

## **Counselling Network Referrer Guidelines**

Cancer Council WA (CCWA) partners with qualified counsellors to provide short term counselling to people whose lives have been affected by cancer. The CCWA Counselling Network has members across both metropolitan and regional WA.

Other specialist services may also be appropriate for your client. These include the WA Psycho-Oncology Service (ph. 9382 7480) and the Breast Cancer Clinical Psychology Service (ph. 9224 1629).

### **1. Who is eligible for this service?**

Clients eligible for this service are:

- Cancer patients
- Spouse/defacto/Significant other
- Family members
- Carers

*\*Clients can only be referred up to 2 years post diagnosis*

### **2. What does this service offer?**

- The referred client(s) is eligible for up to 4 one hour sessions only.
- While CCWA acknowledges the possibility of co-morbidity for people experiencing cancer, it is expected that the main focus of counselling sessions will be on alleviating the burden/distress of a cancer diagnosis.
- Due to the short-term nature of counselling sessions from CCWA, if there is suspected mental health condition it is expected that the counsellor would refer to an appropriate mental health professional or back to the treating physician. It could also be suggested that the person seek a referral to their GP for a Medicare-assisted Mental Health Care Plan.

### **3. Who will pay for the sessions?**

- Counselling sessions are offered at minimal or no cost to the client. This program is funded wholly by generous community donations.

### **4. How do I refer?**

- Ask your patient to call our cancer nurses on 13 11 20 or your local CCWA Regional Cancer Support Co-ordinator. A qualified and experienced oncology nurse will discuss the client's needs and assess their suitability of CCWA funded counselling. If appropriate, a counsellor will be matched to the client based on location, specific need, or availability.
- Referrals will be forwarded to the counsellor within 1-2 working days and the counsellor will liaise with the client and notify 13 11 20. Clients who are not suitable or cannot be matched to a counsellor will be asked to follow up with their medical team for a referral to a more appropriate service.