



1107 French Settlement Road, Kemptville, ON K0G 1J0  
Tel 613-258-9611 Fax 613-258-9651  
[www.bethdonovanhospice.ca](http://www.bethdonovanhospice.ca)

## **INFORMED CONSENT AND AGREEMENT TO COUNSELLING SERVICES**

### **Grief & Bereavement Counselling**

The Beth Donovan Hospice offers short-term (12 - 15 sessions) grief and bereavement counselling services, at no cost to clients who are seeking support in coping with loss. The grief counselling services are offered in person at the Beth Donovan Hospice, online or over the phone and are provided by a professional mental health counsellor.

The aim of grief counselling is to help clients safely navigate challenging circumstances of life experiences associated with loss. Counselling is a collaborative process in which the client's own experience, knowledge and wisdom about their unique situation is combined with the counsellors clinical knowledge and experience in order to support the concerns/goals identified by the client. Clients can choose to end counselling at any time.

### **Benefits & Risks**

Counselling presents both benefits and risks. The benefits include, but are not limited to, reduction of distressing symptoms, strengthening coping strategies, increased sense of well-being, and goal achievement. However, because counselling tends to bring up uncomfortable feelings and difficult memories, people sometimes feel worse before they begin to feel better. Some find that, as they experiment with new ways of thinking and behaving, relationships with others are altered or disrupted. You are encouraged to share any feelings of fear, concern or doubt about the counselling process or your personal progress with your counsellor. The counsellor can support you in creating a safety plan to mitigate these risks.

### **Client's Rights**

As a client, you have the right to:

- Refuse a particular counselling technique or to stop counselling at any time
- Be referred to another counsellor or health professional.
- Withdraw consent for the collection, use, or disclosure of your personal information, except where precluded by law, and access or obtain a copy of the information in your counselling records, subject to legal requirements.
- To ask questions about our approach, background and experience or any other topics that will impact your ability or choice to engage in counselling.
- To refuse or say no to anything we suggest or any approach we use.



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### **Circle of Care and Confidentiality**

At the counsellor's discretion and with your consent, information regarding your case file may be shared with managerial level hospice staff or trained bereavement hospice volunteers if they are part of your circle of hospice care. All parties who may possibly have access to your case file as part of the hospice's circle of care are bound to the same rules of confidentiality as those which apply to your counsellor.

### **Clinical Supervision and Confidentiality**

As part of the counsellor's ethical and legal responsibilities, regular consultation takes place with an external Clinical Supervisor and Psychotherapist, Tina S. Brunet, M.A., CCC, RP regarding counselling issues and interventions. This consultation helps guide the counsellor's work to ensure you receive the best possible support. These consultation conversations are subject to the same confidentiality rules and limitations outlined in this document and special care is taken not to include any client names or other identifying information.

### **Limits to Confidentiality**

All information you share with us is strictly confidential and will not be released without your voluntary and written consent. There are limitations to the confidentiality described above and these include:

1. Duty to Warn and Protect: If you disclose a plan or threat to harm yourself, the therapist must attempt to notify your family and notify legal authorities. In addition, if you disclose a plan to threaten or harm another person, the therapist is required to warn the possible victim and notify legal authorities. More important than the legal obligations, though, are our concerns for your health and safety, and that of those with whom you interact.
2. Abuse of Children and Vulnerable Adults: If you disclose, or it is suspected, that there is abuse or harmful neglect of children or vulnerable adults (i.e. the elderly, disabled/incompetent), the therapist must report this information to the appropriate state agency and/or legal authorities.
3. Prenatal Exposure to Controlled Substances: Therapists must report any admitted prenatal exposure to controlled substances that could be harmful to the mother or the child.
4. Minors/Guardianship: Parents or legal guardians of non-emancipated minor clients have the right to access the clients' records.
5. Court Subpoena: If you are involved in court proceedings and your counselling file is subpoenaed.



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## **Cyber Security**

Client confidentiality is of utmost importance, however online communication is not 100% secure. There are risks involved and it is important that you are aware we cannot guarantee your protection. Common video conferencing services such as Zoom, are not secure and data is stored in web servers and thus subject to electronic monitoring. The Beth Donovan Hospice uses software that has increased security, however it is important that you secure your privacy as much as possible. All of our counsellors' information is secured according to the Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA) policy regulation. If these risks are of concern to you, in person or telephone counselling are alternative ways to connect with your counsellor.

In addition, when engaging in video counselling, it is important to ensure that the environment in which you are doing your session is as private as possible in order to protect your own confidentiality. You may also want to ensure that you log out of your software and shut down your device at the end of a video session. Password protecting your device is recommended.

## **Client Records**

All clients of The Beth Donovan Hospice have a case file (a paper record of service as well as a digital record of service). Your counsellor will prepare clinical notes following each counselling session. All relevant paperwork (including initial assessment documents, consent forms and counselling care plans) will be kept in secure storage located within the premises of the Dundas County Hospice for a period of 7 years after the date of your last counselling session, and destroyed thereafter. The Beth Donovan Hospice maintains electronic records, as well as online scheduling and administrative systems in accordance with all applicable personal health information guidelines in order to ensure the security of confidential information. Clients have a right to access a personal record at any time. If requested, staff at The Beth Donovan Hospice will facilitate client access to personal records.

## **Contact**

The Beth Donovan Hospice is open Monday through Friday 8:30am - 4:30pm. You may contact the Beth Donovan Hospice at 613-258-9611 or through our website [www.bethdonovanhospice.ca](http://www.bethdonovanhospice.ca). The counsellor on staff is available Monday through Thursday 8:30am - 4:30pm. Your counsellor may be reached by email [counselling@bethdonovanhospice.ca](mailto:counselling@bethdonovanhospice.ca) or by phone at 613-258-9611 x 6.



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If you have an emergency after hours, please call 911 or go to the Emergency Department of your local hospital. You can also:

- 1) Call The Lanark, Leeds and Grenville Addictions and Mental Health crisis line is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at 1 (866) 281-2911.
- 2) Distress Centre of Ottawa & Region available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week via phone Distress: 613-238-3311 | Crisis: 613-722-6914 or 1-866-996-0991 | TEXT 343-306-5550 Chat & Text 10am-11pm
- 3) For youth aged 5 - 20 years old, contact Kids Help Phone at 1-800-668-6868.
- 4) Call Crisis Service Canada at 1 (833) 456-4566 (suicide prevention hotline - 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

### **Cancelling Appointments**

If you are unable to attend a scheduled session, please notify your counsellor at least 24 hours in advance so that the session time can be offered to another client. If you regularly miss scheduled sessions without providing 24-hours notice, your counsellor will review with you your commitment to the current counselling process and the option of ending counselling will be discussed. **A \$50 fee will be charged to clients who do not provide notification of cancellation prior to a scheduled session.**

### **Agreeing to Counselling Services**

I have read, understood and agree with the information in this document. I have had an opportunity to ask questions about this document. I agree to the Terms and Conditions in this document.

I agree to receive treatment and actively participate in the counselling process.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_