

Canceling an appointment

If you cannot come to your appointment, please give as much notice as possible and let us know by ringing the number your counsellor will give you.

Please say your name, the name of the person you see and whether or not you wish to book another appointment so that we can ring you back to arrange this. If you decide not to continue we will respect your decision. However if you miss 3 sessions without appropriate notice or reasonable explanation, in the interests of fairness your slot will then be offered to the next person on the waiting list. You are welcome though to phone us back at a later date if you feel ready to talk to someone.

Equal Opportunities

RASASC(NW) affirms the right to equality of opportunity of all people accessing our services regardless of gender, ethnic origin, culture, socio-economic status, age, disability, mental health, religion and beliefs or sexual orientation.

Complaints Policy

The Rape & Sexual Abuse Support Centre hopes that everyone coming into contact with our services will find them reliable, informative and helpful. However there may be occasions when the standard of help or the manner in which it was given falls short of our commitment. Therefore we believe that it is vitally important to have an open and accessible complaints procedure that enables us to respond to comments and to continue to work towards the enhancement of our services.

If you wish to make a complaint about the Rape & Sexual Abuse Support Centre please submit a letter, detailing the nature of your complaint providing information wherever possible to:

Complaints Co-ordinator
RASASC
PO BOX 87
CAERNARFON
GWYNEDD LL55 9AA

If you are unable to submit your complaint in writing please telephone us on 01286 669267.

Your complaint will be acknowledged within 7 working days and you will be notified the outcome within 28 days. If you are not satisfied with the response you have a right to appeal. Please do so to the above address.

Counselling & how we work at the Rape & Sexual Abuse Support Centre (NW)

What is Counselling?

The **British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy** defines counselling as an activity that takes place when a counsellor sees a client in a private and confidential setting to explore a difficulty that the client is having, distress they may be experiencing or perhaps their dissatisfaction with life, or loss of a sense of direction and purpose.

It is always at the request of the client as no one can properly be 'sent' for counselling. By listening attentively and patiently the counsellor can begin to perceive the difficulties from the client's point of view and can help them to see things more clearly, possibly from a different perspective. Counselling is a way of enabling choice or change or of reducing confusion. It does not involve giving advice or directing someone to take a particular course of action. Counsellors do not judge or exploit their clients in any way.

In the counselling sessions the client can explore various aspects of their life and feelings, talking about them freely and openly in a way that is rarely possible with friends or family. Bottled up feelings such as anger, anxiety, grief and embarrassment can become very intense and counselling offers an opportunity to explore them, with the possibility of making them easier to understand. (BACP 2004)

Our Ethos at RASASC

All workers and volunteers who work for RASASC hope to provide a safe space for you to discuss your thoughts and feelings, free from judgements and advice giving.

We respect your right to arrive at your own decisions and work with you to find the path that best suits you and your values.



What will happen at the first appointment?

If you decide that counselling may be for you then it might be useful to talk with your counsellor about what your expectations are. It might also be useful to make your counsellor aware of what your needs are from counselling. Just like any other relationship, the more you know and can communicate what you want and need from that relationship, the better chance you will have of receiving it.

At the first session you will be invited to talk about yourself and what brings you to counselling. Don't worry if you are entering counselling for the first time and you don't have any sense of what you need to happen other than you want to feel better than you currently feel. This is quite normal. Again, if you can, try and express this to your counsellor.

Your counsellor will tell you about confidentiality and how they work as a counsellor. Please ask them any questions if you are unsure about anything.

The counselling relationship

It takes time to establish a trusting relationship with a counsellor, it may take several sessions before you feel comfortable with them. It is important that you go at your own pace. Try not to rush things for a quick fix, it can take a while to work through things and this is ok.

Your counsellor should have good, strong, boundaries, and they will avoid dual relationships with you, in other words: personal friendships. You can expect them to be ethical, and treat you with respect.

Change can be difficult, so don't be at all surprised if you are tempted to stop counselling right before some real changes or breakthroughs are about to happen. Not all therapeutic methods are right for all peoples needs and situations. If you feel that the therapeutic model used by your counsellor is inappropriate for your needs, try talking it through with them.

Counselling can change your life. It is quite normal to feel some loss and fear because of this. Others around you may resist your changes and growth, and they may need time to adapt to the new you.

Counselling is often hard work, and can be emotionally draining at times. After an intense therapy session you may feel exhausted. Sometimes, therapy can release emotions that have been 'locked in' for many years. It is not unusual, when dealing with buried feelings, for what may well be the first time in your life, for you to actually feel that you are becoming worse than you were before you started counselling.

Confidentiality

RASASC provides confidential services which means that we won't tell anyone about you coming to our organisation unless you want us to. Counsellors do take the work that they do to Supervision. Please ask your counsellor to explain more about this if you would like to know.

It is important to be aware that counsellors can be ordered by the courts to disclose information if they are working with somebody involved in a court case. Also, if your counsellor has serious concerns for your safety, or the safety of another person such as a child that you know, they may discuss with you whether other services need to be informed. If someone is at risk of serious harm, RASASC counsellors reserve the right to break confidentiality—but you will normally be informed if this is likely to happen.

Our Counsellors

All of our counsellors are volunteers and come from different backgrounds. Everyone who works/volunteers for our service has attended and passed our in-house training course, which is intensive and aims to challenge anti-oppressive practice and develop awareness and skills in supporting people who have experienced sexual violence. Training and support is ongoing within the organisation.

Our counsellors are at different levels of professional development. This means that some of our counsellors are students on a Diploma in Counselling or on a Post Graduate MA Counselling, some have completed their training and some have been working in the field for many years. When you meet with your counsellor they will tell you a little bit about themselves, how they work and whether they are training at present.

Counselling Sessions

Counselling takes place by appointment. A session lasts one hour and it is important that we keep to this time so that other clients do not have to be kept waiting in order to start their session. The counselling process is reviewed on a regular basis, usually every 6-weeks. This is just to make sure that it is beneficial to the client and that we are the most appropriate service for the client.

Where does Counselling take place?

We offer counselling to people from a variety of locations across North Wales. Please ask about this if you need to know more.