

RISK ASSESSMENT

TOPIC : Counselling Sessions

REFERENCE : Substances Support Scotland

WORK ACTIVITY		HAZARD	RISK (H-M-L)	CONTROL MEASURES REQUIRED	IN PLACE	FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED	
Ref No	Description					By when	Person responsible
1	Counselling sessions planning	Misinformation, not considering all eventualities and not preparing contingency plans.	M	- Set clear and achievable objectives. - Instruction and information about session and client. - Choose location/room where there is less likelihood of disturbance or interruption. - Manager to have itinerary of counsellors sessions - Means of communications established.	√		Sarah White Head of Services
2	Venue safety	Disruption, unsuitable rooms	M	- Venues predetermined with visits to ensure suitability. - Discussions with owner/landlord regarding use of rooms. - On site staff aware of counselling sessions and possible outcomes. - Counsellor to be aware of fire evacuation procedures. - Counsellor to arrive early to check room and ask staff about any issues that may disrupt the session. - Sign in and out depending on location.	√		Sarah White Head of Services

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3	Disorder	Physical and verbal abuse to counsellor.	L	• Clients vetted in case of personality clashes. • Counsellor to constantly monitor client and read body language and verbal responses. • Expulsion from session if being verbally or physically abusive. • Awareness of de-escalating techniques	√		Sarah White Head of Services
4	Lone working	Physical and verbal abuse to counsellor. Lack of communication with counsellor	M	• Manager and or on-site staff to be aware of times for sessions. • Text messages or WhatsApp prior to and at the end of session • Follow guidance in Lone Working Policy.	√		Sarah White Head of Services
5	Loss of contact	Loss of communication with counsellor	M	• Ensure signing in processes depending on location. • On-site staff to be given timings of sessions. • Checks by onsite staff and manager if longer than ten minutes of planned session. • Escalation process if no contact can be made. • Use of GPS or lone working monitoring systems.	√		Sarah White Head of Services

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6	Debriefing sessions	Failure to miss critical behaviours	M	- Regular discussions with manager re clients behaviour and manner. - Changes in strategy depending on how client is reacting or progressing.	√		Sarah White Head of Services
7	Stress	Subjected to physical or verbal abuse. Case workload, nature and outcomes of sessions.	M	- Only fully qualified counsellors to carry out sessions - Managers to assess workload and content of sessions. - Managers to monitor counsellors wellbeing.	√		Sarah White Head of Services
8	Stalking and harassment	Unwanted attention	M	- Establish clear boundaries. - Protect your own privacy. - Highlight to manager any issues - Debriefing sessions - In house counselling services	√		Sarah White Head of Services

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Date	July 2025
Review Date	July 2026