



Employee Assistance Programme – Frequently Asked Questions

Your EAP programme is designed to offer you a stepped care approach to psychological support. All counsellors are professionally trained, qualified and are members of their relevant professional body. All Counsellors, Psychotherapists, EAP employees and affiliates have a current Enhanced Disclosure and Barring service check. The service adheres to the BACP (British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapists) ethical code, the details of this can be found here.

<https://www.bacp.co.uk/events-and-resources/ethics-and-standards/ethical-framework-for-the-counselling-professions>

All clients entering the service will be asked to provide their contact information, GP details, employee details and will undertake a short risk assessment. This is to enable us to best meet your needs at the first available opportunity and to ensure you are triaged to the most appropriate support. We provide your employer with baseline management information about user demographics. This will never identify you as an individual. The service has a range of support pathways and this will be collaboratively explored with you to find the one best meeting your current needs. We have compiled a range of frequently asked questions for your information.

1. What happens when I first contact the service?

When you initially speak to us via our 24/7 telephone helpline a member of the EAP team will outline our confidentiality policy, take your personal details and ask you a set series of questions that all clients accessing the service are asked this will include some questions about any risk. This enables us to triage your call to best support you and ensure you are provided with the most appropriate support pathway. Our team will then look to immediately book you in with one of our counsellors / psychotherapists for an initial session to see how we can assist. For clients who would like to access advice, in the moment support or information our team will offer this at point of contact or arrange for a counsellor to call back that day.

2. Is the service confidential?

Yes, the service you receive from us is confidential. There are however some circumstances where our Counsellors may need to provide information to a third party, which could include your employer. These situations are detailed as follows and in your client statement of understanding information which is detailed in your initial appointment email.

- Where there is immediate and/ or serious risk of harm to yourself or others
- A situation regarding the abuse of a child
- A court order for disclosure of information
- Whereby you have given written consent in writing, to disclose specific information to a named third party (for example your GP, OH dept. etc.)
- A requirement of the law e.g. a contravention of the Drug Trafficking Act (not possession) Or the Prevention of Terrorism or Money Laundering Acts
- A Safeguarding issue where there is threat to yourself, another, or a child protection issue

We would always endeavour if possible, to discuss any such disclosure of information with you beforehand, and to do this with your consent. In all cases, where you require assistance and make a specific request for our help in such, we will always consult with you prior to the submission of any document and provide you with a copy. However, in the above specific cases, information may be disclosed without consent to the relevant body.

3. What kind of therapy / support will I receive?

This will be informed by the service level agreement that we have in place with your employer and the assessment of the counsellor who provides the initial counselling session. This will be decided in collaboration with yourself. We have a range of support options including online resources and cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) programmes, CBT workbooks and access to counselling sessions. Our counsellors have a wide range of therapeutic modalities and you will be triaged to the counsellor who best meets your presenting needs.

4. How is my information used?

We will ask you for your personal information to enable us to provide you with access to our support service and to collate non-identifying management information. For clients accessing our Counselling services, CORE-Net is our secure clinical management system. All counsellors keep brief notes of sessions to maintain professional standards of care. These notes are treated as confidential, stored securely in line with all applicable Data Protection laws including UK GDPR, DPA 2018 and EU GDPR and are destroyed confidentially. Notes and client details are stored within a secure dual identification clinical management system that complies with all applicable Data Protection laws. The notes are stored by numerical code and are non-identifying. Notes can only be accessed by those with the authority to do so. Under the terms of all applicable Data Protection laws including the Data Protection Act 2018 (UK and Northern Ireland), UK GDPR, Data Protection Act 2018 (Republic of Ireland) and EUGDPR you must give your informed consent to such records being made and retained. It is your right not to consent, but in such cases, we are unable to provide counselling. You can at any point request a copy of your notes in line with all applicable Data Protection laws and we will ask you complete a Subject Access Request (SAR). We will then review your request in line with our SAR's processes and provide these to you via a delivery method of your choice.

5. Can my Counsellor advise me about my medication?

No. Whilst we will ask you about any medication you are currently taking our counsellors and psychotherapists are not medically qualified to give pharmaceutical advice or prescribe medication. It is best to consult your GP if you have any questions about your medication.

6. Who can I speak to if I am unhappy with my counsellor or have an issue, I do not wish to discuss with them?

You can make a comment, compliment, or complaint at any time during your contact with the service. You can call the 24/7 number and speak to a member of our client services team or ask to speak to one of the senior clinical team.

7. How long will I wait for an appointment?

Your initial appointment will be offered within 5 working days following your contact with our service. This is subject to your own availability and we will always strive to accommodate any days, times, therapist gender and language requirements that you may have. Not all clients require access to structured counselling, and you may find that the in the moment support you receive on the day, or relevant signposting or access to our psychoeducation materials may be most useful to you at that time.

8. How do I provide feedback about the service?

We are always keen to hear feedback to enable us to improve our service, hear any suggestion you may have or to share your experience. All feedback is anonymous and is fed back to both therapists and our support teams. You will be provided with the links to this at the conclusion of your therapy session (s). Your feedback is used to design future services, plan, evaluate and improve our services to you.

9. Can I access my notes?

Yes. You can make a subject access request (SARS) please see question 4 for further information.

10. Can I use the service if I am already seeing a Counsellor or am in other Mental Health services?

If you are currently engaged in counselling with another service, we would not commence additional counselling with ourselves. If you have a diagnosis of another more complex mental health condition such as psychosis or personality disorder this does not always result in you being unable to have contact with the service as we do not have an exclusion criteria. In such circumstances this would be explored with our clinicians and we may routinely contact other relevant professionals involved in your care to obtain their opinion as to whether our therapy services are suitable.

11. Who do I contact if I feel that I need additional support outside of my normal sessions?

Our number is available 24/7 however you will not be able to have contact with your allocated counsellor, though our team is available and will provide in the moment support. **If you are experiencing a mental health crisis and need urgent support call 999 or contact your local A&E emergency department.** You can also contact

Name of Organisation	Contact Details
NHS non-emergency	111
HOPEline UK (suicide prevention for young people up to the age of 35)	0800 068 41 41
SANE (for anyone effected by mental illness including family, friends, and carers)	0300 304 7000 (4.30pm to 10.30pm)
CALM (the charity aims to prevent male suicide)	0800 58 58 58 (5pm to Midnight)
Samaritans	116 123 (24 hours a day 7 days a week)