

# Counselling Policy and Procedures

## Introduction

The counselling service at ESTEEM offers a therapeutic service to our young adults, supporting them with emotional wellbeing. Counsellors will work alongside ESTEEM's fundamental values which are Valuing, Supportive, Inclusive, Integrity, and Caring to facilitate the young adult to use personal resources and empowerment to explore and process identified issues. The counselling service is a valued element of ESTEEM; feedback from young adults shows that being listened to in a professional one-to-one capacity, and in a safe space, helps them to overcome barriers. ESTEEM believes in the 'five ways to wellbeing', we recognise that counselling can open up opportunities for participation and engagement as a key to positive change.

## Who can access Counselling Services?

Young adults can access counselling who are aged 14-26, and who already have a link with ESTEEM, either by attending The Drop-in, having a mentor, working as V2W, or who is about to start engaging with ESTEEM.

All counselling sessions will take place at ESTEEM unless otherwise stated (following risk assessment & discussion with Management staff and ESTEEM's Safeguarding Lead). We offer a minimum of six sessions, with a view to continuing as long as needed; there will be a review at twelve weeks to discuss continuation, which will need to align the needs of the young adult and available funding.

All counsellors must abide by and work within the following policy and procedure codes:

- ESTEEMS Counselling Policy and Procedures
- BACP or equivalent code of ethics
- ESTEEM Staff handbook
- All ESTEEM Safeguarding Policies and Procedures, Confidentiality, Data Protection, Health Safety & Wellbeing and Code of Conduct.

## Requirements for Counsellors

To have a DBS check from ESTEEM and have two references from previous or current employers and to undergo a 3 month probation period as per ESTEEM's safer recruitment policy & trial period procedure.

At minimum, be in, or have completed a second year of counselling training on a BACP or NCS accredited counselling course and have approximately 30 hours of supervised clinical counselling.

Name and reference: HRM_Counselling_Policy_and_Procedure_14	Revision no:	Document Date: 11/02.2019
Document Author: Laura Clark	Revised by: Cat Vizor	Approved by: Peter Latham
		Page: 1

To be a member of B.A.C.P or equivalent professional body who's codes are maintained and to have their own professional indemnity insurance.

## Practice Guidelines

Practice according to humanistic and integrative theoretical models and to short term contract work, which will be from a minimum of six weeks with each young adult. Sessions are to be offered according to need and will be assessed as counselling progresses, within the sessions with the young adult and then by the counsellor and wellbeing manager.

To continue with ongoing personal therapy whilst working for ESTEEM and to attend personal therapy as per terms of counselling training course.

To have attended an interview with ESTEEM panel and all paperwork as per ESTEEMs safer recruitment policy to have been completed.

To abide by the Wellbeing contract for counsellors, ESTEEM policies and guidance given by the Wellbeing Manager and Clinical Supervisor.

To attend induction meeting, quarterly meetings with Wellbeing Counselling team, and exit sessions upon leaving the project.

To have read and signed ESTEEMs policy and procedure agreement form and staff handbook.

## Time Commitments

Each clinical session to last 50 minutes. Minimum 6 weekly sessions.

For volunteer counsellors, we ask a commitment to work for the project for a minimum of 1 year from the start date of volunteering for the project.

For paid counsellors, we would require 1 months notice, as per contract of employment (*not sure if we call it that for self employed counsellors*)

## Supervision

As requirements of the counselling course, ESTEEM will pay up to £25 a session, for student placements. Supervisors are to be suitably qualified and experienced in different therapeutic orientations and to have experience and/or knowledge of working young people. A contract will be agreed between the counsellor, ESTEEMs wellbeing manager and the supervisor for ESTEEM to receive a supervisor report to ensure that the counsellors conduct is adhering to best practice/BACP/ guidelines (*not sure here what to use as reference*)

Name and reference: HRM_Counselling_Policy_and_Procedure_14	Revision no:	Document Date: 11/02.2019
Document Author: Laura Clark	Revised by: Cat Vizor	Approved by: Peter Latham
		Page: 2

## Number of Clients

As agreed with Wellbeing manager and capacity of each counsellor. For volunteer placements this will be in accordance with their course requirements.

## Administration

- Record keeping

All records of counselling sessions are to be either handwritten and kept in a secure locked place in the counsellors place of work or home, in ESTEEM's locked filing cabinet or securely as a confidential counselling contact log in ESTEEM's secure drive. These arrangements are to be made with the wellbeing manager at the start of the counselling role.

- Referrals

All counselling assessments are to be done by a qualified counsellor and ESTEEMs Counselling assessment form is to be used. Handovers for each client are to be done via telephone, face to face or via secure email. The counsellor will then make contact with the young adult to initiate a first meeting.

- Location of counselling

All Counselling to be done in ESTEEM's Otter room or in public place that has been risk assessed as suitable & signed off. The Otter room is to be booked in advance via the room booking diary.

### Holidays

All holidays to be booked in with Wellbeing manager and to give a minimum of 2 weeks notice as per staff handbook.

- Sickness or absence

The counsellor is to speak to a staff member to inform them that they are unable to work due to illness. The counsellor or ESTEEM will inform the young adult if they are unable to be seen for their next appointment. The counsellor will be responsible for contacting the young adult to arrange their next appointment if only 1 appointment is missed. If the counsellor is unwell for a longer period of time ESTEEM will be responsible for communicating with the young adult.

- Travel Expenses

Expenses can be claimed for items that have been pre-agreed by one of the managers. Expenses to be claimed as per staff handbook and must be submitted monthly.

- Invoicing/payment terms

For counsellors that are waged, invoices are to be submitted monthly to the Wellbeing Manager and to be paid within 28 days.

- Payment for qualified counselling

ESTEEM can pay up to £20 per hour for counsellors, including write up of sessions. Payment for further administration and meeting attendance to be negotiated in contract with ESTEEM (*or do we write an amount here, e.g a maximum of 6 hours per year to tie in with meeting attendance*)

Name and reference: HRM_Counselling_Policy_and_Procedure_14	Revision no:	Document Date: 11/02.2019
Document Author: Laura Clark	Revised by: Cat Vizor	Approved by: Peter Latham
		Page: 3

Trainee counsellors are seen as volunteer staff, but contributions up to clinical supervision and some CPD courses are paid by ESTEEM.

- Appointments missed by young adults  
We ask each counsellor and young adult to set up a communication method to book each appointment and a reminder message to be sent if agreed to each young adult no less than 48 hours before the next appointment. If the young adult gives less than 24 hours notice or does not attend an appointment with no notice, ESTEEM can offer 50% of the agreed hourly rate.
- Use of mobile phone  
We ask each contracted counsellor to use a work mobile phone for communication with young adults. ESTEEM has a mobile phone which may be used by trainee counsellors as a priority, if they don't have a work mobile. Counsellors to be clear in their contract with young adult that mobiles are for communicating around appointments and if any other needs arise around counselling they are to bring it to their sessions or to discuss with ESTEEM staff.
- Training  
Counsellors that work or volunteer with ESTEEM are a valuable asset to our service and as part of our commitment to you, we encourage & support your CPD as a practitioner. We offer courses in the form of Induction sessions, mandatory trainings (e.g. Safeguarding, Equality & Diversity, Health & Safety), and other CPD events particularly relating to young adults.

We believe in and encourage a community of learning and sharing best practice amongst our all our counsellors through quarterly meetings and group supervision may be offered when the counselling team has more than 3 staff members.

## Counsellor & Young adult

- Counselling Contracts  
The counsellor and young adults are to negotiate a counselling contract at the start of each session to assist both counsellor and young adult in best outcomes for each session. The contract acknowledges the commitment to the young adult by demonstrating accountability, aims to maintain integrity and help build an appropriate relationship with clients (BACP Ethical Framework for Counselling Professions)
- Personal Safety  
The counsellor is to work under ESTEEMs risk assessments for the Wellbeing project. If lone working off site, the counsellor is to adhere to the risk assessment for that site.

## Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures

As per ESTEEM's Staff handbook, Complaints policy, disciplinary policy and procedures

Name and reference: HRM_Counselling_Policy_and_Procedure_14	Revision no:	Document Date: 11/02.2019
Document Author: Laura Clark	Revised by: Cat Vizor	Approved by: Peter Latham
		Page: 4



**Document Control**

[Name] is the owner of this document and is responsible for ensuring that this policy is reviewed in line with the review requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation.

A current version of this document is available to all members of staff on the company Google Drive and is published in the employee handbook and esteem.org.uk

This [policy/procedure] was approved by the [Name] and is issued on a version controlled basis under her signature.

Signature:

Date:

Revisions to this document		
Revision number:	Date:	Description on modifications:
01	<date of revision here>	<type/mention of modification here>

Name and reference: HRM_Counselling_Policy_and_Procedure_14	Revision no:	Document Date: 11/02.2019
Document Author: Laura Clark	Revised by: Cat Vizor	Approved by: Peter Latham
		Page: 5