

## What to expect – Seeing the Nurse Counsellor at CCQ

This fact sheet is about what to expect from seeing the Nurse Counsellor at Cancer Council Queensland.

### What is Counselling?

- It is a confidential and private process of talking about, and working through, issues that are causing you distress.
- A nurse counsellor will help to clarify what is important for you, explore options with you, and help you to develop strategies to cope, and identify what changes you would like to make that are right for you, and right for your life.
- **Before counselling starts, the nurse counsellor will explain confidentiality and consent with you.**

### What is consent?

**To proceed with counselling at CCQ, you will need to sign our consent form.** This is called “informed consent”. This means that you have the right to receive counselling from the nurse counsellor, and the right to withdraw at any time. You also have the right to tell your nurse counsellor who they can, and cannot, speak to, about your care.

### What is Confidentiality?

Everything you tell the nurse counsellor will remain confidential, EXCEPT in these two situations:

- **Supervision** – the nurse counsellor at CCQ has supervision support from the Senior Psychologist, once a month in a closed door confidential space.
- **Safety** – if your nurse counsellor is concerned that you are at serious risk of harming yourself or someone else, they may need to call emergency services or discuss making a ‘safety plan’ with you. The nurse counsellor will discuss this with you first so that you are included in the decision-making process.

### What are the basic stages of counselling?

- 1) Developing the relationship with you and learn more about your cancer journey (e.g. diagnosis, side effects, how it has impacted your life).
- 2) Clarifying what is happening for you right now, and what is causing you distress.
- 3) Identifying and setting goals that are important to you and what you would like to work on in each session.
- 4) Helping you implement strategies that are meaningful to you and your life; and
- 5) Planning for how you can use these after the counselling has ended.

### Where will I meet the nurse counsellor and how many sessions can I have?

- We are not an on-going service.
- We offer 1-4 sessions with the Nurse Counsellor
- In Brisbane we offer F2F, telephone and video conferencing.
- In regional areas, we offer telephone and video conferencing.

### What happens in the first session?

At CCQ, we call your first session the 'intake session', where we will talk with you about:

- ✓ The purpose of the session – what do you want to get out of your time together?
- ✓ Ask you a 0-10 distress question, and talk with you about how you are managing and what support you might need.
- ✓ Provide you with, or provide access to, up-to-date cancer and/or treatment information.
- ✓ Help you make sense of your reactions to cancer (whether that is diagnosis, treatment, recurrence, survivorship, or something else that is relevant to your journey).
- ✓ Introduce helpful stress management and coping strategies that are most applicable to your life.
- ✓ Talk with you about other resources and encourage you to use the strategies outside of the call.