

COUNSELLING POLICY

1. Context

1.1 One of the support services offered by Burning Nights CRPS Support is the provision of free counselling for anyone aged from 18 years upwards, who is:

- diagnosed with Complex Regional Pain Syndrome (CRPS);
- affected by Complex Regional Pain Syndrome (CRPS), i.e. a family member, carer or friend.

1.2 Counselling offers an opportunity for individuals affected by Complex Regional Pain Syndrome (CRPS) to talk and be heard in a safe, non-judgemental environment. The expression of fear and anxiety can benefit mental and physical wellbeing.

1.3 The counsellor's role in this process is to aid the individual in ways that respect the person's values and capacity for self-determination. The counsellor will not give advice but will help the individual explore options. The practitioner's role in this process is to aid the individual in ways that respect their values and capacity for self-determination.

2. Entitlement

2.1 Counselling is available to anyone affected by Complex Regional Pain Syndrome (CRPS).

2.2 Service users are entitled to expect a high-quality therapeutic counselling service which:

- is client focussed;
- is delivered by appropriately qualified counsellors.

2.3 Each counsellor will be a member of BACP, and as such will be bound by its ethical framework for good practice in counselling and psychotherapy and subject to professional conduct procedures for the time being in force.

3. Professional Practice

3.1 All counsellors are trained to diploma level and committed to maintaining their competence through ongoing professional development.

3.2 All counsellors and staff have undergone enhanced Disclosure and Barring checks.

3.3 Counsellors have regular supervision with an experienced qualified counsellor who is experienced in supervision.

3.4 Counsellors will not misrepresent their training or experience.

4. Client Confidentiality

4.1 The client confidentiality policy is contained in the counselling agreement, a copy of which is given to each client at the first session. The counsellor is required to explain exceptions to confidentiality to each client verbally at the beginning of the first session.

4.2 The BACP ethical framework requires that counsellors offer the highest possible levels of confidentiality in order to respect the client's privacy and create the trust necessary for counselling.

4.3 In exceptional circumstances, the counsellor may take the decision to break confidentiality, with or without the client's consent if necessary where, in their professional judgement:

- there is a risk of the client harming themselves or being harmed;
- there is a risk of another person being harmed;
- or there are safeguarding issues.

In such circumstances the counsellor will always:

- seek to obtain the client's, or if appropriate the parent/guardian's, consent prior to disclosure;
- discuss with his/her supervisor;
- and inform the Chair of Trustees of any planned breach of confidentiality.

It is therefore ethically and legally unwise to promise "total" or "absolute" confidentiality.

4.4 Burning Nights CRPS Support offers confidentiality within the law and the BACP ethical framework.

4.5 During counselling, the counsellors must ensure that all client information is stored securely and separate from personal data forms. Once counselling has finished, counselling records and brief case notes are held by each counsellor at their office and will be kept securely locked away. Please see the Data Protection Policy and Procedure.

5. Service Delivery

5.1 Counselling will be provided in an appropriate, safe and confidential environment.

5.2 Counselling sessions will last for up to 60 minutes and will normally be on a weekly basis, at the same time and day each week.

5.3 The request for counselling will initially be to Burning Nights CRPS Support. However, all appointments will be booked via the counsellor.

5.4 Clients will be offered up to 20 one-hour sessions and in extreme circumstances a further 10 one-hour sessions may be offered at the discretion of both the counsellor and Burning Nights CRPS Support.

6. Monitoring And Evaluation

6.1 Evaluation is carried out via survey evaluation form at the start of counselling and at the end of their sessions. Clients are informed at the start of counselling that evaluation forms will be offered, and should be filled out as part of the counselling service.

6.2 The counsellor will monitor the client and at the end of 10 sessions there will be an evaluation. The client could then be offered a further 10 sessions. After the second set of 10 sessions, there will be a 4-week mandatory break after which there will be an evaluation to see how the client is doing.

7. Insurance

7.1 Public liability insurance is held by each of the counsellors individually.

