

## What is counselling?

Knowing someone you care about has been sexually assaulted or raped can be very difficult to deal with. Counselling is one of the ways that you can get support for yourself. Counselling aims to provide a safe and confidential environment for people to talk about issues that concern them. Counselling at Yarrow Place is provided by workers who have been trained and have experience in helping and supporting people.

## Counselling may help you when:

- you feel tired and are struggling to maintain support for the person who has been sexually assaulted or raped
- hearing about the rape has reminded you of a traumatic event from your past that you are finding difficulty coping with
- you feel confused and are unsure about how to support the person you know who has been raped or sexually assaulted
- an issue is seriously impacting on your day to day life
- you feel alone and as if nobody understands you
- most days, life seems really hard and you can't cope any more
- you have strong feelings like anger, self blame or depression and nothing seems to help.

## The role of the counsellor is to:

- provide a safe place away from other demands in your life to discuss issues in your life
- enable you to explore your thoughts and feelings at your own pace
- focus on your needs
- assist you in exploring options/solutions regarding difficulties you may be experiencing
- assist you to monitor how things are going.
- provide ideas and encouragement so you can better support your significant other

## The main aims of counselling are to help you to:

- feel more in control of your life
- find solutions you haven't tried yet
- become clearer about your strengths and supports and how to use them to your best advantage.

## Do I need counselling?

- Help and support can be really important if you are assisting someone who has been raped or sexually assaulted. Sometimes knowing someone you care about has been raped can remind you of your own past experiences of violence or trauma. Whether or not you want counselling may depend on how you are feeling
- how things are going for you
- what you need to know in relation to what happened
- who you have to rely on for support

## How many sessions will I need?

Usually one or two sessions will assist family members or friends of people who have been sexually assaulted, however, if you require more sessions this can be negotiated with your counsellor.

## Is there a cost for counselling?

At Yarrow Place, counselling services are free of charge.

## When attending counselling at Yarrow Place we ask that you:

- be considerate of the rights of others using the service - especially their right to confidentiality
- let us know if you have any special needs such as childcare, interpreter or disability requirements
- attend appointments without being under the influence of drugs and alcohol that affect your thoughts, feelings and behaviour
- let us know if you are unable to keep an appointment.

## What are my rights when seeing a Yarrow Place counsellor?

When using Yarrow Place services you have a range of rights that are outlined in the Yarrow Place pamphlet. In relation to counselling, your rights include the right to:

- be treated with respect and in a sympathetic, constructive and reassuring way
- have your culture, ethnic background, beliefs and sexuality respected
- receive relevant and accurate information
- make your own decisions
- be counselled in a way that empowers you
- decide when to begin and end counselling
- request to change to another counsellor
- confidentiality (see also Yarrow Place pamphlet 'CASE NOTES')
- complain if you are not satisfied with the service you receive.

### Other Support Options:

Yarrow Place offers a range of groups and information seminars. In particular we offer information seminars for family and friends of people who have been raped or sexually assaulted. Please talk to your counsellor or the duty worker if you would like more information about these seminars.

You could request a 'Significant Other Information Pack' which contains written material on how to assist someone who has been raped or sexually assaulted and how to support yourself. Please speak to your counsellor or the duty worker about this Information Pack.

## Yarrow Place Services

A range of counselling and medical services which

may be accessed according to individual need:

- 24 hour crisis response for recent assault which can include counselling and/or medical
- Counselling support for recent victims of rape
- Long term counselling if requested or required
- Support for those close to the survivor of rape and sexual assault is very important for healing. Support persons such as family members, partners and friends are offered a limited number of counselling sessions at Yarrow Place. This provides an opportunity for support people to express their reactions to what happened, to explore coping strategies and to discuss how to support the survivor.
- Specialised medical care and follow-up
- Collection of forensic evidence as requested by those people who have made, or may wish to make, a complaint to police
- Group programs offered throughout the year
- Education, training and consultation for workers
- Community Education to increase knowledge and awareness

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## Counselling for significant others at Yarrow Place



Level 2 Norwich Centre 55 King William Road North Adelaide SA 5005  
Tel. 8226 8777 / 1800 817 421 Fax. 8226 8778  
After hours and emergency 8226 8787 email: info@yarrowplace.sa.gov.au

[www.yarrowplace.sa.gov.au](http://www.yarrowplace.sa.gov.au)



Children, Youth  
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