

# Women's Health Counselling Service

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## Information for women and their families

East Kent Hospitals offers a counselling service to women and their families. The following outlines the service provided and how you can be referred, should you think that this service would help you.

### What is counselling?

Counselling offers the opportunity to explore issues in private with someone who has no other role in your life.

Our counsellors are trained practitioners who will work with you over a short period of time to help improve and maintain your mental and emotional wellbeing. They will use their skills, Talking Therapy, and EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing) to help you understand or explore your grief, trauma, or mental wellbeing. If you need any further information on any of the treatments listed above, please speak to your counsellor.

Women's Health have three counsellors, two who are Accredited Members of the British Association for Counsellors and Psychotherapy (BACP). All the counsellors are bound by the BACP Ethical Framework for Good Practice and the Professional Conduct procedure within it. This offers a framework for best practice.

### How can I be referred to the counsellors?

Our counsellors will take referrals from staff within the obstetrics and gynaecology wards, antenatal clinics, foetal medicine clinics, and Emergency Department, as well as from community midwives, GPs, health visitors, and other therapists/agencies.

They can also take self-referrals via the email address at the back of this leaflet.



### **Can anyone be referred?**

No. The person or persons referred need to be currently under the care of the Trust or have been so within the last year.

### **Is the service confidential?**

Yes. Confidentiality is an essential part of the counselling process. No personal information will be shared with anyone outside of this service without your consent, unless the counsellor believes you or someone else is in danger.

### **How much will it cost?**

The service is free to NHS patients and their partners who are known to Women's Health.

### **What issues will the counsellors deal with?**

- Following the loss of a pregnancy at any stage from early pregnancy to after birth.
- Issues relating to body image following gynaecological/obstetric surgery.
- After a traumatic birth experience.
- Issues regarding fertility.
- Issues related to anxiety/depression that have occurred in the short term or are related to a specific medical issue within Women's Health. This is not for those who have long-term panic attacks, long-term anxiety, or long-term depression. These may be referred to the Mental Health Midwifery Team or to IAPT (Improving Access to Psychological Therapies programme). Please discuss with a member of staff which service would be most helpful for you.
- Relationship issues happening because of a present situation.
- Parents of sick babies in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) or Special Care Baby Unit (SCBU).
- Parents distressed by ultrasound findings such as foetal abnormalities.
- Before becoming pregnant, patients that may be affected by previous birth trauma, loss of a pregnancy, or stillbirth.

### **How long is each counselling session?**

Each session is normally 50 minutes.

### **Can I bring someone with me to my appointment?**

Yes, but only if this has been arranged with your counsellor before your appointment.

## What if I still need counselling support after I have completed my sessions with the counsellor?

If this happens, our counsellors will refer you on to other psychological services or back to your GP to refer you on.

If the issue is related to a previous traumatic birth or the loss of a baby, you may be referred to THRIVE.

## What if I need to cancel my session?

Please give us a minimum of 48 hours' notice if you need to cancel your appointment. This gives us enough time to offer your appointment to another patient instead.

## Who are the counsellors?

- **Lois Mummery** (works Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday)  
Telephone: 07879 81 38 46 (voicemail available)  
Email: [lois.mummery@nhs.net](mailto:lois.mummery@nhs.net)
- **Donna Harrison** (works Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday)  
Telephone: 07879 43 01 12 (voicemail available)  
Email: [donna.harrison12@nhs.net](mailto:donna.harrison12@nhs.net)
- **Angelina Fellowes** (works Thursday, Saturday)  
Telephone: 07767 78 78 86 (voicemail available)  
Email: [angelinafellowes@nhs.net](mailto:angelinafellowes@nhs.net)
- **New referrals email:** [ekhuft.womenshealthcounsellors@nhs.net](mailto:ekhuft.womenshealthcounsellors@nhs.net)

The counsellors communicate regularly with each other to make sure you are offered the best service that will fit your needs and lifestyle as much as possible. If you have any questions about the counselling service, please speak to a member of staff or the person referring you.

If you would like this information in **another language, audio, Braille, Easy Read, or large print** please ask a member of staff. You can ask someone to contact us on your behalf.

**Any complaints, comments, concerns, or compliments** please speak to your doctor or nurse, or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01227 78 31 45, or email [ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net](mailto:ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net)

**Patients should not bring in large sums of money or valuables into hospital.** Please note that East Kent Hospitals accepts no responsibility for the loss or damage to personal property, unless the property had been handed in to Trust staff for safe-keeping.

**Further patient leaflets** are available via the East Kent Hospitals web site [www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/patientinformation](http://www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/patientinformation)