

WELL-BEING AND SUPPORT PROCEDURE

This document is subject to the policy statement included in the Employee Handbook

This document is subject to the standard policy statements

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<i>Date agreed & Implemented:</i>	
<i>Agreed by:</i>	
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<i>Ver</i>	<i>Status</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Reason for Change</i>	<i>Authorised</i>

Denbighshire County Council is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy working environment. As part of this commitment the Authority acknowledges the contribution of its staff. Where staff are experiencing work-related, personal or health problems, it may affect their work performance as well as their quality of life and general sense of wellbeing.

In accordance with the Equality Framework, Denbighshire County Council will not discriminate in the application of these procedures in respect of age, disability, gender, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation, trade union membership or lack thereof. Reasonable adjustments will be put in place, as appropriate, to support staff with a disability.

1. Types of support available

1. Counselling Support
2. Specialist Therapy Support for Musculoskeletal conditions.

1. Counselling support

Denbighshire County Council provides access to confidential, professional counselling and support for all staff through the provision of an in house service. The key principles of the service are to ensure that:

- It is available to all staff members at no cost to them (cost is borne by employees Service area)
- Access to counselling is voluntary;
- Professional counselling is provided by qualified psychologists;
- Strictest confidentiality is maintained by the provider;
- Employees seeking assistance will not jeopardise their employment in any way.

How does counselling work?

Workplace counselling is a therapeutic process of providing help and support to employees who are experiences difficulties which are impacting on work. It helps employees see things from a different view point and encourages them to draft their own action plan. Counsellors will support employees to find solutions and develop management strategies to enable them to cope better and build their resilience supporting a return to work or enabling an employee to remain in work whilst going through either personal or work place difficulties.

Counsellors are not able to advise on fitness to work or any other occupational health issues. Any concerns by the counsellor regarding an employee's fitness to work should be discussed with the occupational health advisor before discussing with the employee.

Workplace counsellors are expected to work within a short-term framework; work place counselling is not a long term solution. Employees accessing counselling have a limited number of sessions available to them, usually between two and six sessions and no more than two complete 6 session courses in a twelve month period.

An initial assessment or screening will normally be undertaken; at the end of the initial assessment employees will be given feedback as to their suitability for counselling, expected waiting times before counselling sessions commence, and frequency and duration of sessions;

If further counselling sessions are required, counsellors may advise for these to remain in house (limited to a further six sessions only). This will require consent in writing from management and therefore; either the employee can discuss this with their manager or Occupational Health will on behalf of the employee. Consent for further sessions must be obtained from management in writing before they can be accessed (this will be discussed with the employee by the counsellor prior to seeking consent).

Employees may also be advised to refer onwards to alternative primary care resources through their GP which will not be funded by the Authority.

In the event of the counsellor having any concerns about possible risk to the employee or others at initial contact, the employees GP or Occupational Health will be informed as soon as possible

A consultation or 'session' with a counsellor usually takes place in a confidential setting (traditionally at the approved premises of the counsellor or at the Occupational Health's premises where this is suitably private) and will last between 50 minutes and one hour. The duration and frequency is often dependent on the counsellor's availability and the appropriateness of counselling (dictated by the counsellor in consultation with any supervisor or case manager). Traditionally, counselling happens face to face. Workplace counsellors are expected to have an understanding of the council's cultures and workplace factors that might impact on their work. Counsellors will not give advice, but they will help to find solutions to problems or help to create management strategies to cope with them better and to support in putting these strategies into practice.

Feedback of employee's progress will be negotiated with the employee and relayed to referrers where necessary; A standard feedback form will be provided to referee (Appendix 1)

What kinds of problems can you seek workplace counselling for?

Workplace counselling can be sought for any issues that affect working life including (but not limited to):

- Stress
- Depression or anxiety
- Bullying and harassment
- Bereavement and loss
- Relationship and family difficulties
- Substance misuse (including alcohol abuse).

Counselling and confidentiality

Confidentiality is not absolute, but standards need to be set which safeguard clients, counsellors and the council during the counselling process.

Respecting client confidentiality is a fundamental requirement for keeping trust. The professional management of confidentiality concerns the protection of personally identifiable and sensitive information from unauthorised disclosure. Disclosure may be authorised by client consent or the law. Any disclosures should be undertaken in ways that best protect the client's trust. Counsellors should be willing to be accountable to their clients and to their profession for their management of confidentiality in general and particularly for any disclosures made without their client's consent.

There are circumstances in which counsellors cannot legally or ethically maintain confidentiality within the service. Wherever possible, counsellors will make every attempt to communicate first with the employee explaining the reasons for the need to pass on information and to whom this will be given.

Circumstances where a disclosure may be made include:

- 1) Where there is risk of harm to self or others
- 2) Where there is a serious alleged crime
- 3) Where there is a legal requirement (e.g. protection of children or prevention of terrorism)
- 4) Where there is a significant threat to the health and safety of those within the authority.

The key principles are that employees should be able to seek counselling support in confidence (e.g. to attend at a location that is confidential), that inappropriate disclosures to line managers about what is discussed should be prevented, and that notes of any consultations are kept secure so that other related professionals do not have access to them.

Information on who is accessing the service is analysed confidentially in order to measure the impact of the service, identify areas for improvement and for service costing purposes. Employees are tracked through a coded system to maintain confidentiality.

Referral process for the counselling service

Referrals can be made by either employee self-referral or by management referral.

Employees can confidentially refer for counselling by contacting the Occupational Health department on 01824 712522 or by emailing

Occupational.health@denbighshire.gov.uk

Referrals for counselling can also be made by management following discussion with the employee by completing the relevant referral form (appendix 2).

Cancellation of counselling appointments

Employees unable to keep an appointment are required to give at least 24 hours' notice (except in completely unavoidable circumstances such as sudden illness). The appointment can then be used by someone else.

This can be done by either calling: 01824 712522

Or emailing either:

nia.evans@denbighshire.gov.uk or alana.nicandros@denbighshire.gov.uk

For counselling to be of benefit it is important that employees attend regularly. Frequent cancellation of sessions will result in the service being withdrawn, though the counsellor would usually discuss missed sessions with the employee to explore what is happening and understand why they are not able to attend regularly.

If more than two sessions are missed without informing either of the above the service will be withdrawn. If an employee wishes to end the counselling, at least one session's notice must be given.

If the counsellor has to change an appointment for any reason, they will give as much notice as possible and will arrange an alternative date and time.

Time off work for counselling

If employees need to take time off work in order to receive Counselling, Physio, or Osteopathy appointments provided under the Well-Being and Support Procedure, management should be sympathetic towards an employee's request for time off. There is an expectation that appointments should be taken in an employee's own time. However it is recognised there may be exceptional

circumstances in which this is not possible. In such cases, where an employee can demonstrate that they cannot attend in their own time, managers may allow employees to be given paid time off to attend.

2. Physiotherapy/Osteopathy Services

The main objective of this service is to reduce and to prevent sickness absence.

The specialist therapies available cover a range of treatments including physiotherapy and osteopathy. These are available for employees who are absent from work or struggling to cope in work with work induced injuries or with non-work related medical conditions.

If the injury is work induced, managers should consider their duty of care whilst assessing the cost of this treatment.

What is Physiotherapy/Osteopathy treatment?

Physiotherapy: The aim of physiotherapy is to help restore movement and normal body function in cases of illness, injury and disability. Physiotherapists use therapeutic exercises designed to strengthen the affected body area in order help reduce tissue inflammation and pain, and to promote recovery. These exercises need to be repeated regularly, usually daily, for a set number of weeks.

Osteopathy: This is a manual treatment which relies on mobilising and manipulating procedures in order to relieve complaints such as arthritis, asthma, depression, Irritable Bowel Syndrome, migraine headaches and menstrual pain. Osteopaths use their understanding of the relationship between structure and function of the body to help resolve the underlying cause of the problem. Osteopathy not only treats the symptoms but also looks at the root cause of the medical problem.

Accessing treatment

To access the service, employees must:

- be referred to Occupational Health either by their manager or as a self-referral (However, in self-referrals management will be contacted to sanction treatment)
- Managers can complete the relevant referral form (appendix 2)

In relation to non-work induced injuries or medical problems, the manager should assess the feasibility of sanctioning this treatment in order to:

- try to prevent sickness absence
- facilitate an earlier return to work for employees who are on NHS waiting lists

In this instance, the employee will be required to make a contribution towards the cost of the physiotherapy treatment, which relates to repaying the tax of 20% on the total cost of the treatment (this type of treatment is taxable). The tax will be reclaimed during the following tax year by amending the tax code over a period of twelve months.

Prior to any treatment, the manager will be required to provide a cost code which will be used to pay the monthly specialist therapy invoice, which is sent to Occupational Health. For current service costs, please contact Occupational Health on 01824 712522.

Once a referral has been made to the physiotherapy/Osteopathy services the employee will be contacted and an appointment made for an initial assessment. The services will then provide a report with recommendations as to whether further treatment is required. If this is the case consent for the treatment to continue must be obtained by management. At the end of treatment a final discharge report will be provided to Occupational Health and the referring manager by the service with a summary treatment given, success of treatment, number of sessions attended, and any other recommendations including adjusted duties.

Cancellation of appointments

Employees unable to keep an appointment are required to give at least 24 hours' notice (except in completely unavoidable circumstances such as sudden illness). The appointment can then be used by someone else.

This can be done by contacting the service provider directly (contact details should be given when initial assessment appointment is booked. Frequent cancellation of appointments will result in the service being withdrawn and if more than two appointments are missed without informing the service provider the service will be withdrawn; however, the employees department will still be charged for the missed appointments.

Time off for appointments

As above for counselling services.

Appendix One

Denbighshire County Council CASE SUMMARY & EVALUATION		
Employee's name:		DOB:
<p>Please ask the client the following:- Please rate how you felt before and after the counselling. Between 1 and 5 (1 = very poor 5 = very good)</p>		
	Before Counselling	After Counselling
Ability to cope with the demands of my job		
Relationships with my colleagues		
Relationship with my manager		
Satisfaction with my personal life		
Ability to deal with my problems		
	Yes	No
Without counselling would your concerns have caused you to:-		
Miss work		
Have difficulty concentrating at work		
Impacted on your performance at work		
	Yes	No
Work Status		
Were you off sick when commencing counselling?		
If Yes, have you since been able to return?		
If you have not been able to return to work what has been the barrier to a return to work?		
Summary of counselling process [including therapeutic goals reached and clinical		

interventions used]			
Number of sessions agreed		Number of sessions attended	
Details of any further support required			
Work		Counselling	
Employee Signature		Date	
Counsellor's signature		Date	

Appendix Two

Management Referral for Occupational Health Sickness Absence Assessment

*Employee Number	
*Employee Name	
*Address	
*Mobile/contact Number	
*Cost Code	(required to sanction physiotherapy and counselling)
*DOB	
*Job Title	
*Service Area	
*Manager's/ HR's Name/email and contact number	
*Brief reason for referral	
*Start date of Sickness absence or N/A	

*(The above information required is mandatory, referral will be sent back if not fully completed)

Is this referral for (please tick appropriate box)

- Counselling Physiotherapy Occupational Health Advisors appointment
 Occupational Health Physicians appointment

For physio/osteo treatment - If the referral is for a non-work related incident, the employee will be required to make a contribution towards the cost of the physiotherapy treatment, which relates to repaying the tax of 20% on the total cost of the treatment (this type of treatment is taxable). The tax will be reclaimed during the following tax year by amending the tax code over a period of twelve months.

(Managers must provide their staff with this information)

Occupational Health will report **ONLY** on the following three areas.

1. What is the employee's current state of fitness for work?
2. Are there any work modifications or adjustments which would alleviate the condition/allow for rehabilitation or enable an early return to work (this includes advice on phased return to work programmes)?
3. What is the likely timescale for the employee to recover/return to work?

If you have any further specific questions you require answering, or wish to provide any further information, please write these below.

Occupational Health will provide a copy of the appointment letter upon receipt of referral and a report will be issued within 3 working days of having attended Occupational Health.

All employees must be notified of a referral to Occupational Health.

*Employee informed of referral verbally By letter In Person