

Team Counsellor Development Policy

Introduction

1. The LIFE-FORCE Counselling Service BACP accreditation status requires team counsellors to meet the criteria detailed within this policy in order for them to remain on the team.
2. It is important that within the team there is a range of therapeutic approaches and specialist skills so that the Service can meet the needs of a wide range of client issues. This development policy aims to ensure the team undertakes ongoing CPD training that reflects expertise in a wide range of presenting issues.

Team Counsellor Membership Categories

- **Senior Team Membership**

This status is awarded to Certified Team Counsellors who have been on the team for more than 5 years and have gained individual accreditation either prior to or during this time with BACP, BAPCP or UKCP.

- **Certified Team Membership**

This category applies to Team Counsellors who have not yet achieved individual BACP, BAPCP or UKCP accreditation and reached Senior Team Membership status.

Continuing Team Counsellor Membership Requirements

To remain on the team, counsellors are required to:

1. Adhere to all of the Organisation's Counselling Service policies and procedures as detailed in the latest edition of the Team Counsellor Handbook including any ongoing developments and, in particular, all aspects of the Consultant Counsellor Agreement.
2. Adhere to the BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions, and as such the Organisation expects counsellors to be committed to the values, embody the ethical principles and aspire to the personal moral qualities, as detailed in this document.
3. Have been engaged in professional practice at the Centre within the last 6 months and be available to receive Service client referrals.
4. Attend Team Counsellor meeting, during which space is offered to each Team Counsellor to share insights of a professional nature in relation to annual development. There is also the opportunity for counsellors to provide the Office staff with evaluation and feedback of the Counselling Service as a whole. Included within each team meeting will be a brief presentation on health and safety (including fire procedures) by the Centre's Health & Safety Officer, or his deputy. Also a presentation on any policy developments that have occurred within the year will be provided.
5. The content and outcomes of the team meetings are summarised and published in a Therapist Newsletter, which counsellors are required to read and follow any amendments accordingly.

Individual Annual Reviews

1. Team Counsellor membership monitoring procedures require the Office to conduct annual reviews with each individual counsellor, during a specified month of the year, either face to face and/or on the telephone, followed by the completion of an Individual Review Form.
2. As part of the review, counsellors are required to complete an Annual Update Form, a Service Evaluation Form and a List of Client Referrals by the middle of the specified month, beyond which the Service is unable to make client referrals to the counsellor until the form is complete. This form provides evidence and confirmation that the counsellor agrees to:
 - a) Maintain continuing membership of a relevant professional body such as BACP. If a counsellor's professional membership is revoked at any time, then they will not be able to retain membership of the Counselling Team.
 - b) Be listed on a Register of Counsellors & Psychotherapists, such as BACP, UKCP etc., which is approved by the Professional Standards Authority for Health & Social Care.

- c) For a case load of 5 or more clients and/or working towards BACP accreditation and wanting the client hours to count, attend a minimum of 1 ½ hours of supervision per month. For a case load of 1 - 4 clients and not working towards BACP accreditation, attend a minimum of 1 hour of supervision per month.
- d) Hold current individual professional indemnity insurance.
- e) Hold a current DBS Enhanced Certificate, including Adult/Child Barring List Check(s) as applicable, which is renewed every 3 years.
- f) Hold a ICO Certificate of Registration which is renewed prior to the expiry date.
- g) Hold a current basic Emergency First Aid at Work Certificate which is renewed every 3 years. Copies of certificates should be filed in the Office.
- h) Hold a current Child Protection Training Certificate, if working with clients under the age of 18, which is renewed every 3 years and copied to the Office.
- i) Have an individual Client Information Leaflet and Client Therapy Contract and to use these for all Service referrals.
- j) Have a Therapy Assessment Form which is completed for each new referral, during the initial 1-3 assessment sessions, and the consent statement signed by the client.
- k) Completion of a minimum of 30 hours of CPD per year, in a category relevant to the practitioner's professional practice. This can include activities such as:

i) Short Courses on Professional Issues	ii) Seminars and Conferences
iii) Study for Further Qualifications	iv) Encouraging the Development of Others
v) Committee Work/Meetings	vi) Personal Development

A copy of BACP re-accreditation CPD Information Record Sheet can be provided instead where relevant. Copies of CPD Certificates should also be provided as evidence of stated CPD activities when available.

- l) Complete annual on-line training in Health & Safety, House Keeping, Risk Management, Data Protection, Equal Opportunities and other arising professional topics
 - m) Appoint annually, for a period of 1 year, a Contingency Counsellor who is also a Team Member and as such will be able to liaise with the Office in the event that they are unable to do so themselves. To have a clear formal arrangement that clarifies the procedures the Contingency Counsellor will undertake in the unlikely event of their serious incapacity or death e.g. the liaison with a family member; obtaining a list of clients names along with their contact details and appointment times; discussion with the Office regarding the reassignment of clients to either self or another Team Member; retrieval, management, storage and destruction of all client case notes according to the Data Protection Policy.
3. It is the counsellor's responsibility to ensure that all paperwork is kept up to date, which includes the return of relevant Referral and Closure Forms to the Office within the required timeframe. However the review also requires the counsellor to provide the Office with an up to date list of all ongoing clients, along with any outstanding Closure Forms, so that the Office can ensure the counsellor's client file is fully up to date and is an accurate record of their current case load.
 4. The individual review also includes a recap of any particular aspects of room hire procedures as deemed necessary by either the counsellor or Office.
 5. The Service Office staff also monitor the quality of each counsellor's work on a daily basis through their ability to manage their practice in a professional and considerate manner, especially regarding any practice management issues that may arise. To ensure efficient administration it is important that Team Members respond to queries made by the Office within 24 hours. Any counsellor who is regularly unable to meet any documentation deadlines will have their team membership suspended for 28 days, during which time the Office will not be able to refer them any clients. If after this suspension period the counsellor has been unable to provide the required documents, then their team counsellor membership will be terminated and their registration will be transferred to the status of Independent Practitioner. Furthermore, any counsellor who is unable to work within the policies & procedures of the Organisation will be asked to leave the LIFE-FORCE Counselling Service team.