

This document explains what you can expect from therapy, and forms an agreement about how you and CFC will work together. It is important that you read and understand it.

Your first appointment

The first appointment is an assessment with a qualified counsellor. You will be asked to complete an outcome measure and the counsellor will speak with you about what has been happening in your life. Together, you will decide if our service is right for you. If so, this helps us allocate a suitable ongoing counsellor, who may be different from the one doing your assessment.

Your counsellor

We work hard to offer you the best possible support. Our counsellors are trained by recognised counselling bodies and they are always learning. Most of our counsellors are qualified. Those still working towards qualification have satisfied their training body that they are competent to see clients and receive additional training and support where required.

Your ongoing counsellor will help you to plan your sessions and talk about what is important to you so that you get the most from your time. They will regularly review your progress with you.

Costs and arrangements

The cost of counselling depends on your total household income. Some people are eligible for fully-funded or part-funded sessions. Reception will agree this with you before your first appointment.

You will always be working within an agreed number of sessions. We typically work in sets of 8 sessions. If you need more, these can be agreed. For individuals, fully-funded sessions where applicable are limited to 8, but you can then move to part-funded. Fully-funded or part-funded sessions are limited to 16. Couples and families can only have 8 part-funded sessions then must pay the full fee for further sessions, or agree to end.

Charges are reviewed annually. You will be given 6 months' notice of any increase.

Individual and couples sessions last 50 minutes, families are 60 minutes. These are offered weekly on the same day and time. We do not offer any other frequency, but do our best to accommodate your planned holidays and other appointments. Counsellors will advise you of their planned leave appropriately. Dates of the 8 fully-funded sessions are fixed during the first counselling session.

Please present in good time. If you are more than 30 minutes late, we will not be able to see you.

Please call us if you cannot attend an agreed appointment. We charge your normal session price for missed sessions and sessions cancelled with less than 24 hours' notice. Fully-funded sessions missed or cancelled are lost, as are part-funded sessions missed or cancelled within 24 hours.

If you miss 2 sessions in a row and we cannot contact you, we will assume you do not wish to continue and your slot will be offered to another person on the waiting list.

After funded sessions end, please wait 3 months before requesting any more funded counselling.

If you attend counselling under the influence of drugs or alcohol your counsellor will end the session.

In couples and family counselling, if one person cannot attend, the session must be cancelled and rebooked when everyone can come. If a partner / family member does not want to continue, you can still continue with no break after re-contracting with your counsellor.

If you come as part of a couple or family and there is violence or abuse in the relationship, it may not help to be counselled together. Your counsellor will suggest an alternative until it is safe for you to attend together.

Confidentiality and standards

Your information is confidential within our service. However, there are limits to this:

- If we believe your safety or that of someone else is at risk, we have a duty to take this further (for example by speaking to your GP). Whenever possible, we would discuss this with you first. We have a legal obligation to report serious crimes including money laundering, drug trafficking and terrorism immediately, without informing you.
- All counsellors receive confidential supervision, and use this to get support for their work.

We take the details of your GP and an emergency contact. By giving us these details, you consent to us contacting them should the need arise.

Should you by chance see someone from CFC outside of your sessions, it is your decision whether to greet them or not.

If you have a concern with your therapy, please speak to your counsellor first. You can then speak to the office if needed. Our complaints policy gives more help - see www.thecfc.org.uk/complaints. Our counselling service is accredited by the British Association for Counselling & Psychotherapy (BACP www.bacp.co.uk). We abide by their *Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions*.

If you have telephone or video counselling:

- You must find a quiet, private space to be or our service may not be suitable.
- Recording sessions is not permitted.
- You are responsible for the security of your devices e.g., passwords, anti-virus software etc.

Your data

Information about you is held securely. Records are deleted or destroyed after 7 years.

We only use your personal information (e.g., your email address or the experiences you talk about) to help us provide your counselling. Our funders do want to know if we are helping people and we provide them with anonymised data (e.g., outcome measures and improvement rates).

Your counsellor may ask for your signed permission to securely record sessions or write an anonymised case study. Your counselling will not be affected if you choose to say no. You can request an up-to-date record of all the personal information we hold on you. This will be provided within 30 working days. An administration fee may apply. With couples or family counselling, we need the written consent of all participants before we can complete this.

If you need a letter or report for a solicitor, GP or tribunal etc., please email CFC reception (altrincham@thecfc.org.uk / bury@thecfc.org.uk) who will inform the Clinical Services Manager.

Agreement

I have read and understood this information and commit to counselling as above.

Client signature: Client name (print):

Counsellor signature: Counsellor name (print):

Date: