

*The Irish Cancer Society provides a professional counselling service for patients (and/or their families and significant others) with all types of cancer and at all stages of their cancer journey*

*The Irish Cancer Society can be contacted on:*

DONEGAL SERVICE

087 6577741

DUBLIN SERVICE

087 2490890

087 2490949

CORK ARC, CANCER SUPPORT CENTRE

087 6891220

HOPE CANCER SUPPORT CENTRE, ENNISCORTHY

087 6852628

GARY KELLY CANCER SUPPORT CENTRE, DROGHEDA

087 1234598

MAYO CANCER SUPPORT CENTRE

087 2500382

PORTLAOISE CANCER SUPPORT CENTRE

087 9217037

LIMERICK CANCER SUPPORT CENTRE

087 9040504

NATIONAL CANCER HELPLINE, FREEFONE

1 800 200 700

Monday to Thursday 9am to 7pm/Friday 9am to 5pm

The Irish Cancer Society, 01 231 0500



counselling  
service

## what is counselling?

Counselling takes place when a counsellor and a client make an agreement to meet in a private and confidential setting to explore a difficulty or distress in the client's life. One very popular definition of counselling is that it is "helping people to help themselves". Do not expect the counsellor to give you instant and magic solutions but rather to work with you towards understanding your situation and finding your own solutions.

## why go for counselling?

Coping with a diagnosis of cancer can be devastating. Patients and their families may have difficulty coming to terms with the illness and can experience feelings such as anxiety, fear, anger, sadness and depression. These feelings can occur at any time during their cancer journey - possibly many months or years down the road. Many people feel they have a difficulty speaking to a close friend or relative. However, it is often very useful to speak to someone who is not personally involved. You may be able to express worries or concerns which you have to a counsellor that you do not wish others to know. Also, it can be difficult for people undergoing a stressful and emotional experience to talk to the people closest to them, as they may also be very upset. You may find it easier to talk to someone outside your immediate circle.



## how can counselling help?

A counsellor will be able to provide emotional support by allowing you express your feelings and fears. The counsellor will not tell you what to do, but counselling may help you see things differently and help you find your way through a difficult patch.

## does going to counselling mean admitting failure?

Paradoxically it can be seen as a matter of strength to go for counselling. Many people think that they are being strong in not seeking help whereas in fact those that can admit to their difficulties could be considered the strong ones. Going to counselling often means you have taken the first step on the road to resolving the problem.

## do I need to have serious difficulties before going to counselling?

NO! If you are finding it difficult to cope for whatever reason then going to counselling may be of benefit.

## does going to counselling mean "I'm losing it?"

NO! It means you are taking responsibility for your situation and trying to make things better.

## who is the counselling service for?

The service is available for patients, their family members and significant others (e.g. a close relative or friend). Most of the counselling will be on a one to one basis but sometimes may be appropriate to invite your spouse/partner/family member(s) or significant other along to counselling.

## how long will counselling last?

At the first session it will be decided between the counsellor and client how many sessions may be needed. The client will be offered up to a total of eight sessions in all. In some cases it may be possible to extend this. Each counselling session will last for one hour.

## how much does it cost?

The Irish Cancer Society will fund the costs of the counselling service and there will be no charge to the client.

## how do I make an appointment?

The counselling service can be contacted on the national cancer helpline on Freefone 1 800 200 700, 9.00am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday and Tuesday 9pm.

The Irish Cancer Society is the national charity for cancer care in Ireland. It is dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem and to improving the lives of those living with cancer. Each year almost 20,000 people in Ireland develop cancer. The Irish Cancer Society's focus is on the patient. What can we do to help improve the situation facing people with cancer and their families? This question has guided the introduction and development of our services which are constantly evolving to meet patient needs.

