

## **Lifelink Counsellor Roles - Fact Sheet**

### **Not just a standard “day at the office”!**

Lifelink Counsellors provide an invaluable support to thousands of people across Glasgow, Renfrewshire and West Dunbartonshire.

As a Lifelink Counsellor you may be working across a variety of adult and youth services from schools, to workplaces to community venues across the working week – sometimes you might work in 2 venues in one day to meet the demand for the service.

Because of the variety of our delivery venues and client groups, there is nothing “standard” about a counselling day. Unlike the usual standard of hour-long counselling sessions, youth sessions can be between 30 to 45 minutes to fit with the venue or school timetable with additional time for recording notes and documentation at school break times or at the end of the school delivery day, therefore it’s important to understand your work hours are not school hours.

A Lifelink counsellor may be the sole counsellor working from any particular venue and will need to be comfortable with using their own initiative and coping skills whilst enjoying a fast-paced environment and have strong time management skills. Support from managers, colleagues or clinical supervisors is always available by telephone to guide you on any issues that arise or if you need help, and we prioritise scheduled clinical supervision, team meetings and one to ones with your manager to ensure there are opportunities to engage and connect.

It is the role of the Lifelink counsellor to develop a strong working relationship with the various other agency representatives in the venues they work from – whether it be the teaching and admin staff in schools, to the GP and practice manager contacts in some of the other venues we deliver from. Lifelink counsellors support a myriad of partners and agencies to help them understand the benefits of counselling and the criteria of our service to help them make appropriate referrals.

A solid understanding of child and vulnerable adult protection and wellbeing processes are essential for every Lifelink counsellor as safe plans/risk assessments and wellbeing supports are a regular part of the counsellor’s day.

A Lifelink counsellor can expect to have an active caseload of 18 to 30 clients’ sessions scheduled per week (depending on how many days per week you work) and you will schedule to see between 5 and 6 people per full working day. We know this sounds full on so it’s important to remember that this is the “scheduled” structure – in practice you will actually see around 70% of the scheduled caseload.

Lifelink’s one to one counselling support gives clients the chance to understand personal and social issues in depth and to develop the emotional skills and confidence to overcome personal challenges, transitions and difficulties.

Regular challenges/issues raised are:

- Wellbeing / health
- Anxiety/Stress
- Depression
- Relationships
- Bereavement or loss
- Coping Skills
- Anger and Conflict
- Exam Stress

### **Lifelink Counselling Models**

Our services operate across a range of structures, from a short-term counselling service for clients at the mild to moderate end of the mental ill health spectrum – with a particular focus on stress and anxiety management – to longer term cases where historical trauma or abuse

presents. The part of the service you work in will determine the delivery model, and often our counsellors need to assess if the client is suitable for the Lifelink counselling service they are placed in. If their needs indicate otherwise your role will be to liaise with the relevant partner agencies to make an onward referral to another appropriate service i.e. CAMHs or PCMHTs.

- **Single Session Framework Approach**

Single session therapy is a process we adopt as part of our integrative model. It is delivered by treating each client contact time as the possible last, while laying the foundation of ongoing work. Each session is complete within itself, and the idea is that those who need more counselling sessions, get more, and those who need less can get less sessions. Research shows that people can benefit from 1 or 2 counselling sessions where appropriate and for some people a commitment to longer term approaches can be a barrier to engagement. You can see more info about the method here <https://www.moshetalmon.com/en/home#!home>

Our service works on the principle of searching for strengths and abilities and seeking achievable goals, whilst laying the foundation for ongoing counselling. With this in mind, our delivery approach uses a 4:8 model.

- **4:8 Model**

Many of our services deliver using this model. If the client meets our criteria following initial assessment, then your work with them will take place over a span of 4 to 8 sessions using the structure model below (laid out in the foundation following from the single session explanation). Our focus on review from session 4 to 8 is aimed at ensuring that our service continues to be suitable for the client and is achieving progress.

Research has shown that clients who don't show early improvement are significantly less likely to improve later on. A study of outcomes found that clients who showed no improvement by the third session did not, on average, improve over the entire course of therapy.

<b>Session Number</b>	<b>Action required if further sessions considered appropriate</b>
<b>1 Assessment</b>	Our service works on the principle of single session however at assessment you are required to lay the foundation for ongoing counselling. Our approach is a 4:8 model
<b>2 – 3</b>	Each session should be complete in itself and once the session is complete the offer of another session may be appropriate
<b>4 Review</b>	Review progress with client. Where appropriate counsellor discretion to offer additional sessions
<b>5 - 8</b>	Clients can access additional session up to a maximum of 8. Each appointment beyond 4 should include a formal review to clarify if improvement is achievable.

**Holiday restrictions for youth counsellors:**

Lifelink counsellors who work in our schools services are required as part of their contract to take Annual Leave during the school holidays to ensure that full delivery of the contracted therapy sessions can be delivered.