

REFERRAL GUIDELINES COUNSELLING SERVICES

These guidelines are designed to assist with referrals to Harbour's Counselling services and should be read alongside the referral form.

Harbour offers counselling to those who have experienced rape and sexual violence and domestic abuse.

Please note that due to funding restrictions rape and sexual violence counselling is currently only available in the Hartlepool and Stockton areas.

Harbour's Sexual Violence Counselling works with adults who have been raped or sexually abused, providing therapeutic support to enable them to deal with these issues.

Harbour's Domestic Violence Counselling works with adults who have experienced domestic violence, providing therapeutic support to enable them to deal with these issues.

Harbour's Counselling Service offers both 1-1 counselling and group work.

HARBOUR COUNSELLING

Tel : 03000 20 25 25

Email : counsellingservice@myharbour.org.uk

Secure Email: counselling.referrals@harbourdas.cjsm.net

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE REFERRAL PROCESS

In all dealings with referring organisations, Harbour seeks to be positive and transparent and expects the same from those making referrals. Harbour requires as much information as is known during the referral process to ensure the correct decision is made on the referral for the benefit of the individual.

A referrer should expect an update or response from Harbour within 48 hours of making the referral.

Harbour's **eligibility criteria** for its counselling services are:

- a. The applicant must 18 years or older.
- b. The applicant must have experienced rape, sexual abuse or domestic violence
- c. Where a person presents with complex needs, Harbour must believe that it can effectively support the person with the issues arising from the sexual violence
- d. The applicant should not present a risk to Harbour's employees

a) Age of applicant

Please note the age of the applicant.

b) Sexual Abuse / Domestic Abuse

Sexual Abuse encompasses both sexual violence and rape. The violence and abuse can be actual or threatened and can happen once every so often or on a regular basis.

Domestic violence is a pattern of controlling and aggressive behaviours from one adult towards another, within the context of an intimate or family-type relationship. It can take the form of physical, sexual, psychological, financial or emotional abuse. The violence and abuse can be actual or threatened and can happen once every so often or on a regular basis.

c) Complex Needs

Where an applicant has a range of complex needs, in particular addictive behaviours and/or mental health issues, Harbour needs to make a judgement whether it can effectively support the individual with their experiences. The balance of this judgement rests with whether the individual can demonstrate that they are functioning independently in their daily life, in which case they should be able to benefit from Harbour's services.

When considering an application for an individual with complex needs, Harbour also reviews the balance of other people currently receiving counselling support, as a new individual requiring a lot of intensive support may not be able to receive this if existing clients are also requiring intensive support.

d) Risk to Harbour Employees

Please see additional information

The following notes refer to the corresponding sections of the referral form:

1. THE REFERRER

Please indicate the time and date of the referral, this enables Harbour to monitor the time taken for referrals to be processed.

2. BACKGROUND

Please provide as much information as possible.

3. PERSONAL DETAILS OF THE PERSON REQUIRING THE SERVICE

Please provide as much information as possible.

4. PREVIOUS INVOLVEMENT

Please provide as much information as possible.

5. KEY AGENCIES WORKING WITH THE FAMILY

Harbour uses information about the individual's background and any agencies working with the individual to carry out an initial risk assessment. A member of staff may contact any of these agencies to obtain background information.

An individual who has been violent towards a staff member of these agencies is unlikely to be offered a place within the Harbour's Counselling service.

6. OTHER INFORMATION

The purpose of asking about criminal convictions is to enable Harbour to assess the risk presented by this individual to others and Harbour staff.

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 places restrictions on the information Harbour can require to have disclosed. This Act defines the period of rehabilitation for criminal sentences, after which it is considered spent. The details are complicated but the key aspects are:

- Any prison sentence over 2.5 years never becomes spent
- Most sentences become spent after 5 years
- Prison sentences up to 6 months are spent after 7 years
- Prison sentences between 6 months and 2.5 years are spent after 10 years.
- Rehabilitation periods are halved if the person is under 18 when convicted.

Harbour may choose to not support an individual who has a history or predilection for violence or arson.

Information about secondary issues enables Harbour to ensure the individual meets section c) of the eligibility criteria, in other words that their primary support need is related to experiences of sexual abuse or rape or domestic abuse and not another issue.

Other relevant information may relate to the person's experiences or any special requirements they has.

Cultural/Faith/Language Needs

The referrer should provide any relevant information about specific needs and requirements of the individual in line with their culture or faith. Wherever possible, Harbour will endeavour to meet these needs, with assistance from other agencies as appropriate.

If an individual speaks no English whatsoever, it will be difficult for Harbour to support them. If they have some knowledge of English, then assistance can be brought in as required to ensure clear communication between Harbour staff and the individual.

7. CONFIRMATION

Please sign to mark that you understand this declaration.

8. DECISION ON REFERRAL

Harbour staff will make a decision on each referral based on the information provided, taking account of the needs of existing service users and consulting a Service Manager where the circumstances are complex.

Where the decision is that the client cannot be offered support Harbour will provides a reason for this decision.

APPEALING DECISIONS

If the referrer or the individual disagrees with the decision, the appeals procedure involves contacting the Service Manager in the first instance to express why the decision not to support should be reviewed again.

If this does not lead to a resolution to the satisfaction of all parties, then a formal appeal should be made to the Chief Executive of Harbour, in writing, explaining clearly why the decision is disputed.

The Chief Executive will respond to such appeals, in writing, within five working days.

Further information about the appeals procedure can be obtained by calling 01429 270110 or e-mailing brigitterowell@myharbour.org.uk