

Client Information Form

Information

The Halton Hills Family Health Team is pleased to offer short-term therapeutic support (typically 6 to 8 sessions). Case notes are kept after each meeting and are entered into your medical file in accordance with documentation standards and so that your family physician can be informed about ongoing treatment.

Attendance

It is expected that you attend your scheduled appointments. If you cannot attend, we request 48 hours' notice to cancel/reschedule an appointment. If you "no show" to an appointment (i.e. not attend without first rescheduling or cancelling), the session will be counted against the total sessions you can receive.

Risks and Benefits

Counseling is beneficial, but as with any treatment, there are inherent risks. During counseling, you will have discussions about personal issues which may bring to the surface uncomfortable emotions such as anger, guilt, and sadness. The benefits of counseling can far outweigh any discomfort encountered during the process. Some of the possible benefits are improved personal relationships, reduced feelings of emotional distress, and specific problem solving. We cannot guarantee these benefits, of course. It is our desire, however, to work with you to attain your personal goals for counseling.

Confidentiality

Information discussed in sessions is considered confidential and would only be shared with your informed consent. You will be asked to sign a 'Consent to Release Information Form' if you wish for the information to be shared with any other person. There are exceptions to the confidentiality that are required by law.

The limits to confidentiality include the following circumstances:

1. The risk of harm to self or another person.
2. If you are a child, or know of a child, in need of protection (s.72 of the Child and Family Services Act).
3. If you report sexual abuse by a Regulated Health Professional.
4. If you report abuse of an elderly person in a long-term care facility or retirement home by staff at that facility.
5. Pursuant to subpoena, court order, or sworn testimony.

Please note that information may be shared with other healthcare providers in the Team in order to provide you with the best collaborative care.

What to Expect from Counselling

Before you begin your journey towards improved self-awareness and well-being, there are a few fundamentals about the process of counselling to be aware of to ensure you gain the most benefit from your experience.

1. Be ready and willing to engage.

Counselling works only when you are ready and want to be there. Others, including your partner, parents, friends or health care providers cannot pressure you to seek treatment. You have to decide that you are ready to begin counselling.

2. Attend regularly.

Counselling involves a stepwise process toward change and requires several sessions. To get the most out of your experience you need to attend every scheduled appointment.

3. Be prepared to make an effort.

The process of working on yourself and creating positive change is hard work. Counselling alone will not heal you – you must be an active participant in the process. Your counsellor will not tell you what to do, but rather, empower you with the tools to develop the skills you can use every day to help you manage and thrive.

4. Come prepared with goals and areas you want to focus on.

Each session can go by fast! In order to make the most of your time, be prepared to create therapeutic goals with your counsellor: what would you like to work on or work through? This will help you and your counsellor set the focus of your sessions and set realistic goals to help you make progress.

5. Communicating with Staff and Counsellors.

You are welcome to email or call your counsellor to reschedule appointments. However, we discourage communication of any personal information via e-mail as we cannot guarantee privacy and confidentiality of electronic communication.

Staff and counsellors can only communicate with the person whom the referral for counselling was made. The exception are children under the age of 12. We cannot discuss details of your case with family members or friends without your consent to do so.

6. Emergency situations

In case of an emergency, please call 911, or go to the local hospital - emergency department. You can also call COAST at 1-877-825-9011 or North Halton Distress Line at 905-877-1211 (24 hours a day, 7 days a week).