

Counselling Service Q&A

Let's start at the beginning...

Q. How do I access counselling?

A. You need to be aged between 14-24 years and live in Maccelsfield, Poynton, Wilmslow, Knutsford and some of the surrounding villages. You can request counselling by making a referral over the phone, email or using our online referral form. You can find this form on our website. We will ask some initial questions to make sure that we are the right service for you. It is ok for someone you trust to help you make a referral but we will also ask to speak to you to check that you are comfortable to go ahead.

Q. What happens after I've referred?

A. You might be offered a triage call back if we need a bit more information about what is happening for you. We do this to make sure that we can support you with whatever it is you are experiencing as sometimes a more specialist service might be needed. If it seems like Just Drop-in counselling could be helpful, we will invite you to come for a counselling assessment meeting with one of the counsellors, who will talk to you about what's working well and what you would like support with. Before your assessment, you will be sent a link to complete an online 'My Whole Self' form. This is so we have an idea of how to support you from the very first meeting.

Q. What is an assessment appointment?

A. Your first appointment will be a counselling assessment. This is likely to last between 45 minutes and an hour. During this time, the assessor will ask questions about you and your life to help them understand your circumstance and the type of support that might be best suited to your needs. Here is a picture of some of the areas of your life you will be asked about. You will have already told us information about some of these areas if you have filled out our My Whole Self questionnaire, but don't worry if you haven't, you can go through it during your assessment. We understand that it can be difficult at first to feel comfortable and safe to talk to a new person, so please be reassured that you do not have to talk about parts of your life until you are ready.



What about the people in my life?..

Q. Who will you share my information with?

A. If we decide together that Just Drop-in counselling would be helpful for you at this time, then the assessor will ask your permission to share the information you have told them with the members of the Just Drop-in team who will be supporting you. This is so the team know about the help you require. We do not share your information outside of Just Drop-in without your permission unless we are significantly worried about your safety or the safety of someone else. Also if certain laws are being broken.

Q. Can I bring someone else to counselling with me?

A. You are welcome to bring someone to support you during your assessment appointment. Moving forward, we only do individual counselling. We do not offer family or relationship counselling. However, we have a comfortable waiting area where family and friends are welcome to wait for you. We always offer a warm welcome, a drink and we have free Wi-Fi.

Q. Can I attend Just Drop-In without my parents' permission?

A. Yes, if you are aged 14 and over, we do not seek parental permission for you to attend; however, we do encourage you to keep your parents/carers informed.

Q. Do you talk to my parents about me?

A. Just Drop-In recognises the importance of good communication with parents/carers and seek to provide as much information as we can about our service. For example, in our waiting room and on our website. However, we would only routinely discuss what's happening in counselling with your parent/carer with your permission or if we are significantly worried about your safety or the safety of someone else. We know that this can cause some frustrations for some parents/carers, but it is important that counselling is confidential. More information about this can be found at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/consent-to-treatment/>

What happens next?..

Q. What happens if Just Drop-in isn't the right service to support me at the moment?

A. If we decide together that Just Drop-in counselling wouldn't be the most helpful support for you at this time, with your permission, the assessor can use the information you have shared to help navigate you to the right support elsewhere.

Q. How long will I have to wait for an appointment?

A. If you still want to go ahead with counselling and the assessor agrees that it would be appropriate, you will be added to the allocations list to be matched with a counsellor. We offer counselling in different places, with male or female counsellors and qualified or trainee counsellors. The assessor will explain your options during your assessment. You should start counselling within 4-8 weeks of the assessment. Sometimes it may be a bit more or could be less than. Our evening and weekend slots are the busiest and you may have to wait longer for these.

Q. How much does counselling cost?

A. Just Drop-in is a registered charity and our service is totally FREE. We provide our services as a result of charitable grants. If you wish to make a donation, then this is welcome but by no means expected. You can make a donation by going to our website and clicking 'Donate'. Or you can donate a jar of coffee, tea, sugar or hot chocolate which we will use to make other people feel welcome.

Q. Can you explain counselling to me in more details?

A. Yes, it is important that you feel informed about what to expect during your counselling. Therefore, your counsellor will talk through our counselling information with you at your first session. We encourage you to ask questions and let us know if you are unsure about anything to do with counselling.