

The diocese recognises that Ministry can bring its own stresses, and that the clergy are not exempt from the other problems of everyday life arising from family and personal circumstances. It is not always appropriate to seek support from a colleague or senior person, and for many years the diocese has provided short term professional counselling.

From 1 January 2019, we will be working with the Churches' Ministerial Counselling Service (CMCS) who will provide this confidential service. This will be accessed anonymously, with no records available to any Diocesan staff concerning who uses the service.

SOME QUESTIONS ANSWERED...

Who can use CMCS?

The Diocese of Exeter makes this service available to:

- Ordinands and Readers in training;
- Licensed clergy and members their immediate families over 18 living at the same address;
- Licensed Readers and licensed lay workers;
- Retired clergy, widows and widowers of clergy resident in the diocese; and
- All EDBF employees and Church Commissioner employees working for the Diocese.

You can approach CMCS to help with many things, for example:

- *If you are feeling low*
- *If you worry about behaviour patterns*
- *If you have experienced loss*
- *If your relationships are going through a difficult patch*
- *If the stresses of ministry are getting too much*
- *If you face a dilemma*

ABOUT CONFIDENTIALITY...

CMCS follows the *Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy*, published by the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP)

The only people who will know that you are having counselling are the counsellor and the AC. Your denomination will not know, nor will the central office of CMCS know your identity. Your counsellor will keep all you say confidential, except where disclosure is required by law or if you might harm yourself or someone else. Counsellors are required to have supervision for their work, but in that process clients remain completely anonymous.

ABOUT COUNSELLING....

Are all your counsellors Christians?

This isn't one of our requirements, but most are, and all our counsellors have affirmed respect for the Christian faith and commitment to helping ministers.

Are your counsellors professional?

CMCS only consider applications to join their Register from counsellors who are fully accredited with one of the major national counselling organisations, so they have extensive training and experience and are required to maintain their skills through continuing professional development.

How much will it cost?

The Diocese of Exeter will normally meet the full cost of counselling accessed through the CMCS scheme.

Procedures

How do I ask for counselling?

Contact our CMCS Area Co-ordinator, **Graham Exon** on **07867 009740** or graham.cmincs@gmail.com, Graham will take some details and find you a counsellor; you then arrange when is best to see them. Your counsellor will use their skill to help you to explore the issues you want to talk about and to gain different perspectives and ways to cope. This will usually be over a maximum of twelve weekly sessions.

The CMCS website, <http://www.cmincs.net/area-co-ordinators/4574629341>, includes details of other Area Coordinators who all hold the details of approved counsellors.

Process

- *Counselling takes place when a counsellor sees a client in a private and confidential setting to explore a difficulty the client is having, distress they may be experiencing or perhaps their dissatisfaction with life, or loss of a sense of direction and purpose. It is always at the request of the client as no one can properly be 'sent' for counselling.*
- *By listening attentively and patiently the counsellor can begin to perceive the difficulties from the client's point of view and can help them to see things more clearly, possibly from a different perspective. Counselling is a way of enabling choice or change or of reducing confusion. (BACP)*
- Your counsellor will help you to explore the circumstances which have given rise to what is troubling you, its impact upon yourself and those around you, and the options and consequences which are now possible.
- Your counsellor will *not* provide answers or advise you as to any particular course of action which you should take.

Since 1996, the Churches' Ministerial Counselling Service has established itself as a leading provider in Great Britain of counselling for ministers and their families, originally within the Free Church denominations, but now also service some Anglican dioceses.

If you feel that it would help to talk something through confidentially with someone right outside your church structures, we are just the people to help. This can be work related or personal—both are covered.

CMCS has a procedure for dealing with any complaints relating to the service. Details can be obtained from the Area Coordinator or the Service Coordinator.

Appreciation from clients

Those receiving counselling are asked, if they wish, to complete a feedback form and send it in anonymously. Here are three comments we've received over the years:

"I am so very grateful for the care and support given to me through a very difficult time."

"Excellent Service... Having always said "I will never go for counselling" the experience was very positive and helpful."

"(The counsellor) has been a gift to me... My experience has been life changing and life enhancing."

ABOUT APPOINTMENTS...

- Please be punctual and give a high priority to keeping appointments.
- In the case of unavoidable cancellation please let the counsellor know as soon as possible. **You will normally still be asked to pay the fee (or your normal share of it) if you do not keep an appointment.**

For further information contact your

Area Coordinator
Graham Exon Tel: 07867 009740

or

The Service Coordinator
Churches' Ministerial Counselling Service
PO Box 44
Didcot
OX11 8RT

Tel: 01235 517705
Fax: Tel: 01235 517715
Email: sc.cmincs@gmail.com
Website: www.cmincs.net



Churches' Ministerial Counselling Service

The CMCS Mission Statement:

The Churches' Ministerial Counselling Service exists to provide confidential support to ministers and adults in their immediate household through short-term, professional counselling.

www.cmincs.net

