Counselling by a psychologist for Mental Health issues

The clinic applies a multimodal clinical approach to assessment and intervention. Counselling services are provided by registered psychologists. Psychologists are registered with AHPRA. Our counselling services from a psychologist focus on promoting life skills, healthy brain function, and general wellbeing in children, adolescents, and adults either in person at the clinic or by Telehealth (Zoom). The following is a list of counselling modalities used along with a brief account of their usefulness. The modality used is tailored to the specific needs of each client

Looking for counselling for ADHD related issues please read more about ADHD therapy options

Counselling modalities

1. Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) CBT is one of the most widely researched and evidence-based modalities. It focusses on identifying and restructuring unhelpful thought patterns and associated behaviours. CBT has a strong evidence base across a range of conditions, including depression, anxiety, and mood disorders. It's particularly valued for its structured approach and ability to produce measurable, lasting change (research.com).

2. Psychodynamic Therapy Rooted in Freudian theory, psychodynamic therapy explores unconscious processes and past experiences that shape current behaviour. It's especially useful for those seeking insight into deep-seated emotional issues and patterns, and has demonstrated efficacy in treating depression and personality

disorders (cuny.edu).

3. Humanistic therapy encompasses several approaches, most notably Person-Centered Therapy developed by Carl Rogers, which emphasises unconditional positive regard, empathy, and the therapeutic relationship. Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a related framework within humanistic psychology (research.com). You may recognise Maslow's hierarchy of needs diagram below courtesy of Wikipedia.

4. Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT) SFBT is goal-oriented and concentrates on finding practical solutions in the present and future, rather than dwelling on past problems. Its brevity and focus on strengths make it well-suited for clients seeking quick, actionable change (cuny.edu).

5. Motivational Interviewing (MI) MI is a collaborative, client-centered approach designed to elicit and strengthen motivation for change, especially in individuals struggling with ambivalence (such as those with substance use issues). Research supports its effectiveness in improving treatment adherence and outcomes (AJN The American Journal of Nursing).

6. Family and Couples Therapy These modalities address relational dynamics and are effective for families and couples experiencing conflict, communication breakdowns, or systemic issues. Approaches like Structural Family Therapy and Emotionally Focused Therapy have strong evidence bases (research.com).

Usefulness and Effectiveness Meta-analyses suggest that the effectiveness of a modality often depends on factors like the therapist/client therapeutic relationship, client preference, and the specific issue being treated. Combined treatments (e.g., medication plus counselling) may outperform single-modality approaches, particularly for complex conditions like depression (Health Services Insights). Overall, evidence-based modalities such as CBT, MI, and structured family interventions have robust support across diverse populations (research.com). These modalities represent the core options available to clients, each with demonstrated strengths for particular populations or clinical concerns.

How Counselling Can Help?

Counselling aims to assist in dealing with a range of difficult issues, from day-to-day concerns to more serious and long-term psychological problems. Counselling can help you gain a greater understanding of your feelings and help you make positive changes in your life. It can also help you set realistic goals for the future and turn those goals into actions. You will be expected to be an active participant in your therapy and may be given ‘homework’ as part of your behavioural change plan. Our therapeutic approach emphasises your strengths in achieving your desired outcomes.

Counselling for Depression, Anxiety and Sleep Problems

Depression, anxiety and sleep difficulties are among the most common reasons people seek counselling, and they frequently occur together. Our psychologists tailor evidence-based counselling to each of these concerns.

Counselling for Depression

Depression can affect mood, energy, motivation, sleep, concentration and self-worth. Common signs include persistent sadness or emptiness, loss of interest in activities you once enjoyed, fatigue, changes in appetite or sleep, difficulty concentrating, and feelings of worthlessness or guilt.

Counselling for depression at BNC draws primarily on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), which helps identify and shift the unhelpful thought patterns and behaviours that maintain low mood, together with Behavioural Activation, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), and Interpersonal or Family Therapy where relevant. Combined treatment (counselling alongside medical management, where appropriate) can be more effective than either approach alone for moderate to severe depression.

If you are experiencing thoughts of suicide or self-harm, please contact Lifeline on 13 11 14, or call 000 in an emergency.

Counselling for Anxiety

Anxiety disorders include generalised anxiety, social anxiety, panic disorder, specific phobias and health anxiety. Symptoms can be psychological (persistent worry, irritability, difficulty concentrating, avoidance) and physical (a racing heart, muscle tension, restlessness, and sleep disturbance).

Our counselling for anxiety uses Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), the most researched and evidence-based treatment for anxiety disorders, together with graded exposure, relaxation and mindfulness-based strategies, and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) where appropriate. Sessions focus on understanding what maintains anxious thinking and avoidance, and building practical skills to manage worry and the physical symptoms of anxiety.

Counselling for Sleep Disorders

Ongoing sleep problems — difficulty falling asleep, frequent waking, early waking, or poor-quality sleep — can significantly affect mood, concentration and overall wellbeing, and are frequently linked with depression, anxiety and ADHD.

Where insomnia or another sleep disorder is contributing to your difficulties, counselling can include Cognitive Behavioural Therapy for Insomnia (CBT-I), the leading evidence-based, non-medication treatment for chronic insomnia. CBT-I addresses the thoughts, habits and routines that disrupt sleep, and is often combined with broader treatment for any underlying depression, anxiety or ADHD symptoms contributing to poor sleep.

Support for Counselling at BNC

Referrals & Rebates

You can access counselling at BNC through referrals from parents, carers, GPs, schools, or other health professionals. Under the Australian Medicare system, you

may be eligible for Medicare rebates for up to 10 sessions per calendar year if you have a referral and a Mental Health Care Plan (MHCP) from your GP, or a referral from a paediatrician or psychiatrist. Rebates may also be available through your private health fund, but eligibility varies—check with your insurer for details. Please note that Medicare fee rebates and session numbers are subject to changes from the Australian Government, check with your Medical referrer for details.

Gap fees apply— contact the clinic for current price list.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can counselling help with depression?+

Yes. Counselling — particularly Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and Behavioural Activation — is a well-established, evidence-based treatment for depression. Many clients notice improvement within several sessions, though the right length of treatment depends on the severity and duration of symptoms.

How does counselling help with anxiety?+

Counselling for anxiety helps you understand what maintains anxious thinking and avoidance, and builds practical, evidence-based skills — such as CBT techniques, graded exposure and relaxation strategies — to reduce worry and manage physical symptoms like a racing heart or muscle tension.

Can a psychologist help with sleep problems or insomnia?+

Yes. Psychologists can provide Cognitive Behavioural Therapy for Insomnia (CBT-I), which is considered the first-line, evidence-based treatment for chronic insomnia. This is particularly useful where sleep problems are linked with depression, anxiety or ADHD.

Do I need a referral for counselling at BNC?+

A referral is not required to book, but a referral and Mental Health Care Plan (MHCP) from your GP, or a referral from a paediatrician or psychiatrist, may make you eligible for Medicare rebates for up to 10 sessions per calendar year.

Is counselling for depression, anxiety or sleep problems covered by Medicare?+

It can be. With a valid referral and Mental Health Care Plan, Medicare rebates are available for eligible counselling sessions, subject to current Australian Government rules. Rebates may also be available through your private health fund — check your policy for details.

How many counselling sessions will I need?+

This varies by person and presenting concern. Some clients see meaningful change within a handful of sessions, while more complex or long-standing difficulties may benefit from an extended course of therapy. Your psychologist will discuss an appropriate plan with you.

Nutritional Support

The Australian National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) sets out clear nutrition guidelines, emphasising the importance of consuming a wide variety of foods from the five key groups to meet the population's nutritional needs and reduce the risk of chronic disease (NHMRC). Despite these guidelines, research has highlighted that many Australians still experience nutrient deficiencies, which have been associated with a higher risk of both physical diseases and mental health disorders (Starck et al., 2024; Shepherd & Gibson, 2013). Australian studies have also found links between inadequate nutrient intake and the prevalence of common mental disorders in women, reinforcing the critical role of nutrition in both physical and mental well-being (Jacka et al., 2012).

Australian clinical guidelines for ADHD and ASD recommend that when clinically indicated, clinicians consider lifestyle, dietary and nutritional factors as part of a multimodal treatment plan . When a psychologist considers nutritional factors may be relevant to a client's presentation, referral to a dietitian or nutritionist for individualised dietary assessment may be recommended as one component of a broader treatment plan.

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