

ACC NHS STAFF COUNSELLING SERVICE

Key Information

What is on offer?

- A confidential and free counselling service provided by ACC (Association of Christian Counsellors) Registered Counsellors, who are sensitive to religious and non-religious spiritualities
- Up to six sessions of counselling on a no-fee basis
- From qualified counsellors
- Either by video link or by telephone

Who is the counselling service for?

This is an inclusive service, welcoming and open to people of all religions/ beliefs and none, cultures, ethnicities, sexualities, gender and gender expressions, age, disabilities, etc. who are working in any patient facing role, both clinical and non-clinical, working for the NHS based in England.

What can you seek counselling for?

Counselling will provide an opportunity to talk through issues affecting your life such as but not limited to trauma, loss and grief, discomfort around ethical dilemmas, stress and anxiety, burnout and guilt.

How do I access the service?

To refer yourself to the service please:

- Download the self-referral form [here](#) and email the completed form to CCSS@acc-uk.org, or

- If you do not have access to a computer to do this, please telephone 0247 644 9694 at any time and leave a message with your contact number.

If you would like to talk to someone at ACC about this service, please send an email to the Service Coordinator at CCSS@ac-uk.org.

Your employer will not know that you have applied for counselling with this service.

What happens next?

- ACC will contact you to acknowledge receipt of your referral form and if you are eligible for the service assign your referral to a Case Manager.
- The Case Manager will endeavor to assign you a counsellor within 10 working days.
- If the service is full, we will let you know and put you on our waiting list.

Who is managing and administering the scheme?

ACC (Association of Christian Counsellors) is managing and administering the service. We have been established as a professional counselling membership body for nearly 30 years and hold an accredited register of counsellors under the Professional Standards Authority.

Our members are professional counsellors who work in many different settings including schools, universities, NHS, counselling centres and in private practice. ACC members are Christians who want to belong to a Christian organisation partly for the sense of fellowship, but also because they want to be available to clients, who specifically want to work with a counsellor who is a Christian. All members work to ACC's Ethics and Practice, and respect the autonomy of clients. ACC counsellors work with people of all faiths and none and are open to work with spirituality within the counselling process, if the client would like to, but will not impose their religious views on clients.

Why has it been set up?

The service has developed from a service set up in April 2020 by the Board of ACC, with the support of our members, to support NHS staff who were impacted by the increased

pressure of the Covid-19 pandemic. Now the service is available for anyone working in a patient facing role, whether or not they have been impacted by Covid-19.

ACC are well placed in terms of our knowledge and experience of counselling practice to design the service and put safeguards in place to ensure that it offers minimum risks to members of the public who wish to access it.

Can I trust the service?

Yes - because all the counsellors offering their services are trained and insured. All counsellors will be working under ACC's Ethics and Practice. In the unlikely event that you have a concern or want to make a complaint about a counsellor, there are well established processes for you to follow.

Yes - because ACC are managing and administering the service, and you will have a named contact (a Case Manager) who will be on-hand if you have any questions or concerns.

How is this service funded?

The original service operated from April 2020 - January 2021 with no external funding. During this time the counselling service was provided by counsellors volunteering their time and ACC providing management and administrative resources.

From February 2021 the service has been funded by NHS England's Health & Wellbeing Programme.

I am not eligible for the service - who can help me?

We know that there may be people reading this who would like to have counselling but are not eligible for this particular service. You may have access to a work-based scheme, which your HR department can tell you about. Otherwise, you can contact your GP and/or local mental health charities to see what is available to you.

Please also consider accessing support from your local **Mental Health and Wellbeing Hub**. You can find details of your local hub on [this website](#). To find their contact details, please select the appropriate region in the menu on the left-hand side of the page.

Alternatively, you may wish to access immediate support via the **confidential text service**. Information on accessing these services can be found [here](#). Further details of the National NHS support offer can be found [here](#).

You may also want to look at the 'Find a Counsellor' section on our website, where you will find both individual counsellors and counselling organisations, some of whom provide no-fee or low- cost counselling. There are other directories of counsellors online BUT please make sure that you choose a counsellor who is on a register of counsellors which is accredited by the Professional Standards Authority. If in doubt, check that their professional body is listed on the [Professional Standards Authority's website](#).

If you are feeling acutely distressed and/or suicidal, make an emergency appointment with your GP or ring NHS 111 or 999, or go directly to an A&E department, or call:

Samaritans - 116 123

Premier Lifeline - 0300 111 0101