling Service established in 1993, and renamed the Genesis Psychotherapy Family Therapy Service in 2004 has developed into an important family therapy center, with significant government funding (Carr, Lange & Kennedy, 2004). In 2002 Padraic Gibson was

appointed manager of Genesis and in 2005 Ed McHale moved from Clanwilliam to Genesis.

In 2006 Clanwilliam family therapy training program was converted from diploma to masters level, and accredited by the Irish Higher Education and Training Awards Council. External examiners to the program have included Arlene Vetere, formerly from the Tavistock and now at the University of Surrey, Isobel Reilly from Queen's University Belfast and Charlotte Burck from the Tavistock in London.

Clanwilliam Institute developed foundation and family therapy supervision programs which ran for a time in the 1990s in collaboration with the Mater. Bernadette O'Sullivan was central to the development of Clanwilliam Training in Supervision Program (TISP) and continues to direct this program. In the 1990s Clanwilliam also offered training programs in family mediation for separating couples, and a masters program in systemic management in collaboration with Sunderland University.

At Clanwilliam institute the CEO was Ed McHale until 2005 and the director of training was Phil Kearney until 2006. Since Ed and Phil retired Aileen Tierney has been CEO at Clanwilliam Institute and has also taken as over as director of training, a position held by Bernadette O'Sullivan, for a couple of years after Ed and Phil retired.

Aileen Tierney qualified as a social and trained as a family therapist and supervisor at MFI and Clanwilliam. In 2011 she completed her PhD at Taos/Tilburg University on systemic practice in disability services. She has been with Clanwilliam since the 1980s, became CEO in 2006 and has led the development of Clanwilliam family therapy program so that it meets current national and European accreditation criteria and is accredited as a masters level degree program.

International visitors

Since the initial family therapy workshops of the 1970s mentioned earlier, numerous

international family therapy experts have conducted training in the Republic of Ireland at the invitation of FTAI, the Mater, and Clanwilliam Institute. In the 1980s there were many international family therapy visitors, beginning with Salvador Minuchin's workshop at the Mater at the start of the decade. Gianfranco Cecchin and Luigi Boscolo from Milan gave their first Dublin workshop in 1983 at the invitation of Clanwilliam Institute, and this marked the beginning of Cecchin's many subsequent visits to Ireland. In July of this same year Monica McGoldrick, Lynn Hoffman, and Nollaig Byrne convened the first Systemic Teams Conference in Ballymaloe House, County Cork. This was attended by the Milan team from Italy; the Ackerman team, Harry Goolishian and Harlene Anderson, and Karl Tomm from the USA; Tom Andersen's team from Tromsø in Norway; Mia Andersson, Klas Grevelius and Ernst Salamon from Sweden; and Irish teams from Belfast and the Mater. This conference consolidated Milan Systemic Family Therapy (and various variations on this approach) as the principal practice model taught in the main family therapy training centers in Ireland. This conference and the other teams conferences which followed it were not only the cradle for the development of post-Milan ideas in the Irish Context but were also the forum within which the international family therapy community developed post-Milan, collaborative, and dialogical approaches. Many members of the international family therapy community who attended the Ballymaloe conference gave workshops in Ireland in later years. Other noteworthy family therapy workshops in the 1980s were convened by Don Bloch, Peggy Papp and Olga Silverstein from the Ackerman; Paul Watzlawick from the MRI in Palo Alto; Bill O'Hanlon; Laura Fruggeri and Valeria Uguzzio from Milan; Brian Cade from the Family Institute, Cardiff; John Burnham from the Parkview Clinic in Birmingham; Ros Draper from the Tavistock in London; David Wilmot and Hugh Jenkins from the Institute of Family Therapy in London; and Peter Lang and Martin Little from the Kensington Consultation Centre in London. Humberto Maturana gave an important workshop on constructivism and

family therapy. In June 1989 the first International Family Therapy Association (IFTA) conference was organized in collaboration with FTAI and Clanwilliam and was held at Trinity College Dublin, with Florence Kaslow as chair of IFTA (Kaslow, 1990). This was followed by a Family Therapy Teams conference in Renvyle House in Galway organized by the Fifth Province Associates (Imelda McCarthy, Nollaig Byrne and Phil Kearney).

As narrative and solution focused therapy gained ascendancy within the family therapy field, in the 1990s Ireland hosted important workshops on these emerging approaches to family therapy practice. There were workshops convened by Michael White, Alan Wade and Charles Waldergrave from the emerging narrative therapy tradition. There were also workshops by Steve de Shazer, Insoo Kim Berg, Terry Trepper, Michael Hoyt and Scott Miller on brief solution focused therapy. Joan Kelly gave an important workshop on mediation with divorcing couples, at the invitation of Clanwilliam Institute in 1997, the year that divorce legislation was passed in Ireland. In the 1990s there were also further visits from Gianfanco Cecchin, Karl Tomm, Tom Andersen and other colleagues who had first visited in the 1980s. Barry Mason from the Institute of Family Therapy in London gave a workshop on chronic illness and the family; Bob Beavers presented on successful families at UCD; Harry Proctor gave a workshop on a constructivist approach to family therapy; and Ken Gergen presented his views on social constructionism.

In the first dozen years of the new millennium, there were further workshops by international family therapy experts in Ireland. The growing interest in narrative therapy led to a series of further workshops from Michael White until his untimely death in 2008. Alan Jenkins gave a workshop on narrative therapy with violent men. There was also increasing interest in attachment-based therapies. Arlene Vetere from the University of Surrey gave workshops on her integrative narrative-attachment therapy and Scott Woolley from California gave a workshop on emotionally focused couple therapy. Elsa Jones, Eia Asen, and Julian

Leff gave a workshop on their evidence-based systemic couple therapy for depression.

There were also workshops by Jim Locke, Howard Liddle, Gwyn Daniel, Paolo Bertrando, Jim Wilson, Renee Singh, Art Fisher, Ken Gergen, Sheila McNamee and many others.

Other developments

There have been many other important developments in systemic therapy in the south of Ireland. In 1993 Sister Jo Kennedy, from the Mater founded Hesed House, a community-based family therapy service in the disadvantaged Dublin suburb of Inchicore (Cadwell, 1996; Kennedy, 1989; Kennedy & O'Shaughnessy, 1998; Kennedy, Gibson & Cadwell, 1998). Sister Jo, a qualified speech and language therapist, was administrator at the Mater, trained in family therapy at the Mater and spent a decade in community development work in Inchicore before establishing Hesed House. In 2008 and 2009 Hesed House ran an international systemic seminar series which included presentations by Peter Stratton, Reenee Sing, Bernadette Wren, Paolo Bertrando, Arelen Vetere, and Giorgio Nardone. Ed McHale, Padriac Gibson and Imelda McCarthy have run a family therapy supervision program at Hessed house since 2010.

In Ireland, there is a strong brief therapy and solution focused therapy tradition. John Sharry, Melissa Darmody and Brendan Madden (2011) established the Brief Therapy Group (BTG) in Dublin in the 1990s. John Sharry and Meilssa Darmody trained with Chris Iveson at the Brief Therapy Practice in London (Ratner, George, Iveson, 2012). John Sharry went on to develop a suite of parent training programs with his colleague Carol Fitzpatrick, a child psychiatrist who trained in family therapy at the Mater in the early 1980s (Sharry, Hampson & Fanning, 2011; Sharry & Fitzpatrick, 2011a, 2011b). These programs incorporate ideas from solution focused therapy and family therapy, and have been evaluated in a series of controlled trials (Carr, 2011). With his colleagues, John Sharry has also written a series of

popular books on managing children and adolescents which make family therapy ideas and practices accessible to parents (Sharry, 2002; Sharry & Fitzpatrick, 2004; Sharry, Hampson & Fanning, 2005; Sharry, Reid & Donohoe, 2001). More recently in 2012, Padriac Gibson, who trained at Clanwilliam, in collaboration with Giorgio Nardone has launched an MSc in brief strategic psychotherapy at the Bateson Clinic, which Padraic Gibson founded in 2011, in Dublin. Giorgio Nardone is a colleague of Paul Watzlawick from the MRI who is now based at the University of Siena, Italy and has published a series of books developing the MRI brief therapy model (Nardone & Watzlawick, 1993; 2005)

While the main Irish training centers for family therapy are in Dublin and Belfast, family therapy practice centers have developed throughout Dublin and Belfast and the rest of Ireland from the 1970s. The earliest of these developments occurred in the west. In 1975 Anthony Carroll (a psychiatrist) established a family therapy practice in the Irish public child psychiatry service in Galway and this continues to operate today (Gormley, 2003; Stack, 2003). In the 1990s the Mater ran an off-site family therapy training program in the north east (Ardee, County Louth); and Clanwilliam also ran off-site family therapy training programs in the midlands (Nenagh, County Tipperary) and the north east (Dundalk, County Louth).

In 1994 a family therapy service was developed in the mid-West by Sister Geraldine Collins. In 1995 a foundation level family therapy training program was established at the University of Limerick by John O'Brien in collaboration with Geraldine, with support from Jim Sheehan at the Mater. In 2000 after considerable planning and development work by Jim Sheehan, the University of Limerick founded a 3-year masters program in family therapy with Marie Murray as the director and David Campbell from the Tavistock as the external examiner (Murray, 2003). Unfortunately this program was discontinued after training a single cohort of therapists.

As an independent family therapy consultant, and as faculty of both the Mater and

Clanwilliam family therapy programs Corry de Jongh has played a central role in the training and supervision of family therapy teams within the Irish public health service outside Dublin. Over the past 20 years she has contributed to the establishment of family therapy teams in the north west (in Sligo and Donegal), the mid-west (in Tipperary and Limerick), the west (Galway), the south east (in Kilkenny and Carlow) and the north East (in Louth, Cavan and Monaghan).

In the 1990s Paddy Sweeney, a priest, and his colleague Collette Richardson with support from Jim Sheehan and Nollaig Byrne from the Mater and Jim Wilson from the Institute for Family Therapy in London, established a family therapy training program in Romania. It involved a series of week-long site visits to Romania; followed by an intensive two week academic and clinical supervision program at the Mater; and the provision of remote academic and clinical supervision (Sweeney, 2003).

In 1993 Imelda McCarthy established the first doctorate in family therapy and systemic practice at UCD. Graduates of this program have gained international recognition, for example, Valerie O'Brien (2000) for her work on kinship fostering and Marie Keenan (2011) for her work on clerical child abuse.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF FAMILY THERAPY IN NORTHERN IRELAND

The family therapy movement in Northern Ireland began in 1977 (Allison, O'Neill & Reilly, 2008). Isobel Reilly, Artie O'Neill, Denis O'Brien, and Billy Nelson convened regular meetings in Belfast. Meetings were also arranged in Ballymoney by Sheila Henry and Kerry O'Halloran for those interested in family therapy. Sue Walrond-Skinner and Brian Cade from the Family Institute at Cardiff in Wales presented the first Northern Ireland family therapy workshop in Belfast in 1977 under the auspices of the Irish branch of the Association for Child Psychology and Psychiatry. AFT NI was also constituted in 1977 (two years after AFT had been founded

in London). AFT NI now has just over 40 family therapists on its register. In 1979 Isobel Reilly was elected to the AFT national executive committee in the UK. There were conversations at this point between AFT NI and FTNI about amalgamation. While this proposal has clear administrative advantages, the political, cultural and historical issues that divided the island of Ireland prevented AFT and FTNI from merging.

In the 1970s Arnon Bentovim from Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital in London, David Campbell from the Tavistock in London, Katie McGing from Saint Michael's House for people with intellectual disabilities in Dublin, and Max Cornwell from Australia, visited Northern Ireland and offered workshops and consultations to members of AFT NI.

In 1980 the Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children invited Ros Draper from the Tavistock to conduct family therapy team training over a series of nine workshops. This laid the foundation for team-based family therapy in Whitefield House (which is now the Youth Justice Agency) and the child psychiatry department of the Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children. Arite O'Niell, Billy Nelson, Patricia Donnelly, David Gilliland and John McGeown were among the founding members of the Northern Ireland family therapy movement who attended this training program. Queen's University Belfast hosted a series of introductory seminars on conjoint family therapy in 1980 and introduced intermediate level family therapy training into a post-qualification certificate course for social workers specializing in child care in 1985. In the same year AFT NI organized a foundation program in family therapy. Noel McCune went to the Philadelphia Child Guidance Clinic and to Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital for family therapy training and also served as the Northern Ireland representative on the AFT executive committee in the UK. Dedicated family therapy sessions were established in some services in Northern Ireland by Billy Nelson and Arlene Healey and their colleagues in Belfast, Noel McCune's team at Craigavon, Gerry Cunningham's group in Derry, Marie Kenny in Antrim and Sam Allison in Newtown Abbey. Artie O'Neill and Denis

O'Brien at Whitefield House (the Youth Justice Agency) developed a foundation level family therapy program and has continued up to the present time to play a central role in the development of family therapy in Northern Ireland.

The family therapy movement in Northern Ireland was strongly influence by the Mater family therapy program. In the 1990s a group of family therapists from Northern Ireland trained at the Mater in Dublin. These included Isobel Reilly and Stephen Coulter, who went on to become directors of the family therapy program at Queens University Belfast which was founded in 2001, and Arlene Healey who went on to become Director of the Family Trauma Centre (FTC) in Belfast which was founded in 1999 with Marie Kenny, Isobel Reilly and Stephen Coulter on staff as family therapists (Healey, Coulter, Kenny & Reilly, 2001; Kenny, 1999). The FTC was the first clinical service in Northern Ireland to have designated family therapy positions. The FTC offers a community based service to families adversely affected by the conflict in Northern Ireland. In the 1990s foundation level family therapy training programs were set up in Craigavon by Moira Davren with consultation from Jim Sheehan from the Mater, and in Belfast by Arlene Healy and Marie Kenny, who had trained at the Mater. The Family Institute at Cardiff in Wales also contributed to the development of family therapy in Northern Ireland. In the 1990s intermediate level family therapy courses offered by the Family Institute, were run in Newry hosted by Gerry O'Hanlon, in Derry hosted by Gerry Cunningham, and in Moy hosted by Cathy Jayat.

Foundation and intermediate level courses were also conducted in other centers in the early years of the new millennium. Barry Mason and Jim Wilson, from the Institute of Family Therapy in London, ran foundation and intermediate level courses in Moy and Derry.

Since the 1970s many international family therapy experts have run training workshops in Northern Ireland including Michael White, David Epston, Karl Tomm, Lynn Segal, Bill O'Hanlon, Glenn Lerner, David Wilmot, Tony Morrison, Jan Walker, John

Burnham, Arlene Vetere, Rudi Dallos, Ben Furman, Janine Roberts, Sallyann Roth, Howard Liddle, Gwyn Daniel, Paolo Bertrando, Donald Williamson, Morris Taggart, and Matthew Selekman.

The Queen's University family therapy training program

In 1999 the training steering group of AFT NI recruited Jim Wilson to facilitate planning a family therapy program, and through lobbying, the School of Sociology, Social Policy and Social Work at Queen's University Belfast agreed to provide a base for this course. Queen's University Belfast, founded in 1845, is a member of the Russell Group of 24 leading UK universities. The first accredited masters level professional training program in family therapy in Northern Ireland was established at Queens in 2001, followed in 2002 by foundation and intermediate level courses. Collectively these 3 courses constituted a 4-year part-time program which meets the accreditation criteria of national and European family therapy associations. In 2002 a family therapy supervisor training program was also established at Queen's. The Queen's family therapy programs were set up and directed by Isobel Reilly until she retired in 2010. They are now directed by Stephen Coulter. Both Isobel and Stephen trained and worked initially as social workers and then trained as family therapists at the Mater program in Dublin in the 1990s. External examiners for the Queens course have included Graham Bryce, from the University of Glasgow and director of a major Scottish family therapy training program; Judith Lask, from the Institute of Psychiatry family therapy program at Kings College London, and Phil Kearney from Clanwilliam Institute Dublin.

FEEDBACK – THE IRISH JOURNAL OF FAMILY THERAPY

Feedback is the first and only Irish family therapy journal. Imelda McCarthy established *Feedback* in the late 1970s as the FTNI news bulletin. Originally a single page reproduced

on a Gestetner copier at the Mater and circulated by hand, this evolved in the 1980s and 90s into an increasingly sophisticated magazine, and in the new millennium, under the editorship of Jim Sheehan, Jane Williams and their colleagues, into the official academic journal of the FTAI. *Feedback* now publishes academic papers, as well as news items about family therapy, and reviews of books and workshops. Much of the information in this paper is based on articles published in *Feedback*. The many editors have included Marie Murray and Joe Duffy both of whom achieved national celebrity status through their involvement in the media. Marie Murray is best known for her regular mental health column in the Irish Times, the main national Newspaper, her frequent media appearances, and her popular books (Murray 2002, 2007; Murray & Keane, 1998). Joe Duffy's national fame arose from his daily access radio program 'Liveline' on the main national radio station RTE 1.

TRAINING STANDARDS: NATIONAL AND EUROPEAN

In Ireland family therapy training and registration standards are set by national family therapy professional associations (FTAI in the south and AFT NI in the north); national umbrella psychotherapy associations, of which FTAI and AFT NI are members (the Irish Council for Psychotherapy (ICP) in the south and the UK Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP) in the north); and European associations including the European Family Therapy Association (EFTA) and the European Association for Psychotherapy (EAP). The national family therapy associations (FTAI and AFT NI) publish registers of family therapists on their websites. FTAI's register is also published periodically in the ICP's *Guide to Psychotherapy in Ireland* which is now in its fourth edition (Irish Council for Psychotherapy, 2003). (Web addresses for all the organizations referred to here, are listed at the end of the paper.)

National and European general psychotherapy associations are a relatively recent development. UKCP was founded in 1980 and inaugurated in 1993. ICP was founded in

1991. These general umbrella organizations represent the collective interests of various branches of psychotherapy (including systemic, psychodynamic, humanistic and cognitive-behavior therapy) nationally and at a European level within EAP and EFTA. EFTA was founded in 1990 and EAP was founded in 1991. Ed McHale, one of the founders of Clanwilliam Institute, held the presidency of EAP and arranged for Ireland to host the EAP conference at UCD in 2000. A number of Irish family therapists have made significant contributions to the development of EFTA including Barbara Kohnstamm and Phil Kearney. Both Barbara Kohnstamm (in 2007) and myself (in 2010) have received awards from EFTA for our contributions to the profession and family therapy research respectively (O'Sullivan, 2011).

EFTA represents 28 national family therapy associations such as FTAI and AFT at EAP. The goal of EFTA is to achieve recognition for family and systemic therapy as a distinct, scientifically-based form of psychotherapy and ensure rigorous standards of training and practice throughout Europe. EFTA is recognized by EAP as the European wide accrediting organization for family and systemic therapy. EAP represents 128 European psychotherapy organizations including 28 national umbrella organizations (like ICP and UKCP) and 17 European-wide associations for psychotherapy like EFTA. Its aim is the establishment of psychotherapy as an independent profession in Europe. The EAP awards the European Certificate for Psychotherapy (ECP) to therapists whose training meets its accreditation criteria. FTAI and AFT have harmonized their family therapy training program accreditation criteria to be consistent with those of the EAP. FTAI and AFT registered family therapists, therefore, are eligible to receive the ECP.

EAP training standards require all psychotherapists to complete 3,200 hours of training spread over a minimum of 7 years. The first 3 years must involve 1,800 hours of training in human sciences such as medicine, nursing, psychology, social science or

education. This must be followed by a minimum of 1,400 hours over 4 years of professional psychotherapy training. Professional psychotherapy training must include three key elements: 500-800 hours of academic tuition covering theory, methodology and psychopathology; 300-600 hours of indirect and 150 hours of direct supervision of clinical practice; and 250 hours of personal psychotherapy or personal development.

EFTA endorses these standards and further specifies that the curriculum for family therapy training programs must cover couple and family therapy skills for casework from intake to disengagement with a range of client systems; skills for engaging in supervision and self-reflection; the history, theories, research and practice of couple and family therapy and relevant information about other therapeutic approaches; relevant theory and research concerning the family lifecycle, family functioning, psychopathology, and sexuality; ethical practice, diversity and the legal context of family therapy; the evidence base for family therapy; and research methods relevant to family therapy.

Currently in Ireland, the professional family therapy training programs based at the Mater, Clanwilliam and Queens University meet EAP and EFTA accreditation criteria. Consistent with these criteria, a primary degree in medicine, nursing, psychology, social science or education is required for admission to these programs. In addition, applicants must be in a paid or voluntary work situation which provides opportunities for them to implement systemic practice during their training. All three Irish family therapy programs are 4-year part-time courses involving 1,400 hours covering academic tuition, supervised clinical practice, and personal professional development.

The final qualification from Irish family therapy programs is a masters level degree. In some instances, a foundation level certificate is awarded for the first year and an intermediate level diploma for the second year of these 4-year programs. Most professional family therapists in Ireland are qualified at a masters level, or equivalent. A handful of family

therapists have completed PhDs in family therapy, or in social science, psychology or philosophy on a systemic therapy topic.

LICENCING AND REGISTRATION

There is not yet statutory registration or licensing of family therapists in Ireland. However, there are concerted efforts by national psychotherapy organizations (ICP and UKCP) to have statutory registration introduced within the next decade.

FAMILY THERAPY TRAINING FEES

At the Mater or Clanwilliam, which are in the south of Ireland, for the period 2012 to 2013, the total fees for enrolling in a 4-year part-time family therapy training program ranged (in round numbers) from about €22,000 to €29,000 (or approximately 29,000 to 38,000 US dollars). At Queen's University, In the north of Ireland, the total fees for 4 years of part-time family therapy training was about £6,500 (or approximately 10,000 US dollars). At the Mater or Clanwilliam the total fees for a 15 month supervisor training program ranged from about €4,500 - €4,500 (or approximately 6,000 to 7,000 US dollars) for the period 2012-2013.

COUPLE THERAPY IN IRELAND

An important issue in the provision of therapeutic services for distressed problems, is the extent to which this is provided by accredited family therapists or by other professionals, an issue that has been given significant consideration in a north American context (Gurman & Fraenkel, 2002). In Ireland family therapists trained on accredited programs at the Mater, Clanwilliam and Queen's University all learn basic couple therapy skills, although there is variability across programs in the degree and intensity of couple therapy training. For many qualified family therapists working on a fee-for-service basis couple therapy is a significant

part of their caseload. However, couple therapy is not routinely offered within the public health service. Historically, in Ireland, most couple therapy has been offered by voluntary counselors, on a no-fee or low-fee for service basis, based in networks of local centers, established by organizations which were originally religiously affiliated, without a formal connection to national family therapy associations such as FTAI or AFT NI.

Accord, Relationships Ireland and the Northern Ireland branch of the UK organization, Relate (Relate NI), are the three main couple counseling organizations in Ireland. Accord, a Catholic organization, has centers throughout the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. Relationships Ireland, which operates in the Republic of Ireland and Relate NI, which operates in Northern Ireland were originally protestant organizations affiliated to the church of Ireland and England respectively. However, now both organizations are non-denominational. Both Relationships Ireland and Accord were founded in 1962 and Relate in 1938. There is also a local Catholic agency in Cork: The Cork Marriage Counseling Centre.

Within Accord, Relationships Ireland, Relate NI and Cork Marriage Counseling Centre marriage preparation courses, marriage enrichment courses, couple counseling, and sex therapy, are offered by voluntary counselors. For religiously affiliated organizations these services are offered in a manner consistent with the values of their sponsoring religious traditions. Counselors are carefully selected and until recently were trained 'in-house'. Currently some counselors in these organizations are trained to diploma or masters level, increasingly in university-based programs. Most counselors are trained in client-centered practices and in facilitating communication between distressed partners. Some are trained in other practice models and in specialist skills for addressing specific problems such as infidelity, sexual problems, and domestic violence. There is considerable variability in the extent to which ideas and practices from the systemic family therapy tradition are incorporated into the training of counselors within Accord, Relationships Ireland and Relate

NI. Brendan Madden CEO of Relationships Ireland and Colm O'Connor, Director of the Cork Marriage Counseling Centre are both psychologists with expertise in systemic practice.

There are no formal links between Irish family therapy organizations and voluntary couple counseling organizations, and the training of counselors within Accord, Relationships Ireland and Relate NI does not meet EAP, EFTA, FTAI or AFT accreditation criteria.

Some FTAI or AFT NI accredited family therapists, and some counselors in religiously affiliated marriage counseling organizations offer sex therapy as part of couple therapy. However, there is a small group of sex therapists in Ireland affiliated to the UK-based College of Sexual and Relationships Therapists (COSRT). Members of this COSRT specialize in sex therapy. Fewer than 20 registered Irish member were listed on the COSRT website in 2012.

EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE, FAMILY THERAPY RESEARCH AND MODEL INTEGRATION

In Ireland there has been an increasing interest in evidence-based systemic practice in the new millennium. Functional family therapy (FFT, Sexton, 2011), multisystemic family therapy (MST, Henggeler et al., 2009) and multidimensional Treatment Foster care (MTFC, Chamberlain, 1994) services have been established in Ireland since 2000. Action for Children has set up an FFT service near Belfast in Northern Ireland and I have been involved in evaluating an FFT service called Families First in Dublin, set up by Archways in collaboration with Tom Sexton from Indian University. Extern has set up an MST service near Belfast in Northern Ireland and an MTFC program in Mullingar in the midland area of the Republic of Ireland. The Daughters of Charity Child and Family Service has also set up a MTFC service in Dublin. All of these evidence-based family therapy services have been initiated by private or voluntary rather than public health service organizations, with training and supervision provided by dissemination organizations affiliated to developers of these

evidence-based practice models. The evidence-based Maudsley Model for treating adolescent eating disorders is increasingly used in Ireland, particularly in university affiliated teaching hospitals (Forbes, 2009; Lock et al., 2001). A range of evidence-based parent training programs are now widely practiced throughout Ireland. These include the Parents Plus (Sharry, Hampson & Fanning, 2011; Sharry & Fitzpatrick, 2011a, 2011b), Incredible Years (Webster-Stratton & Reid, 2010) and Triple P (Sanders & Murphy-Brennan, 2010) programs. Many therapists providing evidence-based family therapy and parent training services are not FTAI or AFT NI accredited family therapists, but rather have received model-specific accreditation from the organizations disseminating these specific evidence-based practice models. This issue of model specific accreditation, in the absence of family therapy accreditation is an important professional issue deserving consideration by FTAI and AFT NI.

With service funders' sharpened focus on outcome assessment and value for money, there is also an increasing interest in family therapy research. Since I returned to Ireland in 1991 after more than a decade abroad in Canada and the UK, my main contribution to the family therapy movement has been in the research domain. I have provided research support and mentoring to colleagues within the family therapy community, conducted an ongoing family therapy research program, and published extensively. My publications include a number of books, journal articles and conference presentations many of which are research based, but which are written primarily for practicing therapists. For example, in a series of review papers, I have attempted to make important developments in evidence-based practice accessible to busy clinicians (Carr, 2000a, 2000b, 2009a, 2009b, 2009c). With Peter Stratton from Leeds University we have been validating an outcome measure – the SCORE - for use in routine family therapy practice (Cahill et al., 2012; Fay et al., 2011). We are currently using this instrument in ongoing controlled trials of FFT and positive systemic practice. In the north of Ireland, there are also research initiatives. For example, Stephen Coulter (2011) has

recently completed a controlled trial of family therapy for trauma.

As the field of systemic therapy (and psychotherapy more generally) matures, there has been a trend to synthesize apparently disparate theories, practices and research findings into comprehensive integrative approaches. In my book - *Family Therapy Concepts Process and Practice* – which is the first Irish family therapy text, I have attempted to contribute to this movement to empower therapists to bring the wisdom of the entire field to bear on routine clinical work (Carr, 2000, 2006, 2012).

CLOSING COMMENTS

In Ireland family therapy has come a long way since 1975. There are three major challenges for Irish family therapy in the future. The first is developing a research infrastructure for generating and using scientific evidence to inform family therapy practice, and convince public health service funders of its value (Carr, 2010). The second is creating a career structure for family therapists within the public health service. The third is creating a context to support the introduction of statutory registration.

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Table 1. Timeline for the development of family therapy and systemic practice in Ireland

1975	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal founding the Family Therapy Network of Ireland (FTNI) in Dublin • Founding of the Western Health Board Family Therapy Service, Galway by Anthony Carroll
1976	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Republic of Ireland family therapy residential workshop presented by Fred La Belle from Canada
1977	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Founding of the Northern Ireland branch of the UK Association of Family Therapy (AFT NI), Belfast • First Northern Ireland family therapy workshop presented by Brian Cade and Sue Walrond Skinner from the Family Institute, Cardiff • First Irish Virginia Satir family therapy workshop in Killiney Castle Hotel, Dublin
1978	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Northern Ireland family therapy training workshops by David Campbell from the Tavistock at Whitefield House - Youth Justice Agency, Belfast
1979	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First meeting of senior officers of FTNI and AFT NI, Dublin • First AFT NI conference
1980	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal founding of FTNI in the Gresham Hotel, Dublin • Founding of the Mater professional family therapy training program as a diploma level course • First Irish Salvador Minuchin workshop on Structural Family Therapy at the Mater, Dublin • First Queen's University Belfast series of introductory lectures on conjoint family therapy • First Northern Ireland training program by Ros Draper from the Tavistock in Milan Systemic Family Therapy team practice at the Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children
1982	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Founding of the Dublin Institute of Marital and Family Therapy by Ed McHale and Phil Kearney (DIMFT) later to become Clanwilliam Institute
1983	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Irish Systemic Teams conference in Ballymaloe House County Cork, organized by Lynn Hoffman, Monica McGoldrick and Nollaig Byrne, attended by teams from USA, UK, Italy, Norway, Sweden and Ireland • First Irish Gianfranco Cecchin and Luigi Boscolo's workshop on Milan Systemic Family Therapy, Dublin
1984	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Founding of the Marriage and Family Institute (MFI) later to become Clanwilliam Institute
1985	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Founding of the MFI / Clanwilliam professional family therapy training program as a diploma level course • First FTNI conference, Killiney Court Hotel, Dublin
1986	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FTNI organize a 2 year series of workshops by Gianfranco Cecchin, Laura Fruggeri and Valeria Uguzzio from Milan; Martin Little, Peter Lang from KCC London; Lynn Hoffman from the Ackerman; Monica McGoldrick; and Mia Andersson Klas Grevelius and Ernst Salamon from Sweden • First AFT NI foundation course, Belfast • First Queen's University Belfast intermediate level family therapy training program
1988	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Founding of Clanwilliam Institute (formerly DIMFT and MFI) • Establishment of FTNI criteria for registration of family therapists • First Fifth Provence paper published in <i>Family Process</i> by Imelda McCarty and Nollaig Byrne, Mistaken love: conversations of the problem of incest in an Irish context
1989	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First World Family Therapy Conference at Trinity College Dublin organized by the International Family Therapy Association (IFTA) and FTNI • First Irish book on couple therapy by Gabriel Kiely Kiely, <i>Finding Love: Counseling for Couples in Crisis</i>
1990	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First 65 family therapists registered by FTNI in Dublin • Mater starts off-site family therapy training program at Ardee, County Louth, Republic of Ireland • Clanwilliam starts off-site family therapy training program in Nenagh, County Tipperary, Republic of Ireland • Founding of the Eastern Health Board family therapy training program, Dublin
1991	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FTNI contributes to the founding of the Irish Standing Conference on Psychotherapy, which later became the Irish Council for Psychotherapy (ICP), Dublin • First group of family therapy supervisors is registered by FTNI, Dublin
1992	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FTNI is incorporated as a limited company
1993	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Founding of the University College Dublin PhD in families and systemic therapy, directed by Imelda McCarthy • Founding of Hesed House by Jo Kennedy

- Founding of Corduff Family Centre (later re-named Genesis)
 - 1995 • Publication of first Irish family therapy book by Alan Carr, *Positive practice: A step-by-step guide to family therapy*
 - First Irish workshop by Steve de Shazer on Solution Focused Therapy, Dublin
 - 1997 • FTNI changes its name to Family Therapy Association of Ireland (FTAI)
 - First Irish workshop by Michael White on Narrative Therapy, Dublin
 - 1998 • Establishment by University College Dublin of a professional 2-year part-time Masters level family therapy training program at the Mater (to replace the former diploma in family therapy)
 - 2000 • Founding of the Family Trauma Centre, Belfast under directorship of Arlene Healey
 - Publication of the first comprehensive Irish family therapy text book by Alan Carr, *Family therapy: Concepts, process and practice* (second and third editions were published in 2006 and 2012).
 - The Ninth European Association for Psychotherapy (EAP) Conference is hosted by University College Dublin under the presidency of Ed McHale, from Clanwilliam Institute
 - Founding of the University of Limerick professional family therapy training program as a masters level course
 - 2001 • Founding of the Queens University Belfast 4-year part-time professional masters level family therapy training program, meeting EAP criteria, under directorship of Isobel Reilly
 - 2004 • Corduff Family Centre re-named Genesis Psychotherapy Family Therapy Service
 - 2006 • Clanwilliam family therapy program became a 4 year part-time master level qualification meeting EAP criteria, accredited by the Irish Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC) (replacing the former diploma level program)
 - 2008 • Mater family therapy program became a 4-year part-time masters level qualification meeting EAP criteria, affiliated to University College Dublin (replacing the former 2 year program)
 - 2011 • Founding of the Bateson Clinic by Padraic Gibson in Dublin
 - 2012 • Founding of the masters level program in brief psychotherapy at the Bateson Clinic, Dublin by Padraic Gibson and Giorgio Nardone, University of Sienna, Italy
 - Clanwilliam was awarded European Accredited Psychotherapy Training Institute (EAPTI) status by EAP
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