



Methods to provide in-house counselling

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Aims

The aims of this factsheet are to:

- Provide examples of where in-reach counselling has been successful
- Provide guidance on how to recruit qualified psychotherapists /trainee psychotherapists, what will be needed to support them and what facilities will be needed
- Provide a template that can be used to advertise and recruit for trainee psychotherapists
- Provide signposting to low cost counselling services if in-house counselling is not an option

The health data provided by the CHATs completed in Westminster illustrated that 88% of clients experience mental distress of some kind, with 52% reporting a mental health diagnosis. Talking therapy is one of the services suggested by clients as a method to support them. As the majority of service users respond more effectively to an in-reach service, it is therefore important to consider whether your service could provide in-house low-cost counselling.



What are the benefits of counselling?

Therapy offers a safe, confidential space for clients to talk about their life and anything that may be confusing, painful or uncomfortable. It allows a space to talk with someone to listen attentively and help improve the situation. It is a very personal process and individuals may feel worse as they talk about painful feelings however therapy should enable clients that engage to feel better in the long run.

Where has counselling worked and why?

Passage House successfully recruited a volunteer final year trainee psychotherapist student, with a Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) specialism, from Birkbeck University. CBT focusses on how thoughts, beliefs and attitudes affect feelings and behaviour, and teaches coping skills for dealing with problems. The trainee understood the client group and was very flexible in her approach.

Daniel Davies – a psychotherapist who is part of the Homeless Health Team delivered counselling for one day every two weeks at Montfort House, and at King George's one day a week. Daniel used an integrative approach, with an emphasis on pre-treatment and motivational interviewing.

Recruitment

To consider before recruitment

What are the psychological needs of your client group? Who do you believe would respond well to therapy and be able to attend up to 20 sessions? Most counselling assumes ability and willingness to challenge oneself and take responsibility for one's problems or contribution to them – when a person is in crisis this not possible and being challenged can be further undermining and even dangerous.

What type of therapy would be most suitable to your service? For example, psychodynamic therapy will have an emphasis on early life experiences, CBT will look at thoughts and how they affect feelings and behaviour and an integrative approach will encompass all theories and tailor to the individual. Dialectical behavioural therapy is recommended for treatment of personality disorders, with over 20 sessions being needed. Art therapy may also be useful.

Do you have the budget to pay for a qualified psychotherapist? A qualified psychotherapist should have more experience of working with personality disorders and complex needs, and therefore could be more suitable to provide this service.

If you don't have a budget for a qualified psychotherapist, you can recruit a trainee; please bear in mind that trainees will strictly abide to what they are learning and may not have the confidence to be flexible with that learning/ may have not dealt with their own issues yet. Clinical supervision will need to be provided and paid for (1 hour of supervision needed for 6 client hours).



How will you determine whether a particular psychotherapist is suitable for your project?

Consider how long they have been in practicing/ or studying for, whether they are willing to be flexible (with length of sessions, will they consider drop in sessions?), do they understand the client group, and can they secure strong boundaries and contain a complex client? Most psychotherapists are trained to take a detailed history – but this in itself can retrigger past traumas so are they willing to be flexible?

Do you have a confidential room that can be used at a set time each week? How do you ensure the psychotherapist can access this when needed?

Is insurance needed?

Do you have any clients on PIP that may like to buy counselling sessions out of their personal budget?

Recruiting

Qualified psychotherapists: If you decide a qualified psychotherapist would be more suitable, note they will expect to be paid for their time. You may be able to negotiate a reduced cost or recruit a qualified volunteer psychotherapist (adapt template provided p.4). You can find a qualified psychotherapist [here](#). If recruiting a qualified psychotherapist, you will not need to provide clinical supervision.

Local substance use service: Your local substance use service may be able to provide an in-reach service.

Trainee psychotherapists: If you are not able to locate/pay for a qualified psychotherapist, there is a huge resource of trainees who are looking for placements to complete their training requirements.

There are professional bodies that regulate counselling/psychotherapy¹, and you should only contact volunteers from colleges that are registered with a professional body. **Recruiting trainees in their 3rd or 4th year of training from UKCP is the preferred choice as they are required to complete 650 hours of voluntary counselling.**

Colleges under UK Council of Psychotherapy (UKCP) are listed [here](#). Choose a London based college that provides training in the type of therapy you wish to be able to provide at your service.

Methods to advertise for trainees:

Create an A4 flyer that can be sent to the college – to place on a notice board. Details on the flyer could include; how long is the commitment for, to be on or have completed psychotherapy training that leads to registration with UKCP, applicants have a minimum of 300 hours experience of providing individual psychotherapy, ability to manage own caseload and work in an independent and self-directed way, previous experience and some



understanding of the key issues affecting the client group such as; addictions, self-harm, suicide, personality disorder, sex work, childhood trauma and complex physical health issues. Also detail the support they will receive from your organisation. See Template at the end of this factsheet for other details to provide.

To consider after recruitment

- If you have recruited a trainee, 1 hour of clinical supervision will need to be provided for 6 client hours. Note that the trainee may already have a contact who can provide them with supervision at their college. If needed you can find a supervisor [here](#). The clinical supervisor will need to understand the client group. The trainee will probably need to meet the supervisor at their place of work. To reduce the cost of supervision, you may be able to link up with another service which is providing counselling supervision.
- How will clients be referred to the service – e.g. via keyworkers? Staff team needs to be aware of the benefits of the service and be on board.
- Consider whether you want the psychotherapist to knock on doors to encourage residents to attend sessions.
- Sessions will be totally confidential, unless the client discloses they are going to do something illegal or harm themselves. You will need to have processes in place so this can be incorporated into risk assessments, when disclosed by the psychotherapist.
- How do you promote the sessions to residents so they are aware – on a formal timetable? Is it possible to find a day/time of day where nothing else is going on to divert resident's attention?
- Is there a member of staff that can consistently check in with the psychotherapist to provide them with support if needed, such as accessing rooms or any questions the psychotherapist has?

Other methods to access

- GPs can refer on to counselling, although there may be a waiting list.
- The Homeless Health Team Counselling service provides a service tailored to meet the special needs of the homeless population in Westminster. Any Westminster homeless person feeling unhappy or troubled can approach the counselling service. Further details at their [website](#).
- Help Counselling Centre: 57 Portobello Rd, London W11 3DB. Phone: 020 7221 9974. For a low fee (which is agreed when client calls up the service) clients can attend weekly counselling sessions with volunteer therapists.
- Further low cost options are listed at:
<http://www.southeastlondoncounselling.org.uk/lowcost.htm>



Template person specification

The following template can be used to develop a volunteer trainee psychotherapist specification or develop an A4 poster to send to colleges.

Counselling and Psychotherapy Student Placement

Project/Service:

Location:

Support and supervision from:

Commitment: Minimum 3 hours counselling/ psychotherapy per week, 1 hour of supervision per fortnight

Where will I be volunteering?

What will I be doing?

In most cases you will provide individual short term (20 sessions) psychotherapy. Where judged appropriate, the treatment period with a client may extend beyond 20 sessions.

You will be participating in one to one and/or group supervision meetings, and training to further the effectiveness of your practice, as well as your theoretical understanding underpinning your practice.

Student Placements must meet the following criteria:

- To be on or have completed psychotherapy training that leads to registration with the UKCP.
- It is essential that applicants already have 300 hours experience of providing individual psychotherapy, or are in their 3rd or 4th year of training.
- A commitment of 1 year providing a minimum of 3 counselling/ psychotherapy hours per week and 1 hour of supervision per fortnight.
- Ability to manage own caseload and work in an independent and self-directed way, including following clinical work recording procedures, and confidentiality, safeguarding and risk protocol.
- A commitment to the work of establishing, maintaining and ending therapeutic relationships with a client group that are often profoundly ambivalent about the value of relationship as a means to overcome problems. This includes sensitivity to the significance of client or therapist cancelled sessions and the ending of treatment.
- Previous experience and some understanding of the key issues affecting the client group such as addictions, self-harm and suicide, personality disorder, psychosis, childhood trauma, the care system, prison, domestic abuse, sex work, social exclusion, poverty, complex physical health issues.
- Ability to work with people who may have offending behaviour, substance use and/or mental health, with sensitivity and respect.

What support will I receive?

- Induction training from organisation Fortnightly one to one and/or group supervision
- Supervisor on call at other times Placement travel expenses are reimbursed
- Optional ongoing specialised training relevant to work with the client group

If you are interested in applying for this position please contact _____

Email:

Telephone

