

Fact Sheet

Why see a sexual health counsellor.

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Why see a sexual health counsellor?

If you have concerns about anything relating to sex then a sexual health counsellor may be able to help. You might want to talk about things like:

- sexual orientation
- sexual practices
- relationship issues
- sexual abuse or having been sexually assaulted
- sexually transmissible infections (also called STIs or STDs)
- blood Borne Virus (BBV) including HIV, Hep B & Hep C

Sometimes past experiences have a big impact on how someone feels about his or her sexuality. It can affect relationships with other people.

If you are anxious about something it can help to talk.

Who can see a sexual health counsellor?

Anyone can ask to see a sexual health counsellor. A doctor, midwife or nurse may also recommend that you see a counsellor

This could be for:

- pre-test counselling, if you have been diagnosed with a STI
- if you need more information or education

What do sexual health counsellors do?

Counselling is about having someone to talk to while you work through any sexual health issues.

Sexual health counsellors may see you once, twice or many times, depending on the issue. Counselling is not about someone telling you what to do, or having a magic answer for you.



Sexual health counsellors do not cover all types of counselling and may suggest that you go to another service that is more specialised or appropriate for your concerns.

Pre-test counselling

Pre-test counselling gives you information on the sexual health tests planned, and a chance to discuss what the possible results may mean for you.

Pre-test counselling is also a chance to consider whether your sexual activities could lead to an infection such as HIV or chlamydia. We encourage you to reduce your level of risk for STIs.

Seeing a counsellor can be a chance to ask yourself some questions. These may include "*why am I doing things that are risky?*" or "*how do I protect myself?*"

It can also be a time to plan how you may reduce your risk of a STI. By talking with a sexual health counsellor you can plan for safer sex in the future.

Being diagnosed with STI

If you are diagnosed with an STI, it is recommended that you see a counsellor as you may have issues to discuss. Some common questions are:

- how did I catch it?
- who from?
- has someone caught it from me?
- how do I tell them?
- what about the future?
- how serious is it?
- can it be cured?

Each person has different issues and options. It is important to have a chance to talk over your concerns.

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Contact tracing

Contact tracing involves contacting people who may have been exposed to a STI or blood borne virus. If you are diagnosed with a STI, the doctor or health care worker will talk with you about how long you may have had this STI and who you have had sexual contact with during this time. This is so the doctor can determine who may also need to be screened for a STI.

For a blood borne virus, such as Hepatitis C the contacts will be people with whom you may have shared injecting equipment.

Western Sydney Sexual Health Centre
Jeffery House
162 Marsden Street Parramatta
02 9843 3124
Mon, Tues & Fri 0900 am - 0400 pm
Weds 1000 am - 0400 pm
Thurs 0400 pm - 0700 pm (appointment only)

Kelly Close Services
Kelly Close Mt Drutt - 02 9881 1206
Mon 0900 am – 0400 pm
Weds & Fri 0900 am – 0100 pm

We welcome further feedback on this brochure as a way of continually improving our service.

Send your feedback to:

WSLHD-Get_Involved@health.nsw.gov.au