



Policy relating to recruitment of newly qualified / inexperienced Counselling staff

1. Introduction:

Lifelink recognise the value of maintaining a balance in our therapeutic delivery between Counsellors and Psychotherapists with lengthy post qualifying experience and who have achieved accreditation with their registration body, and those who are newly qualified or have delivered limited supervised counselling hours.

As a company we recognise the benefits realised at both ends of the spectrum and believe this adds to the depth and quality of the services we provide to our clients. Ensuring a combination of experience and new knowledge, skills and approaches is an integral part of our quality approach.

We also recognise our obligation to our clients and to governing bodies and the counselling industry is to ensure that the quality of our therapeutic delivery is closely monitored and managed.

Therefore, to ensure an adequate evaluative approach during the early days of a newly qualified Counsellor's employment with us, the conditions detailed in point 2 below will apply.

2. Additional management, support and supervision conditions applicable to newly qualified therapists and therapists with less than 200 hours of face to face counselling hours

To be eligible for recruitment as a Lifelink Counsellor, newly qualified therapists will need:

- A minimum of a post graduate level Diploma in Counselling gained via a recognised training / education establishment
- At least 100 hours of supervised face to face therapy sessions accumulated during their training

Once in post, these therapists will also be subject to additional levels of supervision and development support as follows:

- For a period of six months from commencement of employment with Lifelink, newly qualified or minimally experienced therapists will be in a supported 'trainee' position
- Trainees will work no more than three days per week and see no more than 5 face to face clients in a day
- It is anticipated that during the trainee period the therapist will complete a minimum of 100 additional hours of face to face therapy sessions

During the 6-month probationary period, Lifelink will put the following support in place:

- 1.5 hours of supervision per month either face to face or by telephone / digital channels and *either* an additional individual supervision session or a group supervision session
- A buddy arrangement with an experienced therapist who will be allocated by the line manager
- Gradual build up to five sessions a day by the end of the month 1 in post
- Weekly review with line manager

On successful completion of the trainee period, supervision will reduce to 1.5 hours monthly, formal buddy system can discontinue, sessions per day increase to 6 and reviews with line manager will continue in line with the organisational performance management framework.

If, at the end of the training period, for any reason the therapist still requires additional support, this will be reviewed by the line manager and Clinical Quality Lead.