



Staff counselling works



Qualitative research into the impact of counselling on staff experience of work and the workplace - current state of play
by **Mary Dailey**

Many HE and FE institutions provide staff counselling services, and these range from dedicated and discrete services located in Occupational Health or Human Resources, through provision integrated into student counselling services to employment assistance programme services that are 'bought in'.

The Staff Counselling SIG decided to 'piggy back' onto some qualitative research conducted by Patti Wallace, AUCC Lead Advisor, into the impact of counselling on retention and achievement in students.

The data for the research was collected through the routine post-counselling evaluation questionnaires that most services ask clients to complete. All services were asked to include the same four questions using a Likert scale for the responses plus two additional free text questions that allowed the client to say what had been helpful or not in the counselling. The data

collection period was 1 September 2011 - 31 December 2011.

The student questions were adapted for staff clients but similarly focussed on the impact of counselling in helping the client to remain at work and perform better in the workplace.

Data was provided by 14 universities and three FE colleges, in total there were 186 responses which were amalgamated into simple percentage totals and a short summary of the themes emerging from the free text responses was produced. These findings were circulated via the mailbases to the membership of AUCC. A summary of the findings is reproduced below.

- Of those who thought counselling had helped them to stay at work, 84 per cent considered it at least one of the factors involved and 59 per cent considered it an important or the most significant factor

- Of those who thought counselling had helped them do better at work, 83.5 per cent considered it at least one of the factors involved and 56.5 per cent considered it an important or the most significant factor

- Of those who thought counselling had improved their experience in the workplace, 82.5 per cent considered it at least one of the factors involved and 58.5 per cent considered it an important or the most significant factor

- 82 per cent of clients considered counselling to be at least one of the factors involved in developing useful self management skills for the workplace, and 67 per cent considered it an important or the most significant factor

For more information, a copy of the full report, comments and queries, contact Mary Dailey at m.f.dailey@bradford.ac.uk.

Staff counselling data results

	Not at all	To a limited extent	One of many factors	An important factor	The most significant factor	N/A
1. To what extent would you say that counselling has helped you to stay in work						
Percentage response of those who thought it helped	6%	10%	25%	43%	16%	
<i>Percentage response of those who did not think it a factor</i>						28%
2. To what extent would you say that counselling has helped you do better in your workplace?						
Percentage response of those who thought it helped	4%	12.5%	27%	46%	10.5%	
<i>Percentage response of those who did not think it a factor</i>						7%
3. To what extent would you say that counselling has improved your overall experience in the workplace?						
Percentage response of those who thought it helped	5.5%	12%	24%	42%	16.5%	
<i>Percentage response of those who did not think it a factor</i>						4%
4. To what extent would you say counselling has helped you develop skills that might be useful in the workplace (e.g. self -understanding, understanding of others, managing difficult feelings better)						
	5%	13%	15%	47%	20%	

Data collection 01/09/11 - 31/12/11

Total number of institutions (HE and FE): 14
Total number of clients seen (HE and FE): 555Total number of questionnaire sent: 364
Total responses: 186