



Information Sheet: Benefits of Counselling to Employers

Community Counselling offers a free-to-access counselling service in Ryedale and Scarborough Borough District, thanks to a grant from the Big Lottery Fund. However, we are currently only able to provide a service during normal business hours, which may not suit people who have work commitments, including shift patterns.

This information sheet sets out the benefits of counselling for individuals – as well as for their employers – with the aim of:

- Encouraging clients to ask their employers to make reasonable adjustments so that they can attend counselling appointments during working hours;
- Make employers aware of their duty of care towards their staff; and
- Highlight the benefits of counselling to employers as well as employees;
- Promoting the availability of our Employee Assistance Programme [EAP] to employers so that they consider paying for counselling for their staff.
- Helping to overcome the stigma of mental ill-health and foster a sense of the responsibility of everyone to promote mental health for all.

Brief counselling (up to six sessions) can help address issues such as anxiety/stress, bullying at work or bereavement, which may be impacting on work performance.

Clients report that counselling can help them to stay working as they learn new ways to manage difficult situations, including gaining better coping strategies. Clients tell us that just the opportunity to talk and be listened to is of itself helpful.

Benefits of counselling for your employer

Early intervention such as brief counselling can reduce sickness absence levels and help employees face the challenges of balancing work and life.

Monitoring of our service over more than 20 years tells us that other benefits include: reduced levels of emotional and psychological distress, an improved ability to manage workload, better timekeeping, and improved relationships with colleagues.

How can Community Counselling help Employers?

According to the Health and Safety Executive [HSE], in 2017/18, 15.4 working days were lost in the UK as a result of stress, depression or anxiety. On average, people suffering from stress, depression or anxiety took 25.8 days off, compared to only 7.1 days for injuries and 19.8 days for physical ill-health.

Our monitoring shows that nearly three-quarters of clients either recover or improve as a result of the counselling interventions that we provide, which in turn can have a significant beneficial impact on the number of working days lost due to mental health.

We offer an EAP¹ contract where the employer pays for counselling and we provide the first appointment within 12 working days, with no waiting time between assessment and the first counselling appointment. This can be very beneficial to employees because due to the demands on our service there is sometimes a long wait for non-EAP clients.

The number of counselling sessions under an EAP contract depends on the employer. Some employers pay for eight counselling sessions plus the assessment. We recommend six counselling sessions as a minimum.

As well as helping to reduce days lost to sickness, EAP contracts help employers comply with government legislation on employee wellbeing. If your employer would like to know more about EAP contracts, they can contact us using the details below:

Overcoming the stigma of mental health

We fully understand that not everyone will feel comfortable in their employer knowing that they have a mental health issue, which is a legacy of the days when such things were not discussed openly – or even at all - and when employees did not enjoy the same employment protections under the law that they do now.

We would encourage you to consider talking to your employer about a mental health issue as you would about a physical health issue. Remember that one in four of us will experience a mental health issue at some point in our lives, and that getting the right help at the right time will reduce the impact of this on you and others.

¹ Employer Assistance Programme