



Our history

St Barnabas Counselling Centre is a Norwich-based charity with a 50-year history of providing high-quality mental healthcare. Established in 1974, we are deeply rooted in one of the UK's most deprived communities. Our mission is to intervene in the cycle of health inequality by delivering long-term therapy and psychoeducation to help clients build resilience and stability. As a BACP-accredited centre, we currently deliver approximately 400 therapy sessions per month through the dedication of our 30 volunteer therapists.

How your grant is supporting our work

The generous BHMT grant of £1,000 is being used to facilitate specialised continuing professional development (CPD) sessions for our volunteer therapists, many of whom are paying expensive tuition fees to study and enter the profession, so find it hard to meet the cost of additional training, despite its many benefits.

So far, we have used your funding to support four therapists in attending a CPD workshop held in August, entitled 'Growing Dignity with Refugees and People Seeking Asylum: Despair, Hope and Beyond'. This was hosted by Dr Ian Percy, an Australia-based therapist, supervisor, consultant, trainer and published author.

This workshop and follow-up supervision sessions explored how narrative therapy approaches can be transformative in meeting the complex needs of our clients who are asylum seekers, refugees, and migrants (ARM). The demand for this service continues to rise at a rapid rate, in tandem with the need for specialised training for our counsellors.

We host CPD sessions three or four times per year, and your donation will be used to support therapists to attend each of these.

Areas of mental health addressed

We offer the region's only bespoke counselling offer for asylum seekers, refugees and migrants (ARM), recognising that mainstream NHS Talking Therapies are often too brief and non-relational to work effectively with the complex trauma needs of this group, whose presenting problems include PTSD, displacement, chronic anxiety and/or depression, and grief, along with many others.

Impact of the project

In 2025 we saw 47 ARM clients (an 88 per cent increase from 2024). Each is offered 12-15 free sessions with one of our therapists - who receive dedicated training in culturally inclusive and trauma-informed working - and an interpreter if needed. Your grant has so far enabled four therapists to be better equipped to undertake this vital and challenging work, and the remaining funds will likewise be used to support those experiencing financial challenges to access our training opportunities, regardless of income.

Anonymised feedback from our clients

“My nightmares have stopped. I feel a lot calmer. By discussing a traumatic event I have managed to sleep without nightmares.”

“A great reduction in anxiety and grief. A much-increased understanding of my problems. I do not feel I could have experienced more skilled, informed and supportive care than I have received over the last eighteen months. St Barnabas has indeed offered a safe and caring space in which to explore the grief and pain associated with my earlier life. I recognise that I have reached a new turning point and, hopefully with continued but different guidance and support I will find a happier future.”