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**COUNSELLING AGREEMENT**

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| **Client Name:** |  |
| **Counsellor:** |  |
| **Assessing Therapist:** |  |

**What is Counselling?**

Counselling is a place for you to come and talk openly about your feelings. You will be offered 8 sessions which will take place at the same time and in the same place each week, for 50 minutes. Counselling sessions are usually during office hours.

**How to get the most from counselling**

There may be times when you are unable to attend due to illness, a medical appointment or an emergency. If this happens, please contact Rochdale & District Mind reception as soon as you can – ideally at least **24 hours** in advance. If you miss two sessions and do not let your counsellor know there is no guarantee that your place will be held for you. If your counsellor cannot attend a session you will be contacted by your counsellor or by the Therapeutic Lead at Rochdale & District Mind.

**Information about you**

In order for the service to run smoothly, we hold confidential records about you (including name, address, telephone number, date of birth, ethnicity, GP practice, referral form, initial assessment form, monitoring forms and session notes) on a secure computer database.

This information is held for 7 years after you are discharged from our service.

You have the right to see any of the information we hold about you. To do this please submit a request in writing to the Therapeutic Lead. Your information will be provided within one month of your request. You also have the right to ask for information that you believe to be incorrect to be rectified.

If we become aware of a situation where your personal information may have accidently or maliciously been obtained by a third party we will notify you within 3 days.

If you are concerned about the way your information is being held please discuss with your counsellor or the Therapeutic Lead. If you are still unhappy you have the right to complain to the Information Commissioners Office www.ico.gov.uk.

**Your Counsellor**

Your counsellor has been selected for you by the assessing therapist because they believe you will work well together. Your counsellor will tell you about their level of qualifications and experience and the way they like to work.

They work to the BACP’s Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions. A copy is available from the BACP website [www.BACP.org.uk](http://www.BACP.org.uk). If at any point you have concerns about whether the counselling is helping you, you are welcome to contact the assessing therapist or Therapeutic Lead.

It is considered good practice for all counsellors to reflect on their work. Your counsellor may also reflect on their counselling work as a whole and make notes in their own private and confidential journal. To safeguard your privacy such journals/notes will not contain any of your identifying details. Such notes help them to prepare for their consultations with their supervisor. All counsellors have regular supervision to monitor and reflect on their work, in order to ensure that you are working together effectively. Every attempt is made during their reflection to protect your anonymity.

If your counsellor is a trainee they will explain how their work is assessed and they may discuss the possibility of taping your work during the session. You do not have to agree to the taping of your session if you do not want this to happen.

**Confidentiality**

Your counsellor will work hard to ensure the highest levels of confidentiality. They will not normally share information about you without your consent. However, they have an ethical, professional and legal requirement to pass on certain information. The reasons for breaching confidence are:

* Prevention of serious harm to you or another person, including the safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults
* Knowledge of a serious crime
* If compelled by a Court Order

If there is a need to break your confidence, wherever possible your counsellor will discuss it with you first, to explain how and why this is necessary.

**Evaluating our work**

We will ask you to answer some questionnaires during your counselling and collect some background information about you. We use this information to look at the quality and outcomes of our service.

* I understand what information is held about me, and in what format, and for how long.
* I understand I can access this data by written request to the Therapeutic Lead.
* I understand if I have any concerns about this data, I have the right to complain to the Therapeutic Lead and/or the Information Commissioner’s Office.
* I understand the level of confidentiality offered to me.
* If my counsellor is a trainee, they have explained the implications of this for confidentiality.
* I am not undergoing any other form of therapy and agree to tell my counsellor if this changes.
* I understand if I am not happy with the work we are doing I can discuss this with my counsellor, the Assessing Therapist, or the Therapeutic Lead.
* I understand I can obtain a copy of Rochdale & District Mind’s complaints procedure.
* My signature gives permission for Rochdale & District Mind to contact appropriate agencies should they believe there is risk of serious harm to another person or myself.
* I have understood all the information supplied to me about the terms on which counselling is offered and I agree to abide by these.

**Signed**

Client: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Counsellor: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_