



## Relaunch of College Link Counsellor Programme

The Counselling Service has run a successful College Liaison Counsellor Programme for many years. As part of the initiatives to address the increasing demands and expectations of student welfare and support, as well as promoting good student mental health, we are re-launching this programme. The aim of this re-launch is to clarify what this programme can do to support colleges in their key role of supporting the welfare of students and also encourage closer collaboration between college welfare teams and the counselling service.

The link counsellor programme offers a named counsellor to develop a longer term working relationship and point of contact to every college to provide:

- Confidential consultation (on a no name basis if required) advice and information to any members of the college welfare team, or any senior members of the college, through meetings, telephone and e-mail conversations.
- Attendance at formal welfare committees.
- Attendance at more informal meetings of college welfare teams. This could be such things as specific 'case discussions' with the appropriate agreements on confidentiality. The purpose of this would be to create a co-ordinated support between college welfare provision, the Counselling Service and Disability Advisory Service where relevant.
- Input into presentations for the induction of new students or at presentations for students taking final exams.
- Advice on promoting self-help materials to promote student welfare and emotional resilience

The Counselling Service encourages regular contact (termly) between the designated senior member of the College responsible for College Welfare and the link counsellor.

The Counselling Service also encourages college nurses to attend 'Reflective Practice' groups facilitated by members of the Counselling Service to promote good practice across the colleges and increase professional development.

A training programme for College Welfare staff is being developed by members of the Counselling Service, such as a half day training on 'Dealing with Distressed Students'.

This programme does not preclude any College contacting the Counselling Service to seek advice and guidance about any confidential or urgent situation regarding the welfare or mental health of a student by requesting to speak with the duty counsellor, Head or Deputy Heads of Counselling. However, this programme is designed to build up a longer working partnership with a named clinician and the College Welfare team.

If you would like further information about this programme please contact the Head or Deputy Heads of Counselling.