



Identified Improvements for Accessibility

SUMMARY OF THE OUTCOMES OF ANALYSIS

Service Six have analysed information collected from user surveys and identified the following issues which have enabled the Counselling Service to implement changes, or introduce new working methods:

- **Accessibility for our services when contact is in a school venue with potential breaks in therapy due to school holidays.** During the client's initial assessment, this is discussed explicitly; the client is offered an alternative venue or arrangements can be made if the school remains open during the holiday to secure appropriate arrangements for a counselling session.
- **Within our adult services, accessibility issues relate to child care arrangements and transportation.** To address these issues, in the client's initial assessment we ascertain the best time for each client to access counselling whilst maintaining their parental responsibilities and if any logistical issues are identified, we would try to source another venue though this is not always achievable. We have also identified from our Stats that clients residing in East Northants who meet the criteria for the Adult Counselling Service have travelled outside their village/town.
- **Disabilities,** the Service now provides funding for signers for the deaf
- **Language,** the Service now offers funding for interpreters, working within the guidelines of the BACP and effective Clinical Supervision
- **Physical Disabilities,** all venues accommodate for wheelchairs
- **Staff,** we take into consideration the logistics of covering the venues across the County of Northamptonshire. Staff are not expected to travel an inappropriate distance, the Service endeavour to match a client's venue suitably with a counsellor
- **Staff culture and ethnicity,** Service Six encourage Equal Opportunities in recruitment though acknowledge the majority of the Counsellor are female and White British. During the client's wellbeing assessment, they are offered the choice of a female or male counsellor
- **Waiting list,** a limitation in accessing our service is that there is a waiting list in operation. Service Six has implemented change from open ended therapy to time limited therapy (excepting play therapy). This strategy was based on evidence sourced from the Stat forms. At the point of first contact, referral and assessment, clients are made aware of the waiting list and are provided with options, such as referrals to alternative organisations
- **Target population,** Service Six have a defined target population and acknowledge that our services are not accessible to those outside of the target criteria as published. To address this we are continually seeking funding to extend our adult services for the whole of Northamptonshire and not just East Northamptonshire.
- **Disabilities,** when working with disabled clients, we recognise the necessity to appropriately assess each individually, exploring accessibility to a venue and facilities

within that venue. Also, with the client's possible side effects of medication, monitoring pain, the most appropriate time of the day for their therapy session etc. This would be an on-going assessment in collaboration with the counsellor and client. A review of any changes in either medication or a change in condition will be evidenced in the clinical notes. This has again been evidenced in a client's change in session time identified on the completed stats form

At any time we are able to monitor:

- The number of our target population seeking counselling at Service Six
- How long people have to wait before accessing counselling
- The number of clients engaging in our counselling service across our differing target populations
- Average number of sessions clients attend
- The number of referrals we receive
- The number of referral we make
- Equal opportunities
- Ethnicity
- Age of clients
- Venue/town
- Presenting issues of clients
- Disabilities if any

We are able to 'pick up':

- Patterns, themes and issues that clients present in order to take appropriate action

We are able to gather and collate statistics in order to:

- Identify different demands being made on the service
- Pick up new patterns/issues emerging
- Assess whether we have sufficient resources
- Provide evidence to funders and identify why further funds are needed

The completing of forms enables Service Six to learn, plan, monitor and develop our services. In doing so, we are able to work towards our aim that is to offer our target population access to services that are effective, therapeutic and accountable.

Service Six operate an inclusive recruitment policy for staff, counsellors or administrators as reported in our Equal Opportunities Policy. Incorporated into our staff application form is information to complain should they experience discrimination.