

Frequently Asked Questions Counselling Support Service

Where are you based?

The counselling sessions will be based at a location in Southport.

Where is the counselling room situated?

The dedicated counselling room is situated on the ground floor.

Who can use this counselling service?

The service is open to anyone aged 50 and over.

What is counselling?

The Age Concern Sefton Counselling Service provides a safe and confidential place in which to explore your feelings, hopes and anxieties which you are presently experiencing.

Most importantly our counsellors will listen to you, whilst you gain insight into yourself and reach your own solutions to personal issues.

Although this process may be upsetting for a while it will help you understand more about yourself and how to work towards living in a more positive and satisfying manner.

You may make changes you desire in your life, or come to terms with the things that cannot be changed. You may develop a clearer idea of the direction you would like your life to take.

We will not judge or advise you. Our counsellors endeavor to create a culturally appropriate space for you, respecting your privacy, dignity and confidentiality.

All counsellors working for Age Concern Liverpool & Sefton adhere to the British Association of Counselling & Psychotherapy (B.A.C.P) code of ethics and practice guidelines.

The purpose of this information sheet is to let you know what you can expect from this service.

Is my counselling session confidential?

All Age Concern Liverpool & Sefton Counsellors work to the highest possible levels of confidentiality and information that you share with your counsellor will be kept in confidence.

However, we cannot guarantee total confidentiality in every circumstance, because of our legal and ethical responsibilities both to you and the wider

community. It would only ever be in truly exceptional circumstances, where serious harm might occur to yourself and /or others, that breaking confidentiality might be considered. Wherever possible this would be discussed with you in a respectful and compassionate manner. The counsellor is required to consult with the manager of the service before taking any action.

The information will be on a need to know basis only.
It will be the manager's decision to take any appropriate action.
Where possible we would advise you of our intentions.

How can a referral be made?

Referrals can be made by:

- Self referral
- Family & Friends
- GP referral
- Statutory agencies
- Community & voluntary groups
- Care home/sheltered accommodation personnel

If you are unsure please contact the office for further guidance.

Other than self referral, you will be contacted to confirm you require the service.

What sort of issues do you cover?

We have helped many hundreds of people through difficult times, and we cover a variety of issues.

The list is not exhaustive; please contact the office if you are unsure.

- Bereavement or loss (death of a loved one, pets, divorce, separation, redundancy, loss of confidence, retirement etc).
- Anxiety
- Stress Management (panic attacks etc)
- Depression
- Trauma
- Problems at work
- Family issues
- Sexual identity
- Relationships

Are there exceptions to receiving counselling?

- We recommend a waiting period of six months for bereavement counselling as a natural grieving process needs to take place. Exceptions can be made in certain circumstances; this will need to be discussed once a referral has been made.
- You cannot receive counselling if you are currently seeking therapy through another counsellor.
- If you are seeing a psychologist or psychiatrist it would be ethically inappropriate for us to offer our service.
- Counselling sessions cannot take place if you have a court case pending. There may be a conflict of interest and the court case may be jeopardised. It is therefore better to undergo counselling once the case has ended.

Do you have a waiting list?

The waiting list will vary depending on a number of issues; we aim to see clients as soon as possible.

What will happen at my first session?

Your first session will be an assessment session, this enables yourself and the counsellor to look at your needs and what you want to explore during your counselling sessions.

After the assessment has been completed and agreement to continue has been made, you will be allocated with a counsellor.

You will have the same counsellor for the duration of your counselling sessions.

The day and time of your sessions will also remain constant.

How many counselling sessions are available?

This depends on the issues brought up during counselling.

Initially we will offer you up to 8 sessions, if it is felt appropriate the number of sessions will be extended. The number required will be agreed between client and counsellor.

However the work undertaken will be working towards a mutually agreed ending.

Do you provide a telephone counselling service?

We do not provide a telephone counselling service at the moment.

How much does it cost?

Age Concern Liverpool & Sefton currently do not charge for this service. If payment were to be required for counselling the cost could be in the region of £30.00 and upwards, per session. Although this service is free of charge, we do ask that you make a donation in order to help us continue this vital work with older people.

What are your opening hours?

We are open Monday to Friday 10.00am to 4.00pm.

What are the available counselling times?

Counselling sessions are available Monday to Friday. The first appointment starts at 10.00am and the final appointment is normally at 3.00pm.

How long do the sessions last?

Your session will last for 50 minutes.
You can terminate the session at any time.

How do I cancel an appointment?

When you undertake your counselling sessions, it is important that you commit to them.
Sessions take place once a week at an agreed time.
In unforeseen circumstances we require you to cancel your appointment as soon as possible.

Counsellors at Age Concern Liverpool & Sefton

When counsellors join our organisation the appropriate checks are done:

- Qualifications
- References
- DBS Check (Disclosure & Barring Service Check)

All counsellors are interviewed, undergo a full induction and are monitored on a regular basis.

Code of Practice

We abide by the British Association for Counselling & Psychotherapy known as the B.A.C.P guidelines.

Further information

If you require further information please feel free to contact us on 01704 542 993.