

## LSICLG10

### Support and/or refer clients suffering from symptoms of physical illness when counselling



---

#### Overview

This unit is about recognising that the client's symptoms of physical illness may be indicative of their mental health. You will need to assess the on-going risk of the client and take appropriate action including referral to a General Practitioner where appropriate. You will be expected to encourage and support the client to access medical help where they are reluctant to do so. You will also be expected to enable the client to understand the way in which therapy may help him or her to overcome or manage their physical symptoms.

There is one element to this unit

1. Support clients suffering from symptoms of physical illness

This unit is relevant to those working in the following counselling contexts

1. Institutions
2. Statutory Services
3. VCS (Voluntary Community Sector Services)
4. Social Enterprises
5. Individual Practice
6. Commercial Enterprises

All units within the suite of National Occupational Standards for Counselling are not specific to any theoretical model.

## LSICLG10

### Support and/or refer clients suffering from symptoms of physical illness when counselling

---

#### Performance criteria

*You must be able to:*

- P1 recognise that symptoms of physical illness may be indicative of the mental health of the client
- P2 assess the on-going risk to the client with regard to physical and mental well-being and take appropriate action
- P3 recognise your limitations with regard to knowledge about physical health and refer to medically qualified persons
- P4 make an informed decision about referral to a General Practitioner for investigation of physical symptoms
- P5 fulfil ethical and organisational requirements with regard to the health and safety of clients by referring a client to his or her General Practitioner to have physical symptoms checked out
- P6 work with General Practitioners and other medical professionals to support clients who are in need of both medical and therapeutic help
- P7 encourage and support clients suffering from physical illness to access medical help when they are resistant to doing so
- P8 enable the client to understand how mental illness can affect physical health and the way in which therapy may help him or her to overcome or manage physical symptoms
- P9 support the client in his or her understanding of why he or she might have been referred for therapy by a General Practitioner instead of being offered medical treatment of symptoms
- P10 explore with the client ways of coping with stress-related illnesses including relaxation exercises, deep breathing techniques and visualisation techniques where appropriate
- P11 enable clients who have difficulty discussing issues because of cultural or societal taboos to talk about them in the therapeutic relationship
- P12 use supervision to sustain you when supporting clients through terminal illness and major surgical procedures
- P13 recognise and work with clients with issues of loss resulting from infertility or from major surgical procedures
- P14 work as part of a team when supporting clients who suffer from physical ill health

## LSICLG10

### Support and/or refer clients suffering from symptoms of physical illness when counselling

---

#### Knowledge and understanding

*You need to know and understand:*

- K1 the way in which mental illness and the way in which mental illness impacts on physical health and well-being
- K2 the specific role and functions of primary care multi-disciplinary teams, including General Practitioners, and the provision of advice and intervention with regard to both physical and mental health needs
- K3 signs and symptoms of physical illness that need to be checked out by a General Practitioner
- K4 systems of referral to General Practitioners, whether or not the client is registered with a General Practitioner
- K5 physical symptoms of illness that require immediate attention and the appropriateness of referral to an Accident and Emergency Department
- K6 symptoms of physical illness commonly present in individuals suffering from stress, anxiety, depression or other mental health disorders
- K7 the effects of stress and other common mental health disorders on the body and ways in which symptoms can be ameliorated by relaxation and deep breathing techniques
- K8 physical symptoms that are commonly associated with developmental stages, such as puberty and menopause, and their impact on mental well-being
- K9 ways in which gender, age, culture and disability impact upon an individual's ability to talk about sexual disease and dysfunction
- K10 the bereavement process and its effect on physical and mental health
- K11 the impact of terminal illness on the mental health of individuals and those around them
- K12 how and when to support the client in seeking medical help for problems where physical ill health is apparent
- K13 physical symptoms caused by substance misuse
- K14 side effects associated with drugs commonly prescribed for the alleviation of mental health problems
- K15 how to access information relating to appropriate resources for the treatment of specific disease and dysfunction
- K16 working in multi-disciplinary settings when working with clients suffering from physical and mental ill health

## LSICLG10

Support and/or refer clients suffering from symptoms of physical illness when counselling

---

**Developed by** LSIS

---

**Version number** 1

---

**Date approved** September 2007

---

**Indicative review date** September 2009

---

**Validity** Current

---

**Status** Original

---

**Originating organisation** ENTO

---

**Original URN** CLG10 v4

---

**Relevant occupations** Health, Public Services and Care; Health and Social Care; Child Development and Well Being; Associate Professionals and Technical Occupations; Education and training; Preparation for life and work; Health and Social Services Officers; Health Associate Professionals; Therapists; Social Welfare Associate Professionals; Healthcare and Related Personal Services; Childcare and Related Personal Services

---

**Suite** Counselling National Occupational Standards v4

---

**Key words** support, refer, clients, symptoms, physical, illness, counselling

---