

Newsletter

October 2020

Client Consultations Continue

In this newsletter our lead counsellor Dawn Williams shares how services have moved to telephone consultations due to the difficulties of offering a service during the Covid-19 pandemic



As with many other organisations, we at Choices had to make changes to the delivery of our services during this difficult time. While we have successfully continued our Counselling services through telephone consultation, online, video conferencing and via email, we have had to pull back on our face to face delivery of relationship education in schools.



Counselling services continue

I believe that during this time of lockdown, many of us have had to use different technology, telephone support being one of them. Since March 2020, I have been using telephone consultations instead of face to face counselling sessions. Many people are not familiar with this service and so I decided to write down some of the positives and value of telephone consultations.

In general, both client and counsellor are reliant on tone of voice and the choice of Words. The counsellor must quickly attune to the client's style of talking, speed, silences and slight pauses during the conversation. The counsellor is more heavily reliant on listening skills as there is no eye contact or body language to go on. Silences can be harder to manage – it is challenging to decide when and how to break the silence.

However, there are so many positives to telephone counselling.

- The service can be offered globally rather than just locally.
- People with disabilities or those who live in a remote area have access to this service.
- No travel is involved so less time is taken up as well as avoiding waiting time.
- The client is in their own environment and may be more relaxed and less intimidated as they are in familiar surroundings.
- In their own environment, a client is less likely to feel judged, they often talk more freely and self-reveal more easily, knowing they can terminate the session at any time.

It is not just our services that have gained benefits from the enforced changes in society. Many people are finding that they can connect to

Miscarriage Support

Thanks to one of our recent clients for her moving testimonial on how counselling at Choices helped during a time of crisis

Relationship Revolution on hold

Nelly Jaka updates us on the impact Covid-19 has had on our work with schools

other people in a more meaningful way by regular telephone chats. Rather than just saying hello to people I used to meet, I find that by picking up the phone I can get to know people better and at a deeper level. It is also good for encouraging others who may be feeling isolated. Perhaps you can make phone contact with a neighbor or friend you have not seen for some time.

Client Testimonial

After our miscarriage in November 2018 I felt so incredibly lost and didn't know how to process what had happened. The midwives at the medical practice gave me the contact details for Choices and I got an appointment very quickly. No words could ever express just how much my counsellor helped me deal with this incredibly painful experience, but she did. She has helped me in ways I never thought possible and has ultimately changed my way of thinking and greatly improved my mental health. She helped me through our miscarriage, she helped me deal with other past events that haunted me and she helped me deal with the anxieties around having our rainbow baby. I will never be able to thank Choices and my counsellor enough for the support I received. If I could give them the world it would not feel like enough. My counsellor will always hold a special place in my heart, and I will forever be grateful that she came into my life when she did. Thank you from the bottom of my heart ♥

School's Relationship Education

We were able to provide online support in the beginning of lockdown however we had to scale back our services to allow the schools to plan and develop new systems for the pupils returning. However, we are still providing online youth counselling support for referrals made by the schools within the city.

Sadly, we have not been able to return to schools this term because the schools have needed additional time to implement new ways of delivering classes where social distance can allow pupils and teachers to work as safely as possible. It has also been important for teachers to help pupils catch up with work that they may have fallen behind on. Once the schools have made these important changes, we hope to be able to work with them to offer slightly different ways of delivering the Relationship Revolutions materials. To enable us to do this we are actively developing new learning materials and new online ways of delivery our workshops in anticipation of being able to return to schools next term.

Currently we are following strict guidelines about face to face delivery which means we are unable to visit our partner schools and as we

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previously worked in several schools in a day, we will not be able to return with the same working practices. We are developing new policies and plan to be able to deliver our workshops in the new term to all our partner schools.

With increased need of online delivery of counselling and schools work, we looking to update some of our computers which are rather old and no longer fit for purpose. At the moment we are looking for funding for, or donations of, 4 laptops/Chromebook and 1 smartphone which has Wi-Fi calling capability to ensure we can provide support without signal interruptions. If you can help us with any support towards replacing these resources, it will be greatly welcomed.

Your support and prayers are, as ever, much appreciated, please feel free to get in touch at mail@choicesaberdeen.org.uk .

Choices has produced several leaflets that we distribute through local health providers. These leaflets provide information to clients on a variety of topics. We will be making them available on our website for anyone to access, topics include: -

- Pregnancy
- Women and Miscarriage
- Men and Miscarriage
- Men and Abortion

If you would like to access these leaflets you can contact the office – telephone and email details are in the Contact Us information or keep checking the website over the next couple of months.

