Hope Therapy & Counselling Services

Couples, Family and Relationship Therapy Policy

Version: October 2026 | Client-Facing

This policy applies to all couples counselling, family therapy, and psychosexual therapy sessions. It explains the specific considerations that apply when more than one person is the client, and what you can expect from the therapeutic process.

1. Who Is the Client

In couples therapy, both partners are clients. In family therapy, all participating adults and any young people for whom consent has been appropriately obtained are clients. In psychosexual therapy for couples, both partners are clients.

Each person engaging in couples or family therapy accepts our Terms of Service and this policy individually. Each person's agreement to participate is voluntary and should be freely given.

2. The Counsellor's Role — Impartiality

In couples and family therapy, your counsellor works with the relationship or family system as a whole. They do not act as an advocate for any one individual. Their role is to support all participants in communicating more effectively, understanding one another more clearly, and working toward shared or individual goals within the therapeutic context.

If you feel at any point that your counsellor is not being impartial, please raise this with them directly. If the concern is not resolved, please contact Hope Therapy & Counselling Services.

3. Confidentiality Between Participants

Confidentiality in couples and family therapy works differently from individual therapy. Your counsellor will discuss and agree in writing an approach to confidentiality with all participants at the start of therapy. The general principles are:

- What is discussed in joint sessions is known to all participants in the room and is not confidential between them.
- Where individual sessions run alongside the couples or family work, your counsellor will clarify their approach to information shared individually — for example, whether they will maintain individual secrets or require that material discussed individually may be brought into joint sessions.
- Counsellors will not hold information from one party that is material to the therapeutic work without the agreement of all parties about how that information may be used.

We encourage you to discuss any concerns about confidentiality with your counsellor before therapy begins.

4. Individual Disclosures

If you contact your counsellor individually between or outside joint sessions and disclose information that has a bearing on the couples or family work, your counsellor will discuss with you how that information can be appropriately managed within the therapeutic framework. Your counsellor will have explained at the start of therapy how this kind of information will be handled.

5. If One Person Withdraws

If one partner or family member decides they no longer wish to participate in therapy, the counsellor will discuss with all parties whether it is therapeutically appropriate and beneficial to continue with the remaining participant(s). The counsellor's professional judgement on this is final.

If continuation is agreed, the nature and purpose of the therapy will be re-contracted clearly. This typically means a transition from couples or family therapy to individual therapy for the remaining participant(s).

6. Domestic Abuse and Safety

Couples or family therapy is not appropriate where there is current domestic abuse or coercive control, as the therapeutic format can inadvertently create additional risk for the person being abused. At the start of therapy, your counsellor will explore whether there are any safety concerns. If abuse or coercive control is disclosed or suspected, or if either of you asks, your counsellor may offer individual sessions instead. If concerns emerge during therapy, your counsellor may pause or end the couples or family work and offer individual support instead.

If you are experiencing domestic abuse and need immediate support, please contact the National Domestic Abuse Helpline: 0808 2000 247 (free, 24 hours).

7. Psychosexual Therapy

Psychosexual therapy involves discussion of sexual health, intimacy, and relationship functioning in a clinical and professional context. Your counsellor will explain the specific framework and any particular techniques relevant to psychosexual therapy at the outset. As with all therapy, participation in any element of the work is always voluntary and with your informed consent.

Psychosexual therapy is available for both individuals and couples. Each format has its own therapeutic approach, which your counsellor will discuss with you. Sessions are clinical in nature and conducted entirely through verbal discussion within the session.

8. Payment

Payment for couples and family therapy is the joint responsibility of the adults who arrange the sessions. The cancellation policy applies to the arrangement as a whole. If one party cancels in a way that triggers a cancellation charge, that charge remains payable regardless of which party initiated the cancellation.

9. Ending Couples or Family Therapy

Endings in couples and family therapy may be agreed jointly, or may arise because one party withdraws. Please refer to our Ending Therapy Policy for full details. Where therapy ends because one party withdraws, the counsellor will discuss the implications with all parties.

10. Questions

If you have any questions about how couples or family therapy works at Hope Therapy & Counselling Services, please contact us at contact@hopefulminds.co.uk or call 0333 043 1850.

Contact us: contact@hopefulminds.co.uk | 0333 043 1850 | www.hopefulminds.co.uk

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