

Counselling Service at the Dorset Prosthetic Centre

What is counselling?

Counselling is a place where you can feel safe to explore your concerns in a confidential, supportive and non-judgemental setting. The aim is to build a relationship with your counsellor based on trust, respect and confidentiality.

Talking about what is happening can help with any difficult, painful and distressing feelings you may be experiencing. It may help you see things differently, find ways of managing your feelings and help you find a level of acceptance and a better understanding of what is going on for you.

About our counsellor

Our counsellor is fully qualified and is a member of the British Association of Counsellors and Psychotherapists (BACP) and works within their Ethical Framework which can be found on the BACP's website www.bacp.co.uk

Who can use the counselling service?

The service is available to all the Prosthetic Centre's patients, their partners, their children, other close relatives and carers. The loss of a limb for someone close to you can raise all sorts of anxieties and questions such as: How will I cope, feel? What can I do, say? How should I behave? What changes will there be in our life?

What counselling do we offer at the centre?

We can provide support for all clients which could include giving information, help and advice as well as counselling.

Counselling is different because the counsellor has time to devote to listening and attempting to understand the difficulties from the client's point of view. By taking the time to clarify the thoughts and feelings involved, the counsellor works with the client towards finding a way to cope with the issues. The idea behind the way that counsellors work is one of partnership and is someone who will not judge your views or behaviour and who will respect and accept your feelings.

We can offer face to face counselling, video counselling or telephone counselling so that we can ensure all of our clients can have access to this service.

How many counselling sessions will I need?

The first session will be an assessment of needs and the number of sessions needed will depend on the issue presented. Usually 6 sessions is a good start to give a person the skills and insight to cope with their issue but this will be reviewed with your counsellor and a decision will be made if you require more.

What will happen during my first appointment?

Your first meeting with the counsellor will be relaxed and informal, a chance for you both to get to know each other. It is normal to feel apprehensive and there is no right or wrong thing for you to say or do.

You will have the opportunity to talk about how you have been feeling lately and to explore this. Since one of the aims of counselling is to help if you are confused you have no need to be clear about what your problems are, we can work through them together.

At the end of the first or second meeting the counsellor will give you some idea of what can be done by you and the counsellor to work together with your difficulties. The counsellor may recommend that another member of the rehabilitation team may be able to help you.

How long is each session?

Each session is usually 50 minutes and is usually weekly or fortnightly on the same day and time.

What if I can't make a session?

To enable us to offer our service equally to others we ask if you need to cancel a booked session that you give as much notice as possible by calling the department on **0300 019 4363** or the counsellor direct on **07833 058654**. If 3 sessions are missed then the counselling is ended, you will have the option to return to the end of the waiting list.

How confidential is counselling?

What you share with your counsellor is confidential however there are limits to this confidentiality which you need to be aware of. The counsellor may have to break confidentiality if they consider:

- You or anyone else to be at serious risk of harm or there is clear risk to life
- That a child's welfare is at risk in accordance with Child Protection laws
- That a serious criminal act has taken place in accordance with the law
- That an act of terrorism has taken place in accordance with the Terrorism Act

How do people feel after an amputation?

The feelings people experience are unique to them and their situation but a lot of clients who have lost one or more limbs often describe feelings similar to those experienced after bereavement. There are many losses to come to terms with; not only a part of the body but also the loss of the previous role in life or an employment situation may have been affected.

If there is anything which is causing distress and is proving difficult for you to resolve or come to terms with you may benefit from professional counselling.

Individuals may experience a wide variety of emotions including depression, anger and frustration. People may also feel lacking in self-confidence which can affect mobility and potentially lead to some social withdrawal. All these reactions are normal and do not necessarily require counselling. Often a friendly response and support may be sufficient.

How do I tell if there is a problem?

Occasionally people may think that some of these feelings have gone on for a prolonged episode of time i.e. they may be left feeling angry or sad for so long that it is becoming uncomfortable and affecting aspects of their daily life.

It may be like they are “stuck”, unable to regain control of their own situation and adapt themselves in the light of their loss. Counselling can help.

Some common worries about attending counselling

“I find it very difficult to talk”

Many people find it difficult to talk about themselves, particularly things that matter deeply to them or are of a personal nature.

You can go at your own pace and talk about things if and when you feel ready.

“I don’t want anyone to know”

The content of counselling remains confidential but if some information is appropriate to general treatment it may require discussion with a team member and always with the client’s consent.

“I don’t want to waste your time”

Don’t worry. Your needs may differ from those of other people but they are equally important. If you are not sure whether counselling is the right thing for you have a session with the counsellor and then decide. There is no expectation or obligation for you to continue if it isn’t for you. You can always try another time if things change.

How to make an appointment

To make an appointment with the counsellor you can ask at the Main Desk during a visit to the centre or speak to any member of the team. You can also call the counsellor direct on **07833 058654** if you prefer.

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