

# MHA Counselling & Information

ACIS · ACIS YOUTH · BANFF & BUCHAN · CALSAYSEAT · ONE TO ONE · QUARRY CENTRE · STISH  
TORRY ADULTS · TORRY TALK · ABERDEENSHIRE MENTAL HEALTH HELPLINE

Disabling levels of anxiety and stress may result from life events such as bereavement, divorce or redundancy or from difficulties in personal relationships, working life or childhood.

When thoughts and feelings about such issues seem too much to cope with, then even the most confident and capable individual may need skilled help from our highly trained counsellors.

It's not always easy to accept that help is needed but counselling can make the difference between sick-leave or employment and success at work, or between family break-up and a positive family life. The courage it takes to seek and accept help can be rewarded many times over.

Our counsellors cannot give people the answers but can help them to take a fresh look at issues with their skilled guidance and to develop a fresh perspective and improved coping strategy. This process, in a calm atmosphere with assurances of confidentiality, empowers people to find new approaches to their difficulties and to build confidence and self esteem. There is solid evidence from independent evaluations that MHA's counselling services are effective.



**ACIS 25th Anniversary**, Christine MacLean, Lord Provost Peter Stephen, Frances Corbett (left to right)

Historically, MHA has provided counselling services for adults. For some time it has been clear that children and young people also have significant needs which can be addressed through counselling. We are delighted to have secured short term funding to establish our ACIS Youth Counselling Service to respond to this need. The effectiveness of this service is already evident and we are seeking longer term funding to secure its future.

This success was a fitting way to mark the 25th Anniversary of our counselling service ACIS. We also took the opportunity to celebrate this landmark with a party, a great opportunity to thank all concerned and in particular the skilled and committed volunteers whose contribution is so vital to us.

*demand for counselling has increased during this period of recession*



Demand for counselling has increased during this period of recession and there is now unfortunately a considerable waiting list for our services. We need additional funding to train and support more volunteer counsellors to respond to this expressed need, to avoid the additional distress caused by waiting for help that is often urgent and desperately needed.

Our free counselling services operate at a variety of venues in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire and are widely accessible to the people in the North East of Scotland.

Sometimes, good quality information is sufficient to support people to deal with their difficulties. In addition to the Aberdeen Counselling and Information Service (ACIS), which is accessible by telephone, post, or in person, MHA also provides the Aberdeenshire Helpline, for anyone with mental health issues and hosts the Sudden Trauma Information Service Helpline (STISH). These information services respond to thousands of enquiries every year. Contact details can be found in the Service Directory on page 19.

**New ACIS Youth Counselling Service.** Development Officer, Alan McTamney and Information Officer, Angela Sutherland



Confidential Counselling

*'Generally counselling can reduce dependency on anti-depressants prescribed...this has been proven!' (GP)*

*... of the 92 clients – 80 showed improved scores on the HAD Scale results (an independent evaluation)*

*'Definite benefit in mood and self-esteem' (GP)*