

Dear ACC Accredited Counsellors, Managers and Supervisors

As part of our contingency planning for the potential impact of Coronavirus on our members and staff we have considered the risk of counsellors being temporarily without the support of a supervisor and the related risk that key people in ACC, who would normally respond to ethical concerns and practice issues, might be unavailable due to ill health.

We thought that one way to mitigate against both risks is to ask our accredited members if they would be willing to be placed on an emergency 'Standby Support' contact list that the office would be able to reference when a counsellor calls in looking for support and advice. The idea would be to connect you with any counselling member, who needed to consult an experienced counsellor or supervisor about client concerns, or wanted to talk through an ethical concern, or if for any other reason they needed support or advice.

We have not finalised the details, but it's likely that

- The arrangement would be ad-hoc and for the duration of the Coronavirus disruption which could be for several months
- Any guidance, support, help you give will be on a best endeavours basis and there will be no professional liability attached
- Workload (which is as yet unknown quantity) will be shared amongst the volunteers
- Normal protocols with regard to client confidentiality will be observed
- You will be able to consult with another volunteer at your request if you want a second opinion in order to best assist the counsellor
- You remain free to opt out of volunteering at any point

In terms of process, it's likely that the office team will have hold summary details of you on a Standby List. For example, these might include whether you practice as a supervisor, and any areas of specialism that you have. When an enquiry comes into the office from a counsellor in need of help, the team will consult the list, select someone, check their availability and provide information about the request to them. If you are the person approached, you can decide whether you are in a position to offer help, and you can also check that there are no relational issues/conflicts of interest etc with the counsellor making the request. You can then contact the counsellor with a view to helping them resolve the issue or support a client.

ACC ability to offer advice, support and a listening ear is one of the most valuable services that we provide. We believe it would be a great help if counsellors knew that there was a resource pool that they could turn to if their normal supervisory and ethical advisory support was not available.

If you are interested in volunteering for this service, please reply to [office@acc-uk.org](mailto:office@acc-uk.org). Declaring an interest at this stage does not imply any subsequent commitment to volunteering.

Thank you and best wishes

Kathy Spooner  
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