



COUNSELLING SERVICE

STANDARDS OF SERVICE



Carers of West Lothian

Sycamore House, Quarrywood Court, Livingston EH54 6AX
Tel: 01506 448000 | Email: office@carers-westlothian.com | www.carers-westlothian.com

Scottish Charity SC019628 | Company Limited by Guarantee Company Number SC226434

CARERS OF WEST LOTHIAN COUNSELLING SERVICE STANDARDS OF SERVICE

COMMENTS

The Carers Counselling Service endeavours to offer a high quality service that most appropriately meets carers' needs.

We welcome comments and feedback. We want to ensure that the services we offer best meet the needs of those who use the service. Your comments about what has been helpful, or not so helpful, will help us to assess and evaluate what we do and make changes if necessary.

If you have any comments about the service offered, or if you have any ideas about how the service can be improved, then please discuss them with your counsellor or the Carers Centre Manager.

CODE OF PRACTICE

All the counsellors who practice with the project adhere to the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) Ethical Framework and Statement of Ethics and also the Code of Practice of Scotland's Professional Body for Counselling and Psychotherapy (COSCA). If you would like to see the codes, please ask your counsellor.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE NOT SATISFIED WITH THE SERVICE

We want to know if you are unhappy or dissatisfied about any aspects of the service offered to you as soon as possible in order that we can work to resolve the situation as quickly as possible. All feedback will be treated seriously and confidentially:

- If you feel anyone has been inefficient or slow in responding to you
- If you feel you have not received a satisfactory service
- If you are concerned about or unhappy with anything the staff, volunteers, or counsellors have said or done

COMPLAINTS

- We aim to investigate all complaints in a fair manner
- We will work to resolve any complaints as quickly as possible
- Any consequences of mistakes will be rectified

Investigations into all complaints will be completed within 6 months of receipt of the complaint. Complaints covered by this procedure can be made against counsellors (paid staff, sessional workers or unpaid volunteers), any member of the counselling service (Carers Centre Manager and administrative support).

WHO CAN COMPLAIN

- Anyone who uses the counselling service
- Anyone who has accessed the counselling service in the past 2 years
- Anyone who has made enquiries about the service
- Anyone who is on the waiting list
- Anyone representing someone who meets the above criteria

Anonymous complaints will be investigated by the Carers Centre Manager or Chair of the Board of Directors.

ACCESSING COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

This complaints procedure is available on request by contacting Carers of West Lothian.

The complaints procedure can be translated, viewed in larger text and read out loud from our website.

In addition, information on COSCA's complaints procedure and COSCA's contact details are passed on to clients once they have started seeing a counsellor.

HOW TO COMPLAIN

Contact the counsellor or the Carers Centre Manager with the details of your complaint. You can do this either:

- In person
- Through a friend or representative
- In writing (assistance can be provided if someone is unable to write)
- By telephone
- Audio or video recording
- By e-mail

You can also complain to the people who fund the service. They will have their own procedure for dealing with complaints. Ask the service for a list of its current funders then contact them directly for their complaints procedures.

WHAT IF I NEED HELP TO COMPLAIN ABOUT CARERS OF WEST LOTHIAN'S COUNSELLING SERVICE?

We accept complaints from third parties representing someone wishing to complain about the counselling service. Help may be available from Citizens' Advice Bureau, COSCA or advocacy services.

WHAT WE WILL DO ON RECEIPT OF YOUR COMPLAINT

Carers of West Lothian will acknowledge your complaint within 5 working days and will tell you who will be investigating it.

We will appoint a responsible individual to manage the complaints procedure from within Carers of West Lothian. Investigators or members of a complaints panel will be impartial and independent of the complainant and person / counselling service location complained against and will act confidentially in their handling of the complaint.

Depending on the nature of the complaint, and who it is against, your complaint may be investigated by the Carers Centre Manager or the Chair of the Board of Directors.

All parties involved in the complaint can, where relevant, declare a conflict of interest.

Evidence from either party will be heard separately and not together by the investigator and / or complaints panel.

The complainant and the party or parties complained against and / or their representative will not attend any complaints panel at the same time.

The party complained against and the complainant have the right to attend the complaints panel meeting and be accompanied and / or represented by someone of their choice.

We will then contact you, within 15 working days of receiving your complaint, with written details of the outcome of the investigation.

The person managing the complaints procedure can halt the complaint at any stage should it emerge that legal action is under way, pending or intended and that the above person can halt the procedure until any legal process is complete.

Following investigation there are a number of possible sanctions such as additional supervision being made available to the counsellor, additional training being identified, Carers of West Lothian's disciplinary procedure being implemented, and suspension from the counselling service.

Once the investigation has been concluded, Carers of West Lothian will submit the Report to COSCA at conclusion of the complaints proceedings.

WHERE TO SEND YOUR COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS

The Carers Centre Manager can be contacted at:-

Sycamore House, Quarrywood Court, Livingston EH54 6AX

Tel: 01506 448000 E-mail: office@carers-westlothian.com

The chair of the Board of Directors can also be contacted in writing at the above address.

WHAT IF I AM NOT SATISFIED WITH THE OUTCOME OF MY COMPLAINT

Within Carers of West Lothian there is an Appeals Procedure against decisions made. If you are not satisfied with the response you have received, you should write to the Chair of Carers of West Lothian's Board, marking the envelope 'private and confidential' and send it to the address above and below.

Your letter will be acknowledged within 5 working days. The Chairperson will investigate your complaint and may contact you for further information. You will be informed of the outcome of this investigation and any action to be taken in writing 15 working days from the date of the letter of acknowledgement.

If you are still not satisfied, you can raise your complaint with COSCA. If you are still not satisfied, you can contact the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman.

www.publicguardian-scotland.gov.uk

CONTACT ADDRESSES

Freepost RTJJ-KRJG-HURG

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Sycamore House, Quarrywood Court

Livingston EH54 6AX

Tel 01506 448000

Email office@carers-westlothian.com

Web www.carers-westlothian.com

COSCA

16 Melville Terrace, Stirling FK8 2NE

Tel 01786 475 140

Email info@cosca.org.uk

Web www.cosca.org.uk

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO)

4 Melville Street, Edinburgh EH3 7NS

Tel 0800 377 7330

Text 0790 049 4372 Fax 0800 377 7331

Email ask@spsa.org.uk