



Client Referral & Feedback Annual Report 2024 - 2025



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Introduction

The LIFE-FORCE Centre is a professional independent Counselling Service situated in the heart of Colchester, close to the city centre on East Hill.

The Centre has run a therapeutic Counselling Service for over 30 years. Counselling is provided in-person at the LIFE-FORCE Centre and remotely. The Service is open to individuals of all ages including adults, children, young people and couples.

The focus of our evaluation is:

- Review actions from previous year
- Provide and maintain excellent professional standards
- Maintain minimum waiting times
- Continue to provide highest level of care
- Review feedback from clients regarding the quality of the counselling service and suggestions for improvement
- Set objectives for the year ahead

Research Methods

LIFE-FORCE Counselling Service monitors the level of service it is providing to service users through two systems:

- **The Appointment Register**
- **Client Feedback Forms**

Description of Service

LIFE-FORCE was founded in 1990 and the Centre was established in 1994.

The Counselling Service provided is of the highest professional standards and is run according to the BACP (British Association for Counselling & Psychotherapy) Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions.

The Centre has seven therapy rooms, which include the Emerald, Amber, Coral, Amethyst, Topaz, Sapphire and Play Rooms. All the rooms are purposely furnished and are used exclusively for counselling sessions, meetings or training sessions. The LIFE-FORCE Centre provides an essential mental health & emotional support service, offering face-to-face counselling and also telephone & online sessions.

The Centre runs an affordable Counselling Service and aims to provide counselling sessions to all enquiries whenever possible.

The Service receives referrals from many local authorities and GP Practices, individuals may also self-refer.



Staffing & Resources

LIFE-FORCE ensures all Team Counsellors practising within the Counselling Service provide annual evidence of relevant Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activity, along with up to date renewal documents including; BACP membership, professional indemnity insurance, DBS Enhanced Certificate and ICO Certificate of Registration, and when applicable Child Protection Training. Team Counsellors are required to be listed on a professional register which is recognised by The Professional Standards Authority.

The Counselling Service additionally ensures that all therapists involved receive appropriate regular supervision according to BACP guidelines. It also encourages and supports team members to work towards applying for individual BACP accreditation.

LIFE-FORCE currently has:

- 7 Senior Team Members. This category includes Team Counsellors who have gained individual BACP Accreditation and have been on the team for more than 5 years.
- 15 Certified Team Members. This category includes Team Counsellors who meet all the requirements of being a team member of the Service.
- 4-8 Students on placement, enabling the Service to provide a low cost adult counselling service depending on client suitability.
- 5 Office Staff - Centre Director, Service Support Manager/Health & Safety Officer, Counselling Service Manager, Counselling Service Assistant & Clerical Administrator.

“From the first enquiry to organising my first appointment - the whole process has been excellent.”

“Very polite, welcoming, understanding, professional - swift to respond & offer me a counsellor.”



Analysis of Appointment Register

The Appointment Register serves as a comprehensive record of client referrals to our counselling team throughout the year. It includes information such as the number of clients seen, their age, gender, and how they learned about LIFE-FORCE. These details are collected during the client referral process and meticulously entered into the Appointment Register database, providing valuable insights into the demographics and referral sources of our clientele.

Total Number of Clients: 471

Client snapshot profile

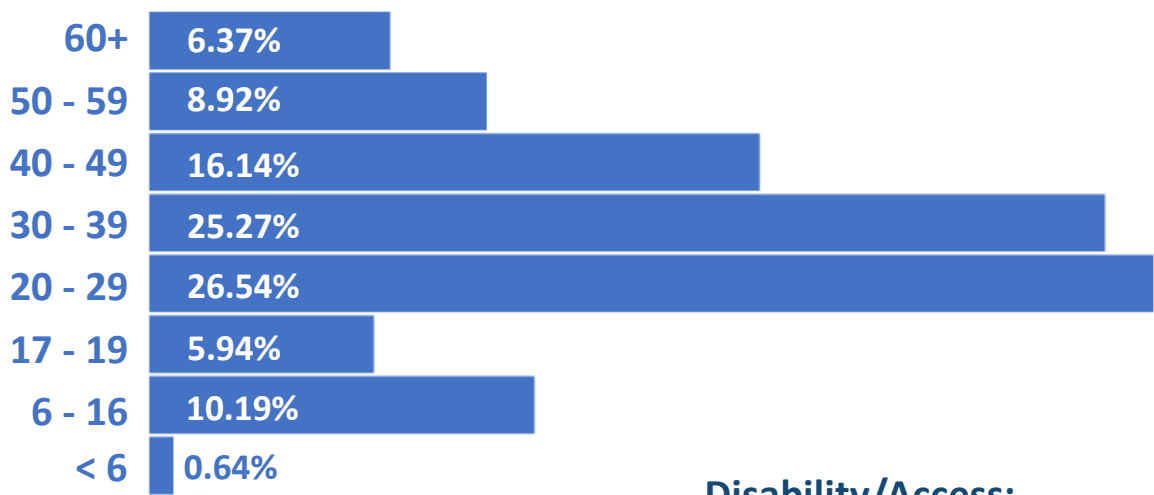
Gender:



In 2024-2025 the current trend for the client base to be slightly more female centric than male has continued, with nearly 59.5% of clients being female and approx. 39% of clients being male. The number of those wishing to be identified as other has increased.

Age Range:

The data shows that this year the age range of clients coming for counselling was as follows:
Nearly 52% of clients aged between 20 to 40 years old, 17% being younger than 20 years old and 31% being older than 40 years of age.



Ethnic Origin:

The data* shows that 96% of clients have White British & Other White Background, 4% come from other ethnic groups, this is less diverse than previous years.

Disability/Access:



Disclosed a disability
(learning or physical)*

LIFE-FORCE Centre has a dedicated therapy room on the ground floor which is mainly used for clients with disabilities/requiring wheelchair access, along with a disabled friendly toilet.

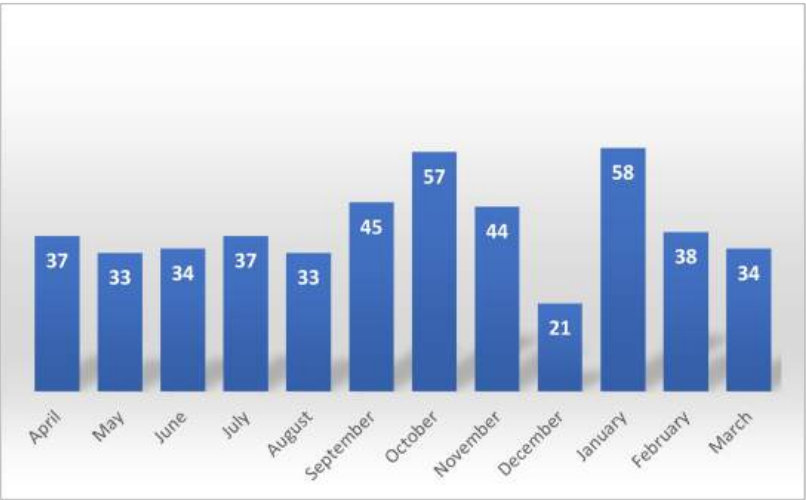
*Data taken from our Client Feedback forms



Analysis of Appointment Register

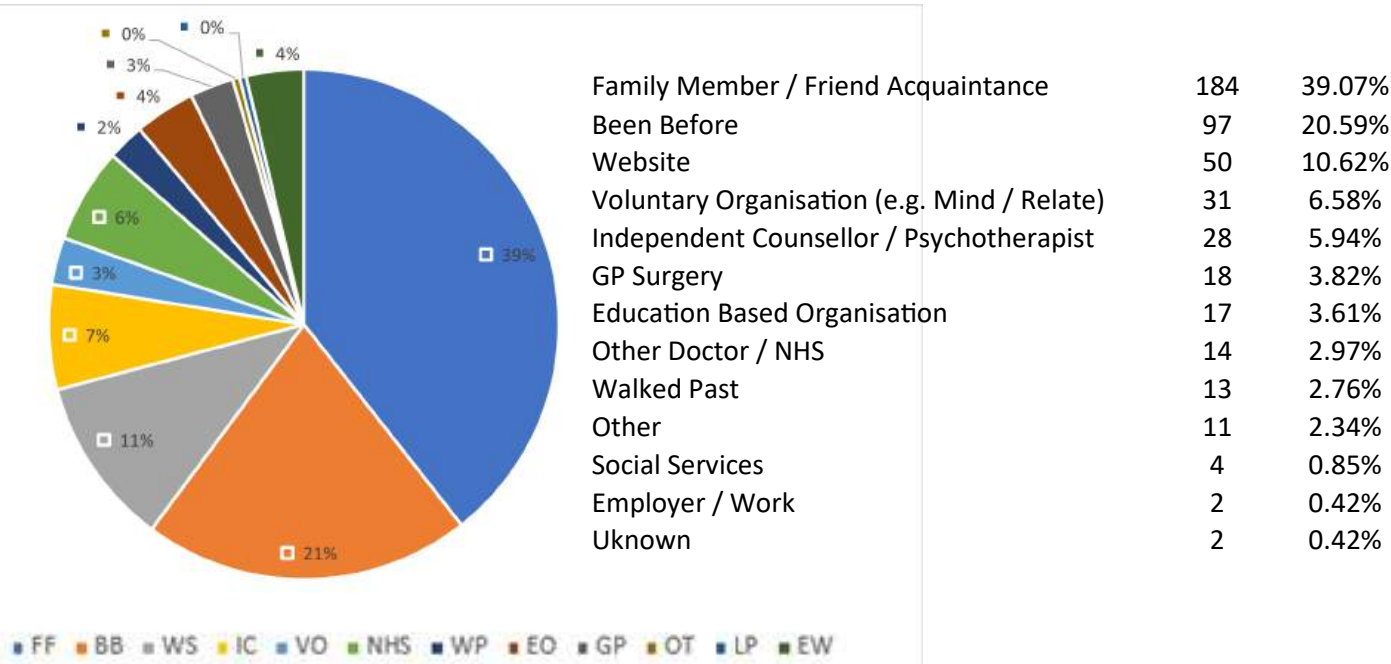
Allocations Month by Month of clients:

Allocations of clients by months are shown to the right.
January, September and October continue to be popular months to seek counseling. December saw the lowest number of clients.



Client Referrals to LIFE-FORCE

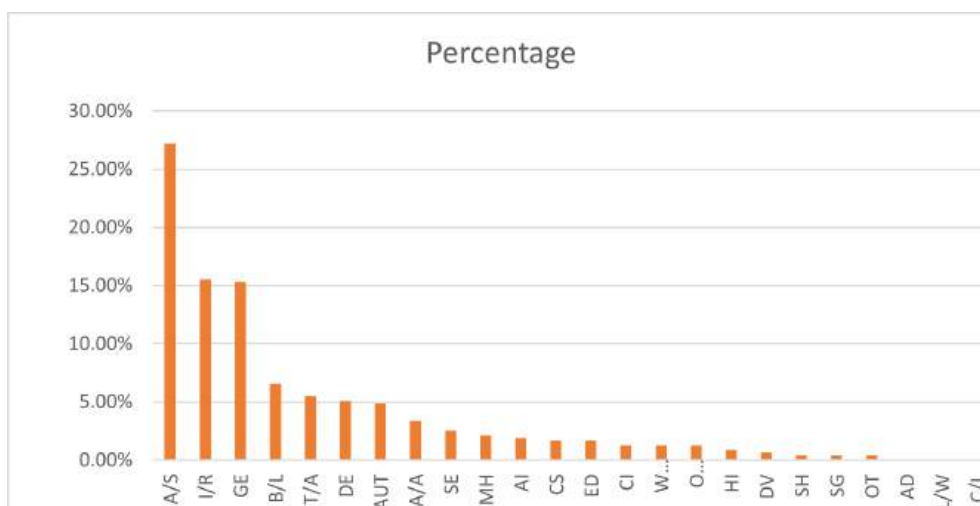
The main sources of clients continue to be word of mouth from family members or friends, followed by those that have been before and then clients who have found us through our website. Referrals from organisations remain much the same as last year.



Reason for Attending

Anxiety/Stress, Relationship Issues and General/Everything continue to be the top three reasons for attending counselling, making up nearly 58% of reasons stated during the referral process.

The next category of Bereavement & Loss was given for 6.5% of referrals.



Code	Reason for Attending	Percentage
A/S	Anxiety / Stress / Panic / PTSD	27.18%
I/R	Relationship / Family / Redundancy / Divorce	15.50%
GE	General / Everything / Past Issues	15.29%
B/L	Bereavement / Loss / Separation / Death & Dying	6.58%
T/A	Trauma / Abuse/ Bullied / Rape	5.52%
DE	Depression / Post-Natal Depression	5.10%
AUT	Autistic Spectrum Disorder / ADHD	4.88%
A/A	Addictions / Alcohol & Drugs / Gambling	3.40%
SE	Self-Esteem / Low Confidence	2.55%
MH	Diagnosed Mental Health Condition	2.12%
AI	Anger Issues	1.91%
CS	Crisis Situation/Suicidal	1.70%
ED	Eating Disorder	1.70%
CI	Childhood Issues	1.27%
W/A	Work / Academic / Training Requirement	1.27%
OCD	OCD	1.27%
HI	Health Issues	0.85%
DV	Domestic Violence	0.64%
SH	Self-Harm	0.42%
SG	Sexuality / Gender	0.42%
OT	Other	0.42%
AD	Adoption	0.00%
L/W	Living / Welfare / Special Needs	0.00%
C/L	Cognitive / Learning Disability	0.00%



Analysis of Client Feedback Forms

Just over 10% of clients (50 out of 471) who attended counselling during 1st April 2024 – 31st March 2025 provided feedback. Although this is a slight increase on last year, we aim to grow responses further over the following year by continuing to provide counsellors with a Client Feedback Form addressed to each client and by posters throughout the Centre. The Client Feedback Form is available in hard copy at the Centre and online on our website.

82.9%

of our clients were new to the service

88%

of our clients found the client leaflet helpful

76%

of our clients found our website helpful

Client Information Leaflets

A Client Information Leaflet is provided to clients on their first visit and gives the client information about what to expect from counselling; including the process and professional standards. We found that most of our clients do tend to read the Client Information Leaflet and find it to be helpful.

Our Website

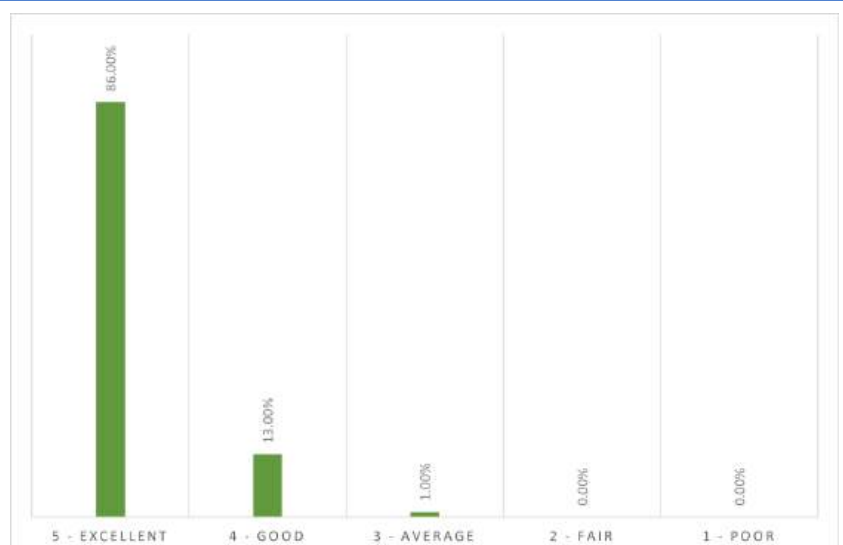
The LIFE-FORCE website is constantly monitored and evolving to meet the needs of our clients. It is important to note that 24% of clients have not visited the website indicating that the paper versions of the Client Information Leaflet and Client Evaluation Forms are still needed at this current time.

“Couldn't quite believe how quick and efficient it all was.”

General Approach of Staff

We asked how clients found the general approach of the LIFE-FORCE office staff e.g. were they helpful and sensitive and to rate their overall professional approach.

99% of our clients rated LIFE-FORCE staff as excellent/good.



Appointment Waiting Times

93.8% of clients felt the level of service they received from LIFE-FORCE was excellent/good regarding how long they waited for an appointment.

The Service always aims to ring clients within 1 working day of initial contact and tries to arrange an appointment within 7-10 days whenever possible.

“I phoned on Monday afternoon and had an appointment on Wednesday. Excellent service.”

94%

are happy with the
waiting times

100%

of our clients found
counselling beneficial

92%

rated our facilities
excellent/good

General Approach of the Counsellors

We asked how clients found the general approach of their counsellor e.g. warm, open, skilled and how they rated their professional ability. 100% of clients rated the professional ability of their counsellor as excellent/good.

The Service always appreciates positive comments from clients regarding the quality of the therapeutic work provided by our Counselling Team.

“The counselling has greatly impacted my ability to handle my past and present emotions and without it I wouldn't have the peace I have today.”

How Beneficial is Counselling

We asked clients to reflect on whether they found counselling to be beneficial, or not and to comment accordingly. 100% found counselling to be beneficial.



Centres Facilities, Atmosphere and Therapy Rooms

We asked clients to rate the Centre's facilities, atmosphere, therapy rooms and the environment. 93% found the Centre's facilities and atmosphere to be excellent/good. The remaining found the Centre to be average. The Centre management staff are continually updating, decorating and maintaining the building. Major works are usually carried out when the premises are closed during bank holidays, for a brief period in August and Christmas week.

Recommendation and Rating of the Overall Service

Asking if clients would consider recommending the Counselling Service to others, nearly half of our clients this year came from being recommended by family or a friend. We asked clients to rate the Service overall and 100% found the overall service provided by LIFE-FORCE counselling to be good/excellent, with no one rating it as average or below.

The Service is encouraged that a large proportion of clients would or already have recommend the Service to family or friends. We also always appreciate positive comments from clients regarding their counselling experience.

Would you recommend?

"I would definitely recommend this to others. I had a very good experience and appreciate the option to see a student counsellor."



Summary of Recommendations

To continually improve the professional standards of the Counselling Service provided to our clients, based on the analysis of both completed Team Counsellor and Service User Feedback forms.

Action Points for 2025-2026

Marketing Aims

We developed a new website in 2024 and plan to build on this going forward to offer more online functionalities to both our clients and counsellors. Last year, we also redesigned our Service posters and Service Information Leaflets to make these more user friendly. Looking at the reasons for client referrals, over the next year we plan to continue to raise awareness of our services by providing GPs and local organisations with more Service information and literature, along with regular marketing campaigns through MailChimp.

Referral Sources

Office to continue to collect data from Referral Source Form to enable us to grow our Marketing Database with active referring organisations.

Waiting Area

Having reviewed the client feedback from 2023-24 we returned the Centre to pre-covid set up and made the waiting areas available again and more welcoming. We intend to keep this arrangement going forward.

Promoting the Return of Client Feedback Forms

We had a slight increase this year of clients providing us with feedback.

We continue to review the procedure regarding how and when the counsellors give this form to the client in order to ensure this is done towards the end of the therapy.

We will continue to keep the Client Feedback Forms in a prominent position in the foyer. Client Feedback Request sheets have been updated early this year to make these more user friendly.

Team Counsellor Recruitment

Our ongoing commitment to providing low-cost counselling to clients, including those that are not suitable for a student counsellor, means that we are recruiting new Counsellors to join the Life-Force Team.

Centre Maintenance

We continue to ensure the Centre is decorated and welcoming to the highest standard. This is essential for creating a positive and inviting atmosphere. A well-maintained, visually appealing space not only reflects professionalism but also makes visitors, clients, and staff feel comfortable and valued. Work is ongoing with larger projects taking place in the Easter, Summer and Christmas breaks.

Client Feedback Conclusion

The Client Feedback Form enables us to see that LIFE-FORCE continues to provide an excellent service from initial contact with our warm and professional staff during the client referral process, to timely provision of a first appointment and then supportive and beneficial ongoing counselling provided by our team counsellors.



*“From the initial call
right the way through
they were professional
and sensitive and
empathetic”*

*“Highly beneficial - I have seen
great changes”*

*“Really affirming, gave me different reflections
than my own, lots of space to talk and explore
by myself, really valuable ”*

*“Personally, meetings with XXXX helped me organise my life,
realise what is important mainly for me, and last but not least,
he literally saved my existence.”*