



WSC Counselling Service Assessment Information Sheet

Please read this sheet before attending your appointment

You have been offered an appointment for a counselling assessment.

Please read this information sheet before your appointment.

It tells you what to expect in the assessment session, gives you some information about counselling, and will help you decide whether you wish to attend this appointment. If you decide not to attend, please let us know, so that we can offer the appointment to someone else on our waiting list.

What will happen at the counselling assessment?

The appointment will take approx. 1 hour, depending on how much you feel able share.

At the assessment session, you will be invited to talk about your situation so that we can decide together if we are the right service for you.

You might feel nervous about talking about personal matters with a stranger. The woman you will speak to is an experienced counsellor and will understand if you find some things difficult or upsetting to talk about.

This assessment session is not counselling, so you won't be asked to go into a lot of detail about your experiences. If you do decide to go ahead with counselling, you might be offered a session straight away or you might be placed on our waiting list for counselling. We will keep you informed about the likely waiting time.

Some of the issues we will discuss in the assessment session are:-

- Is this the right service for me?
- What might be your goals for counselling?
- Your availability
- Waiting time for an appointment (the time given is only a guideline as waiting times are difficult to predict accurately)

What does the WSC Counselling Service offer?

The WSC Counselling Service offers up to 26 sessions of counselling with a WSC counsellor. If you accept the offer of counselling, you will be asked to commit to attending sessions at the same time each week.

The counsellor's role is to listen to you and support you in talking through your experiences, feelings, and concerns in a non-judgemental and non-directive way. Counselling is different from talking to friends or family, as you can say whatever you wish without fear of being made to feel foolish or told what you should do. Many women at risk of offending or affected by the criminal justice system find counselling helpful in supporting them in addressing their difficulties.

Is the WSC Counselling Service the right service for me?

There are some circumstances where we might decide that we are not the right service for you. For example:-

- You do not wish to attend counselling and you have been referred to us inappropriately;
- Your primary needs are more related to practical support (e.g. housing and legal) and counselling at this stage does not seem appropriate (you don't have the time necessary in order to commit to on-going appointments);
- You might require long-term support/psychotherapy and/or specialist mental health services and the counselling service we offer might not be appropriate for you;
- You might not be able to attend at the specific times when we can offer counselling.

If we decide that our counselling service is not right for you at this point in your life, we can provide you with details for other agencies who might be better suited to your needs. We might refer you on to other services with your consent.

Going ahead with counselling at the WSC Counselling Service

Counselling can only really work if it is something you want to do for yourself, rather than feeling pressurised by someone else. It could be that when we offer you counselling, you might decide that it is not a good time for you. That's fine, just tell us and you can take up the service when it is right for you.

Attending counselling is a commitment. When you are offered further counselling sessions, you will be entering into an agreement of attending counselling once a week for up to 26 weeks and sessions will last for 50. Attendance is important as counselling can only work if you come, so before starting counselling do think about whether it is the right time for you to commit yourself to this opportunity

Women's Support Centre Confidentiality Policy

Confidentiality is very important in counselling. We will not tell anyone that you have had contact with WSC or attended for counselling without your permission. There are some very specific situations where we would have to break confidentiality. These are generally concerned with situations where we have good reason to believe that you intend to cause serious harm to yourself or to someone else, or if child abuse is disclosed to us. There are also some situations where we might be legally obliged to disclose information. The full details of our Confidentiality Policy will be explained to you at the assessment session.

Is there a fee for the service?

Our services are free.

Please let us know if you need this form in larger print