



Copayment scheme: Frequently Asked Questions

Why are you now charging £20 per counselling session?

Until **May 2026**, most of our counselling services¹ were free to everyone. Unfortunately, we can no longer sustain this model.

After **30 years of NHS grant funding**, that funding has now come to an end. At the same time, we are experiencing **rising costs and increasing demand** for our services. To ensure we can continue supporting as many people as possible, we have introduced a **£20 contribution per counselling session**.

This change helps us protect the future of our counselling service and reduce waiting times, while remaining true to our charitable mission.

Is £20 the full cost of a counselling session?

No. It costs the charity **around £50 to provide a single counselling session** once therapist fees, supervision, safeguarding, premises, and support costs are included.

The £20 charge covers **less than half of the true cost**. The remaining amount continues to be funded through donations, fundraising, and other limited grants.

Why do I have to pay £20 for a missed session?

If a session is missed without **at least 48 hours' notice**, a £20 fee is charged. This helps cover the cost of the time that has been set aside for you and ensures we can continue to offer our service to all clients. We appreciate your understanding.

What about people on low incomes?

We strongly believe that **ability to pay should never be a barrier to accessing support**.

If you are on a **low income or experiencing financial hardship**, you may still be eligible for **free or reduced-cost counselling**. Counselling will remain free of charge for clients on low income and clients can qualify by providing **any one** of the following:

- Universal Credit award notice

¹ Except for Options which is our chargeable service



- Income Support
- Employment and Support Allowance (income-related ESA)
- Jobseeker's Allowance (income-based JSA)
- Housing Benefit
- Pension Credit (Guarantee Credit)

Acceptable format

- Recent letter (paper or digital PDF)
- Screenshot of online UC journal / account showing name and date

Are any services still free?

Yes. Some of our services **remain completely free**, including:

- **Victim Counselling Service**
- **Children and young people's services**

These services continue to be fully funded because of their critical importance and specific funding arrangements.

Why couldn't the service continue to be free for everyone?

We explored multiple options before deciding to introduce a charge. However:

- The **loss of long-standing NHS funding**
- A **significant increase in demand**
- And **rising operational costs**

meant that continuing to offer all counselling sessions for free would risk the long-term survival of the service. Introducing a modest charge allows us to remain open, support more people overall, and maintain safe, high-quality care.

How does paying £20 help the charity?

By contributing £20 per session (where affordable), clients help us to:

- Keep waiting lists shorter
- Maintain professional, high-quality counselling



- Offer free sessions to those who need them most
- Sustain the service for future years

Every contribution directly supports others in the community.

Our commitment

We remain committed to:

- **Compassionate, accessible counselling**
- **No-one being turned away due to low income**
- **Transparency about why this change was necessary**
- **Securing new grants and contracts to enable us to provide free or low cost counselling and other therapeutic interventions to as many people as possible.**

Other sources of help

Whilst we strive to offer an accessible and professional counselling service to as many people as possible, we appreciate that what we offer is not right for everyone.

Our professional body, the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy maintains a helpful directory to help people find the right therapist for them. Please see link below. The average cost of a counselling in private practice in North Yorkshire is in the range of £45 to £65.

<https://www.bacp.co.uk/search/Therapists>