



COUNSELLOR TRAINING & SUPERVISION

Introduction

The ultimate effectiveness of any counselling service is dependent upon the quality of its counsellors. The quality of the counsellors depends heavily on the training, support and professional development with which they are involved.

What's Up is committed to providing quality training opportunities for its personnel. The What's Up training model ensures that counsellors are exposed to a wide range of learning experiences and have access to quality supervision and support.

Before completing training as a Counsellor with What's Up, the Trainee Counsellor will have undertaken 356 hours of training as detailed in the table below.

PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRAINING	
1 Information Session - organisational values, and operational principles of counselling	3 hours
2 Introduction to Telephone Counselling Skills course	35 hours
3 Issues based learning	12 hours
BASIC TRAINING	
4 Induction Training - includes Computer data base management and telecommunications equipment use and orientation to KHF	8 hours
5 Self directed learning module	4 hours
6 Issues based learning	24 hours
7 Supervised, monitored telephone counselling hours	250 hours (minimum)
8 Supervision	20 hours
TOTAL	356 hrs
ON GOING TRAINING	
9 Internal elective training per year	10 hours
10 Internal compulsory training	As required
11 External training - may be subsidised by KHF if approved as contributing to meeting IDP goals.	
Ongoing Shift and Personal Supervision	

PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRAINING

After attendance at a 3-hour information session that outlines What's Up's policies and procedures, participants in the Introduction to Telephone Counselling Skills course will be selected by the Executive Director based on the quality of their applications. Attendance at this course does not constitute a promise of employment.

BASIC TRAINING

Basic training is provided to participants who successfully complete the Introduction to Telephone Counselling Skills course and who are offered employment at What's Up. Trainee Counsellors will be selected to commence work and

training in accordance with the organisation's employment needs. Training is remunerated at the rate for What's Up Trainee Counsellors.

Each Counsellor has a Key Supervisor (KS) allocated for the period of training. The KS ensures feedback to Trainee Counsellors is co-ordinated and provides additional support for people making the transition to What's Up.

When all basic training components (items 4 to 8 in the table) have been satisfactorily completed, a skills based review of performance is written by the Key Supervisor. This includes feedback from all Counselling Team Leaders and the Personal Supervisor and a self-assessment component. The documentation generated provides the basis for the training review meeting.

Successful completion of the basic training period is defined by a formal performance appraisal process. All training components must be completed to the required standards for a Counsellor to pass the basic training period. A Trainee Counsellor may be required to complete supervised and monitored telephone counselling beyond the 250 hours minimum requirement and/or other learning assignments or modules to support the Counsellor's achievement of the required standards.

INDUCTION TRAINING

The first one or two shifts worked by a Trainee Counsellor is considered part of the induction process. Supervisors will spend time working with the Trainee Counsellor to familiarise them with organisational systems, computer data base management, and phone systems. Significant time is allowed for the Trainee Counsellor to practice their skills. A peer mentor is identified to enable a more comfortable transition into the organisation.

SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING MODULE

The self directed learning module is discussed with the Trainee Counsellor in their first personal

supervision session and is progressed at their own pace. At the mid-training review, progress on this task is discussed.

ISSUES-BASED LEARNING

All Trainee Counsellors must complete 30 hours (nominally) of issue related training. Training objectives have been identified and Counsellors may seek to meet the requirements by attending workshops, reading, monitored counselling and tape analysis. Recognition of prior learning will be considered. Successful completion of training objectives will be recorded on the Counsellor's training record. Trainee Counsellors should actively seek to meet these objectives to complete this training component at the same time as they complete 250 hours of telephone counselling.

COUNSELLING HOURS

Trainee Counsellors must complete a minimum of 250 hours of monitored and supervised practice. It is strongly preferred that Trainee Counsellors work a minimum of 15 hours per week and work continuously until the end of their basic training period.

PERSONAL SUPERVISION

Each Counsellor is assigned to a Personal Supervisor at the commencement of the basic training period. Each Counsellor develops an Individual Development Plan (IDP) in conjunction with the Personal Supervisor and the Key Supervisor. The Counsellor is expected to meet with the Personal Supervisor for a minimum of one hour per month during which time professional development goals are reviewed and progressed.

Implementation of IDP goals is a shared responsibility between the Counsellor and the Personal Supervisor and Counselling Supervisors. Feedback for Counsellors is recorded in the IDP and Counsellors are also welcome to record their views in their IDP. Following completion of basic training, each Counsellor's practice is formally reviewed on a six monthly basis.

SHIFT SUPERVISION

Counselling Team Leaders provide supervision during all counselling shifts.

Shift Supervision allows access to timely support, advice about responding to difficult calls, feedback about calls, information about organisational procedures and policies and debriefing for calls that Counsellors find challenging. The Counselling Team Leader is able to monitor individual Counsellor performance via an integrated telecommunications and computer system which allows for the identification of individual training and/or support needs which can then be built in

to ongoing individual development plans.

ONGOING TRAINING

All Counsellors at What's Up are required to continuously improve their skills and knowledge. What's Up encourages and supports involvement in ongoing training. External facilitators with experience in specific areas are engaged.

INTERNAL TRAINING - ELECTIVE

Component 9 represents regular training opportunities. A minimum 10 hours per year is required to meet organisational standards. Participation in professional development activities is assessed every six months as part of the formal performance review.

INTERNAL TRAINING - COMPULSORY

Component 10 is paid and compulsory training focussing on specific issues and related to ensuring a consistent, high standard of counselling practice across the whole organisation.

EXTERNAL TRAINING

Counsellors may apply for organisational support to attend external training that is consistent with the Counsellor's IDP goals.

SUPERVISOR DEVELOPMENT

Supervisors have access to internal and external supervision paid by What's Up. Subsidised external training allows supervisors to continuously develop their skills. Internal training for supervisors is organised in response to identified training needs.

ADVANCED COMPETENCY STANDARDS

Following Basic Training, Counsellors may work towards Advanced Competency Standards. The successful completion of these is accompanied by a pay rise.

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