

ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

Explanation

ACS aims to provide access to affordable counselling for any client who approaches us, whether referred, or otherwise.

Gender, race, creed, sexual orientation, language, personal financial position, substance abuse or dependency and physical disability are all factors that may cause a person to feel that access to counselling might be constrained.

As a smaller service with counsellors trained in a limited number of modalities, it is to be recognized that ACS may not have counsellors or the human resources able to satisfy the needs of every individual who approaches us.

Policy

1. All in the service, whether receptionist, assessor or counsellor should be alert at all times to the possibility that a person may have particular needs or requirements that may limit their access to our service.
2. Where those needs or requirements are identified, they should be discussed with that person to determine whether ACS has the capability to meet them.
3. If ACS will be unable to satisfy the agreed needs, the matter should be referred to the allocation panel.
4. The allocation panel should at their next meeting attempt to identify another service that may be able to satisfy the person's access needs. The details of any such service should be communicated to the person. If the person agrees, details of their requirement or needs may be passed to the alternative service identified.
5. If the person is satisfied that ACS has the capability to give them access to counselling, they should be admitted as a client. All involved in that person's case should regularly review that the client's needs are being met, especially in supervision meetings.
6. In the event that a significant number of people present with a similar need or requirement that ACS does not meet, this should be brought to the attention of the Management Team who will consider augmenting our offering.

Limitations

Due to the size of the agency and the offer of the once-a-week counselling, we are aware that there are limitations on the needs that we can meet. Whilst the addition of online and telephone counselling will widen the scope of clients to whom we are available, it has become our strategy to continue with these forms of work permanently. However, we are unable to offer counselling to people listed below and currently do not envisage any possibility of meeting their needs. This will be reported in the annual report and this document will be available to any referrers or potential clients on request.

1. Clients under 16 years of age
2. Clients whom our psychiatric advisor judges that counselling will be detrimental to their mental health.
3. The service only offers counselling in English as we do not have translation facilities.

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