

POLICY: Counselling & Support Centre

Policy Group(s): Group G Human Resource Management – 2. Wellbeing (G2/0920)

Related Policy(s): Working with Children and Vulnerable Adults

Risk Assessment

Workplace Health and Safety

Privacy

Commencement Date: September 2020

Scheduled Review Date: September 2025

POLICY STATEMENT

Intent:

The purpose of this policy is to identify appropriate practices for the use of CHC's Counselling and Support Centre by:

- CHC students who wish to access free counselling.
- CHC counselling students who wish to use the Centre as part of their practicum placement for counselling sessions they conduct with other CHC students, (excluding CHC counselling students), and members of the public.
- Members of the public who wish to access low fee counselling.
- Private practitioners who wish to hire the rooms for their own personal practice.

CHC is committed to providing a safe therapeutic environment for clients whilst assisting students to develop appropriate skills and attitudes to resolve problems in academic, psychological, emotional and social contexts. The CHC Counselling & Support Centre is a key initiative that supports and promotes mental health, physical health and wellbeing.

This policy articulates a range of the requirements and expectations and links them to processes and procedures that ensures the student's counselling practicum meets the PACFA Training Standards (2018).

Objectives:

1. To describe the functions of the CHC Counselling and Support Centre relating to student use.
2. To describe the functions of the CHC Counselling and Support Centre relating to private counsellor use.
3. To outline the conditions for CHC counselling students when counselling other CHC students.
4. To outline the conditions for CHC counselling students after completing their course requirements and desiring to begin to build a private practice at the CHC Counselling and Support Centre.

5. To outline client transition arrangements for CHC students from being a CHC counselling practicum student to being a CHC graduated counsellor beginning to build a private practice.

Policy Provisions:

1. General

The functions of the CHC Counselling and Support Centre are as follows:

1. To provide a venue for CHC students to acquire counselling practicum hours to fulfil the practicum requirements of the Bachelor of Counselling/ Master of Counselling courses in which they are enrolled.
2. Students in the Bachelor of Human Services may use the rooms for recording of interviews with approval from the Counselling Practicum Supervisor.
3. To provide free counselling for CHC Bachelor of Counselling/Master of Counselling students who desire to complete their practicum observation requirements of 30 hours of personal counselling. This counselling is to be conducted with approved clinically registered counsellors (PACFA).
4. To provide free counselling for other students at CHC where no dual role relationship exists.
5. To provide low-cost counselling for people in the local community as an outreach service.
6. To provide a low-cost venue for graduated students to build a private counselling practice.
7. To provide reasonably priced rooms for people-helping professionals.

2. Counselling Student practicum requirements

- 2.1. CHC counselling students who choose to make the CHC Counselling Centre one of their practicum placements must:
 - 2.1.1. Be enrolled in a unit of study with attached counselling practicum requirements.
 - 2.1.2. Successfully progress within the course in which they are enrolled.
 - 2.1.3. Notify the Counselling Practicum Supervisor of their intent to do practicum at the centre.
 - 2.1.4. Complete the required documentation.
 - 2.1.5. Notify the Supervisor of Counselling Services (hereafter referred to as the Centre Supervisor) and make an appointment for an induction.
 - 2.1.6. Attend and complete the induction.
 - 2.1.7. Display professional conduct at all times, regarding the employment, legal, moral, ethical and social standards for counsellors and reflective of the PACFA code of ethics (www.pacfa.org.au/ethical-standards).
 - 2.1.8. Follow, at all times, the requirements set out in the *Student Counsellor Induction Manual*.
- 2.2. The Centre Supervisor will notify the counselling practicum student of clients as per the *Guidelines for Allocating Clients to Student Counsellors in the CHC Counselling and Support Centre*.
- 2.3. CHC counselling students fulfilling practicum hours as student counsellors in the CHC Centre will not accept a fee for the counselling of CHC students. This service is provided free to CHC students.

3. Provision of free counselling for CHC counselling students to fulfil the Pre Prac preparation of personal counselling requirements

- 3.1. CHC counselling students fulfilling practicum hours as student counsellors in the CHC Centre must abide by the CHC Counselling and Support Centre guidelines regarding dual relationships and referring clients (covered in *Student Counsellor Induction Manual* and *Dual Relationship Guidelines*).

- 3.2. Counselling of counselling students must not be performed by other counselling students. CHC will provide suitably qualified and registered clinical counsellors for this service.

4. To provide low-cost counselling for those in the community seeking counselling

- 4.1. CHC counselling students fulfilling practicum hours as student counsellors in the CHC Centre will collect a fee on behalf of the CHC Counselling and Support Centre from clients who are not CHC students. Fees are set by CHC's Schedule of Fees and the student may not withhold any part of this fee.
- 4.2. EFTPOS facilities will be made available in the Counselling Centre to accept payment.

5. Graduating counselling students

- 5.1. When CHC counselling students are nearing graduation from the course in which they are enrolled, they will inform their clients that they are graduating and uphold the given *Guidelines for Transitioning Clients Well* which is provided by the Centre Supervisor.
- 5.2. CHC students who are receiving counselling will be given the option of transitioning to another student counsellor as soon as possible or to restart with a new student counsellor at the beginning of the next college semester.
- 5.3. The graduating counselling student may choose to keep seeing non-CHC clients (once they have graduated and taken out their own professional indemnity insurance) or to transition them to another CHC student counsellor. Should they choose to retain the client, the fee that is received from the client may be retained by the student with the understanding that a small fee will be charged for the room hire according to the *Schedule of Fees* set by CHC.

6. To provide venue for graduated counselling students to begin a private practice

- 6.1. When CHC counselling students successfully graduate from the course in which they are enrolled, they may continue to use the Centre rooms at a small flat fee.
- 6.2. They must first make an appointment to meet with the Supervisor of Counselling Services, complete the appropriate paperwork (contract to be signed by the CHC Finance Manager).
- 6.3. The Counsellor must arrange their own professional indemnity insurance as well as be working towards joining a reputable counselling association (e.g. PACFA). Evidence of the insurance must be provided to the Supervisor prior to being able to use the rooms.

7. To provide a cost-effective venue hire for counselling rooms

- 7.1. As part of CHC's community engagement and fostering of the Christian Counselling profession, CHC provides a low-cost room hire for private practitioners where available.
- 7.2. Private practitioners enter into a contract with CHC for room hire once they have provided evidence of qualifications, professional registration and professional indemnity insurance.
- 7.3. The centre supervisor may refer clients to a private practitioner based on client requests and area of need. Private practitioners also source their own clients.
- 7.4. Private practitioners may set their own fees for their services except where there is an agreement between CHC, and the practitioner set out in writing and agreed to by both parties.
- 7.5. Private practitioners will collect payment from their own clients themselves and pay the hire fee for the rooms as per the contract with CHC.
- 7.6. The Centre Supervisor may refuse to hire rooms/terminate a contract with a practitioner at any stage, if:
 - 7.6.1. Their insurance has lapsed, and updated evidence has not been provided.
 - 7.6.2. There are outstanding invoices for the hire of the rooms.
 - 7.6.3. A reasonable complaint is made by a client.

7.7. The room hire fee is set by CHC and is available on the *Schedule of Fees*. This can be found listed on the contract.

8. Counselling

- 8.1. Referrals are not needed in order to access counselling at CHC's Counselling and Support Centre.
- 8.2. The services can be accessed by all students and the wider community simply by contacting the counselling centre direct by email or phone.
- 8.3. Initiatives to ensure awareness and accessibility of the CHC's counselling services to the CHC Community include:
 - 8.3.1. Training all staff as to the nature and availability of the services.
 - 8.3.2. Providing contact details for counselling services on the CHC website.
 - 8.3.3. Providing details of counselling services in both student and staff handbooks.
 - 8.3.4. Providing staff and students with information regarding counselling services at orientation/induction.
- 8.4. Occasionally referrals will be made by Counsellors to external professionals such as doctors or psychiatrists. This may be the case depending on the nature of the required intervention or the degree of involvement required. Referrals may also be made to external counselling services where appropriate. If a student counsellor considers that a referral may be needed, the student must consult with the Centre Practicum Supervisor.

9. Confidentially

- 9.1. All counsellors and student counsellors must maintain client confidentiality when collecting, recording, storing, disseminating, and disposing of information as per CHC's [Privacy Policy](#). However, a counsellor/student counsellor cannot keep confidential any information that reveals a risk of harm to the student or to any other person. If there is a risk of harm, the Centre Practicum Supervisor must be informed, and appropriate measures will be taken.

10. Records

- 10.1. Appropriate records must be maintained including details of the client's name, the date of each session, those present at the session and a brief summary of the main issues discussed.
- 10.2. All records written by student counsellors remain the property of CHC. All records written by professional counsellors remain the property of the individual counsellor.

11. Appointment and Cancellation

- 11.1. All appointments are made using the Power Diary system which each individual counsellor enters by logging in with their own personal login details. This system allows cancellations to be entered and this is done by each individual counsellor once notified. If a client does not show up or notify their student counsellor more than 3 times then, in consultation with the Centre Supervisor, that client is notified that no further sessions can be scheduled. Individual qualified practitioners administer any cancellation fee that applies to their counselling contracts.

12. Timeliness and access to service

- 12.1. The Centre is currently managed on a part-time basis and responses to requests for counselling will be done so in a timely manner, however this may take up to 72 hours. Requests for urgent counselling appointments cannot be guaranteed, however, urgent requests are given priority wherever possible. A referral may be made to Gateway Counselling Services or other appropriate mental health service as required if it is determined that the Centre is unable to cater for the needs of a particular client.

13. Working with children processes – blue card requirements

- 13.1. All counselling students must hold a blue card as part of their practicum requirements and are unable to commence their practicum until this is in place.

SUPPORTING PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

CHC Counselling and Support Centre Practicum Student Induction Manual

- * *Guidelines for the hiring of CHC counselling and Support Centre rooms*
- * *Guidelines for Allocating Clients to Student Counsellors in the CHC Counselling and Support Centre*
- * *Guidelines for Transitioning Clients Well*
- * *Counselling and Support Centre Student Induction Manual*
- * *Dual Relationship Guidelines*
- * *Schedule of Fees*
- * *Critical incidents*
- * *Duress alarms*

RELEVANT COMMONWEALTH/STATE LEGISLATION

Nil.

WHO SHOULD KNOW THIS POLICY?

Supervisor of Counselling Services

Counselling Practicum Manager CHC School of Social Sciences

Course Coordinators CHC School of Social Sciences

Lecturers – CHC School of Social Sciences

Counselling Practicum Students – CHC School of Social Sciences

DEFINITIONS

Nil.

ACRONYMS

CHC

Christian Heritage College

ACCOUNTABILITY

Implementation:	Dean, Social Science
Compliance:	Dean, Social Science
Monitoring & Evaluations:	Dean, Social Science
Development/Review:	Dean, Social Science
Approval Authority:	CEO/President
Interpretation & Advice:	Dean, Social Science

APPROVAL – section maintained by the Registrar

Reference No.	Approved	Date	Committee/Board	Resolution No. / Minute Ref.
G2/0920	Approved	29/09/2020	CEO	

REVISION HISTORY – section maintained by the Registrar

Revision Reference No.	Approved/Rescinded	Date	Committee/Board	Resolution No. / Minute Ref.