

COUNSELLING

The counselling service is for....

Anyone who wants to explore their own life story and move forward to cope better with whatever the future may hold.

Why Counselling?

- ✚ Sometimes offloading feelings makes day to day living easier.
- ✚ Sometimes it is easier to talk to someone outside our own circle of family and friends.
- ✚ Sometimes it is helpful to look at why experiences in the past make us behave the way we do today. This can empower us to make better choices in our relationships.
- ✚ Sometimes it helps to not have to go through things on your own.
- ✚ Sometimes it helps to share memories – good and bad – with someone who is able to listen.

What will the Counsellor do?

There are as many different ways of counselling as there are counsellors! No two counsellors will work in the same way as each counsellor that trains will understand all the different theories about human beings in a unique way.

Different styles of counselling help people in different ways so don't despair if things aren't resolved immediately.

All counsellors are committed to building a relationship with you, the client, and will work hard to encourage you to feel safe. This should be a relationship that is characterised by respect, honesty, warmth and understanding. The counsellor will listen carefully to what you have to say. They may offer reflections but will not normally give advice and should never make you feel judged.

During the first session your Counsellor will:

- ✚ Tell you about their training, experience and the way they work.
- ✚ Tell you about the level of confidentiality offered.
- ✚ Explain that they are working to Guidelines and an Ethical Framework that you may see if you wish.

- ✚ Discuss your hopes and expectations of the counselling.
- ✚ Begin building a relationship with you and offer you the chance to explain your situation as much as you are able and to begin working through the associated feelings.

How many sessions can I have?

You are the best judge of how many sessions you will need. Your counsellor will review the counselling with you routinely and he or she will want to work in a focused way so as not to waste your time.

What will it cost?

There is no charge for using the counselling service. Most of the counsellors at the Linden Centre give their time on a voluntary basis. A paid team support their work. The other services provided by Trinity Palliative Care Services do rely on public donations and you are of course welcome to make a donation to this work, should you wish to, and your counsellor will explain how this can be done.

Where would I have my counselling?

The Linden Centre has been especially designed and built for counselling. However, if you have special difficulty coming to the Linden Centre it may be possible to arrange an alternative venue. Any other location would have to provide the same degree of safety and confidentiality.

What if I cannot attend or I forget to come for my session?

We would appreciate it if you could give us as much notice as possible so that we can offer your appointment to someone else. This is particularly important, as many of the staff are volunteers. If you forget to attend we will contact you either by letter or phone. We will have checked with you at the beginning how you would wish us to make contact should we need to. We try not to leave messages unless we are confident you are happy for us to do so.

What happens if I meet the counsellor in a social situation?

You can decide with your counsellor how you would like them to respond were you to meet them elsewhere. The counsellors would not be looking to have friendship outside of the counselling relationship, as this is considered important for your well being.

How will I know if the counselling is helping?

Trust your instincts! Many people will feel disappointed at having to ask for help but counselling is not an easy thing to do. Sometimes having to focus on your problems can also mean initially that things are more painful. The counsellor would also prefer to be alongside you whilst you find your own solutions rather than 'rescue' you from your distress. If he

or she is not the best person to do that or if you don't feel comfortable with your counsellor then he or she will help you find someone else who can help you in a different way. We will work hard as a service to ensure that the counselling is as supportive as it can be. If you feel the counselling is making you feel uncomfortable in any way, we would like you to feel able to talk through it either with your counsellor or their manager. Or you could put your concerns in writing. If any of your questions remain unanswered please do not hesitate to contact the team in the office at the Linden Centre.