

# Team Counsellor Development Policy

## Introduction

1. The LIFE-FORCE Counselling Service 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

### a) 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.

### b) 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 maintain a case load of 6 – 30 Service clients per week.
4. Complete annual on-line training in Health & Safety, House Keeping, Recycling & Environmental issues, Risk Management, Data Protection, Equal Opportunities and other arising professional topics
5. Ensure that all paperwork is kept up to date, which includes the return of relevant Referral Forms, Closure Forms, and Risk Assessment Forms when appropriate, to the Office within the required timeframe and in response to emails requesting outstanding documents

## Individual Annual Reviews

1. Team Counsellor membership monitoring procedures require the Centre Director to conduct individual annual reviews with each counsellor, during a designated month of the year, either on the telephone or by email, followed by the completion of an Individual Review Form.
2. As part of the review, counsellors are required to complete an Annual Update Form and a Service Evaluation Form by the middle of the designated month, beyond which the Service is unable to make client referrals to the counsellor until the form is complete. This Annual Update 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 and public liability insurance.

- e) Hold a current portable DBS Enhanced Certificate, including Adult/Child Barring List Check(s) as applicable, which is checked every 3 years.
- f) Hold a ICO Certificate of Registration which is renewed prior to the expiry date.
- g) Hold a current First Aid Certificate which is renewed before expiry. Copies of certificates should be held in counsellor's CPD file.
- 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:

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| 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 may also be provided as evidence of stated CPD activities when available.

- l) 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 and delivery of all client case notes to the Service who will manage the safe storage and destruction of these according to the Data Protection Policy.
3. The Service Evaluation Form gives the opportunity for counsellors to provide the Centre Director with feedback regarding the Counselling Service as a whole. All feedback is taken seriously, reviewed with the management team and changes made if deemed appropriate.
  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.