

**Code of Conduct Discretion**

* No counselling of any kind (whether over the telephone or otherwise) should take place in the reception area. All telephone calls should be taken in Room 1(the office) with the door closed whenever clients, parents or visitors are in the waiting area.
* When listening to answer phone messages during counselling hours, please ensure the volume of telephone is low and the reception area is empty.
* Avoid hugging and/or ‘small talk’ with clients or each other in the reception area. This might seem unsociable, but it is professional conduct.
* Raised voices and laughter in the reception area can easily be heard as the walls and doors are thin.
* Counsellors and trainees must not discuss or be derogatory of their colleagues or clients.
* Do not discuss any client cases when other members of the public are present (e.g. parents, other professionals, friends etc)
* If there are any complaints, please report to the Clinical Co-ordinator or the Practice Manager.

**Client Arrival**

* When the client arrives early for their appointment, the client may be asked to wait in the seating area of reception or taken directly to their counselling session room.

* Ensure the radio in the reception area is on so that the clients are not overheard.

**Refreshments**

Refreshments are provided for counsellors between counselling sessions.

* Unless a client asks, it is not a good idea to offer clients food or drink in the counselling session as this might lead to a routine which is difficult to break and could ultimately cause resentment.
* No gifts, cakes or other celebratory gestures offered to the client at any time.

**Alcohol and Drugs**

No alcohol or drugs are allowed on the premises at any time.

There may be circumstances when a client wishes to hand over any drugs or other illegal substances in their possession to signal that they are giving up. Whilst the sentiment is to be welcomed under no circumstances should the counsellor accept as this will place them and C.A.L.M.S in a difficult legal position.

**Parents/Carers & Other Visitors**

Unless the client specifically requests that the parent remain for the duration of their counselling session, please ask parents (or others) who bring young clients for counselling to leave the building and return at a specified time. Explain sensitively that this gives the young person privacy.

If the parent/carer does not arrive promptly to collect the young person all efforts should be made to contact a parent or carer.

If a parent/carer wishes to talk, treat them as a separate client and take them to another room. - Do not discuss confidential issues in the reception area. - Do not discuss your client with them.

All parents and clients should be handed the ‘Counselling Young People – What parents need to know’ sheet found in the reception area. This explains the process of counselling, confidentiality and how to support their children after their session. It also offers counselling to the parent if they need support.

Parents/carers wishing to have counselling themselves must be seen by a different counsellor preferably on a different day.

Confidentiality should be assured between the young person and counsellor and issues should not be discussed with the parent. Parents of the under 16s will need to sign the ‘parent’s consent’ letter unless the ‘Gillick Principle’ applies (see C.A.L.M.S Confidentiality Guidelines).

**Procedure for Calling Clients**

We are aware that young people can sometimes have disorganised lives: having been sufficiently concerned about something to make an appointment in the first place, we would like to support and encourage them to keep it.

To reduce the number of ‘no shows’ at C.A.L.M.S, Staff have the responsibility of sending a generic text message to each C.A.L.M.S client the morning of their appointment. The content of the text is thus: ‘This is a reminder of your appointment at C.A.L.M.S today. We look forward to seeing you’.

In addition to the above, the following procedures will need to be followed:

* Existing clients who do not show: The counsellor/reception volunteer will need to check the answer phone messages, diary or rota for information regarding your client’s cancellation. If they have cancelled and confirmed that they will be there for their next appointment no further action is needed.
* If your existing client has not cancelled or left a message for the first time you are requested to contact your client by C.A.L.M.S landline by dialling 141 before you dial the client’s number. The content of the discussion/message left will be to establish if they would like to continue with counselling and if not to let us know as soon as possible. In addition, we would like your client to know that we are here for them and would like to continue to support them.
* If your existing client has not cancelled or left a message for the second time you are requested to contact your client by C.A.L.M.S landline by dialling 141 before you dial the client’s number. The content of the discussion/message left will be to let them know that C.A.L.M.S are unable to keep that particular appointment open however we want to continue to support them and to call 01344311200 to arrange an alternative appointment.
* If a brand new client does not show you are requested to text the new client using C.A.L.M.S mobile phone using the set template 7, content of the message is “C.A.L.M.S here just a note to let you know that we can no longer hold your appointment. If you wish to go back on our waiting list, please call us. We wish you well”. (Do not use your personal mobile phone at any time)

**Logging new clients for counselling**

When a client or client representative calls in to make an appointment for counselling the new client form will need to be completed. Please write clearly and accurately.

It is important to remember that it may have taken a lot of courage for the client to ring up and ask for an appointment. While we do not counsel on the phone, we do want to be sympathetic and give them a very good impression of the service whilst taking their details. Any initial queries they have about the service should be able to be answered from the C.A.L.M.S brochure.

Assure the client that they will be contacted within two working days of their call.

All forms to be posted in the new client file in the office as soon as completed.

**Client to Counsellor Continuity**

The same counsellor should always see the client. Changes should only occur if:

* The client feels or states that they are unable to work with that counsellor - the counsellor/trainee is away for an extended period or is unable to practice on the day and the client requests to be seen by another counsellor/trainee.
* If counsellors are in any doubt of their ability to counsel a client, then the Co-ordinator or Practice Manager should be contacted before proceeding any further.

**Emergency Cancellation of Appointment with Client**

If a counsellor is unable to attend a session due to an emergency, they should ensure that the client is informed as soon as possible, and a new appointment offered for the same time and day the following week. In any such case the counsellor must notify either the Practice Manager or the Co-ordinator directly, preferably before speaking to the client.

When leaving a message for a client, please ensure that it is done in a confidential manner, stipulating only the counsellor name and cancellation details. Make sure the Practice Manager or Co-ordinator is informed.

**Crisis Counselling**

C.A.L.M.S is not an emergency service, but if an existing client or new young person requires immediate counselling because of a crisis and their C.A.L.M.S counsellor is not available then another C.A.L.M.S counsellor is permitted to see the client. For young people who are not using our service then we do offer a one-off stabilisation session to equip the young person with some strategies until an intervention can be arranged.

The client must be informed that their usual counsellor will continue to see them in future sessions.

The client’s counsellor must be informed that another counsellor has seen their client and the Co-ordinator must also be informed that a client has requested a crisis counselling session.

Details of the session are kept confidential and only factual information is shared if necessary, between counsellors.

It is important to agree with the client at the crisis session that they are responsible for updating their counsellor if they wish and only factual information will be shared.

Only in the event of serious crisis counselling should a clear and factual written summary of the session be provided for the client’s existing counsellor as soon as possible. A copy of the summary is to be submitted to the Co-ordinator.

**Counsellors Absence & Holiday**

At C.A.L.M.S, we work with young people on a term time basis however, for private clients we ask that adequate preparation to be made with regard to notifying the client as to when you will not be available for sessions. We are concerned to ensure continuity of the counselling process as clients come to C.A.L.M.S because they have issues, they wish to resolve, and sudden or unplanned absences make this difficult.

Note: Please notify the client as soon as you know when you will be away. Do not wait until a week before to notify the client.

Let the client know if they need to be seen in your absence that there are C.A.L.M.S counsellors available to them in an emergency. Please invite your client to call into C.A.L.M.S to request this service and provide your client with one of C.A.L.M.S appointment cards.

Holidays - Holiday plans and arrangements should be discussed with the Co-ordinator or Practice Manager at as early a stage as possible so that adequate coverage at peak holiday times and Rota support can be organised.

All holidays should be clearly marked in the Rota together with a Notification of Absence form filled out.

Absences – All counsellors/trainees to notify the Co-ordinator or Practice Manager if unable to attend sessions. Arrangements will be made to contact your clients to notify them of your absence.

**Number of Sessions**

At C.A.L.M.S our workshop programmes are run for 6 weeks at a time, for one to one counselling, client’s must be informed on the first session that the usual expectation is that counselling will be provided for six sessions initially. Then at the sixth session there will be a review and a further period of counselling may be provided if required with further reviews at six weekly intervals. Please encourage your client to attend regularly.

If you know you are going to be on holiday, please work this into your contract with your client.

Counselling may be provided for up to a year.

**Colleague Support**

One to one counselling requires the counsellor to be alone with the young person, however, there should always be another person who has DBS clearance on the premises aware that the session is taking place at all times. This protects both the counsellor and the young person.