



Australian Government

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

CHCFCS803B Provide grief and loss counselling

Release: 1

CHCFCS803B Provide grief and loss counselling

Modification History

Not Applicable

Unit Descriptor

Unit Descriptor

This unit of competency describes the skills and knowledge required for counsellors to explore the meaning and effect of grief and loss issues and work with individuals and families experiencing grief and loss

Application of the Unit

Application

This unit of competency applies to relationship counsellors providing counselling for couples, families, children and individuals (voluntary or involuntary) within the Family Relationships work area

Licensing/Regulatory Information

Not Applicable

Pre-Requisites

Not Applicable

Employability Skills Information

Employability Skills

This unit contains Employability Skills

Elements and Performance Criteria Pre-Content

Elements define the essential outcomes of a unit of competency.

The Performance Criteria specify the level of performance required to demonstrate achievement of the Element. Terms in italics are elaborated in the Range Statement.

Elements and Performance Criteria

ELEMENT

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Establish rapport and explore the clients understanding of grief and loss | 1.1 Engage with client using their framework and language to establish an environment of safety and trust
1.2 Join with the client to explore client's understanding of <i>grief and loss</i>
1.3 Assist clients to understand how their unique context has impacted on their experience of grief and loss
1.4 Explain the role of the counsellor in dealing with loss |
| 2. Assist clients to understand the different impacts of grief and loss | 2.1 Explain the possible <i>range of responses to grief and loss</i>
2.2 Use effective intervention techniques to assist the client to normalise their responses to grief and loss
2.3 Use correct terminology and concepts in the grief counselling process
2.4 Identify the key issues in bereavement counselling setting
2.5 Apply the <i>counselling strategies</i> to a broad range of diverse responses to grief |

ELEMENT**PERFORMANCE CRITERIA**

- | | |
|---|---|
| 3. Formulate counselling responses to grief and loss | 3.1 Monitor and respond to client presentations including <i>safety and assessed risks</i> |
| | 3.2 Assist client to set goals or outcomes for the grief and loss process, dependant upon clients position in grieving process |
| | 3.3 Match therapeutic interventions to client's needs and goals |
| | 3.4 Facilitate referrals to <i>other support services</i> where appropriate |
| 4. <i>Terminate counselling sessions</i> | 4.1 Recognise when the counselling is no longer serving the interests or needs of the client |
| | 4.2 Discuss with the client/s when counselling no longer appears to serve the clients interest or needs and either renegotiate the professional relationship or terminate the service |
| | 4.3 Engage client/s in determining any further external interventions as identified and arrange appropriate referrals |
| | 4.4 Discuss with the client any <i>interruptions to counselling</i> , planned or otherwise, and implement alternative interim counselling |
| 5. Seek feedback from the client/s about the counselling service provided | 5.1 Review counselling progress and provision regularly with the client |
| | 5.2 Obtain feedback from the client throughout and at the conclusion of the counselling service |
| | 5.3 Use a range of <i>feedback strategies</i> to encourage client contribution to improved counselling practice |
| | 5.4 Review client feedback and use this to inform practice reflection and improvement in conjunction with supervision |

Required Skills and Knowledge

REQUIRED SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

This describes the essential skills and knowledge and their level required for this unit.

Essential knowledge:

The candidate must be able to demonstrate essential knowledge required to effectively do the task outlined in elements and performance criteria of this unit, manage the task and manage contingencies in the context of the identified work role

These include knowledge of:

- Difference in grief in men, women, children and young people
- Own prejudices and stereotyping attitudes and behaviour about grief and loss and the potential influence these may have on counselling practice
- Limitations imposed on the counsellor - client relationship as a result of professional and ethical responsibility in the context of an unequal balance of power in the counselling setting
- Limitations to the effectiveness or usefulness of counselling practice in some circumstances and appropriate for client referral when necessary
- Contracting and reaching agreements with client about the nature, process and expected timeframes and responsibilities of counsellor and client within the provisions of counselling
- Importance and opportunities for continuing professional development and maintaining a professional level of self awareness of current scientific and professional information and education in the area of grief and loss
- Indicators and dynamics of domestic and family violence and complexities of interpersonal interactions, e.g. power, abuse and conflict and impact of these on grief process
- Procedures and instruments to screen for abuse before, during and after couple or family counselling and any additional safety planning requirements and procedures for clients and staff
- Referral options and pathways to support clients seeking interventions and supports beyond or in conjunctions with counselling e.g. group support for grief
- The importance and intent of counsellor participation in supervision
- Relevant state and federal legislation applicable to counselling practice
- Limitations of confidentiality that may arise in the counselling setting
- Contemporary research and approaches to grief and loss counselling in diverse cultural contexts
- Developmental stages and how grief is likely to affect young people and children
- Critical understanding and appreciation of the main approaches used in grief counselling
- Critical understanding of the theories of major grief counselling approaches
- Stages of human development and how this knowledge applies to counselling practice

REQUIRED SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

- Human diversity including culture, gender, age, ability, class, sexuality, spirituality and ethnicity

continued ...

Essential knowledge (contd):

- Recognise the role of social contexts on the counselling relationship
- Range of impacts of separation and divorce on couples, parents, children and other family members
- Knowledge of the different types of grief and understanding attitudes, attachment and anxiety issues associated with grief
- Complicated grief processes e.g. people bereaved by suicide and other traumatic loss

Essential skills:

It is critical that the candidate demonstrate the ability to:

- Identify and adhere to legislative requirements of counselling in a broad range of contexts including Family Law and counselling couples, families and children
- Explain counselling goals and action plans and outline counselling process and agreements
- Assess and screen for domestic and family violence and child abuse using a range of processes
- Monitor own competence through counselling supervision and be willing to consider the views expressed by clients and by counsellor colleagues
- Manage the counselling role within an ethical context and discuss processes for client referral where necessary
- Comprehend a variety of individual and systemic therapeutic approaches and their application, including evidence-based therapies and culturally sensitive approaches
- Recognise the strengths limitations and contraindications of specific therapeutic approaches, including risk of harm associated with approaches that incorporate assumptions of family dysfunction
- Assess grief and loss relating to cultural and spiritual differences
- Apply advanced counselling interventions and explain the contribution of counselling to the therapeutic process
- Compare and contrast grief counselling theories and approaches
- Identify common client concerns in the provision of counselling processes
- Work in a multidisciplinary environment where appropriate
- Manage confidentiality of information obtained from clients during the counselling process
- Maintain a solid theoretical base for effective and contemporary counselling practice
- Manage the dynamics of counselling groups and family groups experiencing high levels

REQUIRED SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

of ongoing conflict.

- Respect and promote client self determination and ability to make own decisions within the clients value, beliefs and context.
- Demonstrate sensitivity when counselling individual and groups from diverse backgrounds
- Apply age appropriate communication and counselling interventions when working with children and young people
- Work with child and parental loss
- Counsel and intervene for complicated grief and loss situations

Evidence Guide

EVIDENCE GUIDE

The evidence guide provides advice on assessment and must be read in conjunction with the Performance Criteria, Required Skills and Knowledge, the Range Statement and the Assessment Guidelines for this Training Package.

Critical aspects for assessment and evidence required to demonstrate this unit of competency:

- The individual being assessed must provide evidence of *specified* essential knowledge as well as skills.
- Observation of workplace performance is essential for assessment of this unit.
- Consistency of performance should be demonstrated over the required range of situations relevant to the workplace

EVIDENCE GUIDE

- Access and equity considerations:*
- All workers in community services should be aware of access, equity and human rights issues in relation to their own area of work
 - All workers should develop their ability to work in a culturally diverse environment
 - In recognition of particular issues facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, workers should be aware of cultural, historical and current issues impacting on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
 - Assessors and trainers must take into account relevant access and equity issues, in particular relating to factors impacting on Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients and communities
- Context of and specific resources for assessment:*
- In cases where the learner does not have the opportunity to cover all relevant aspects in the work environment, the remainder should be assessed through realistic simulations, projects, previous relevant experience or oral questioning on 'What if?' scenarios
 - Assessment of this unit of competence will usually include observation of processes and procedures, oral and/or written questioning on essential knowledge and skills and consideration of required attitudes
 - Where performance is not directly observed and/or is required to be demonstrated over a period of time and/or in a number of workplace settings, any evidence should be authenticated by colleagues, supervisors, clients or other appropriate persons

EVIDENCE GUIDE

Method of assessment

- Observation in the workplace is essential
- Written assignments/projects or questioning should be used to assess knowledge
- Case study and scenario as a basis for discussion of issues and strategies to contribute to best practice
- Counselling skills involving direct client contact are to be assessed *initially* on two occasions in a simulated counselling setting. If successful, further assessment is required during 10 hours actual counselling practice under direct supervision
- The assessment environment should not disadvantage the candidate
- Assessment practices should take into account any relevant language or cultural issues related to Aboriginality, gender or language barriers other than English
- Where the candidate has a disability, reasonable adjustment may be applied during assessment
- Language and literacy demands of the assessment task should not be higher than those of the work role

Range Statement

RANGE STATEMENT

The Range Statement relates to the unit of competency as a whole. It allows for different work environments and situations that may affect performance. Add any essential operating conditions that may be present with training and assessment depending on the work situation, needs of the candidate, accessibility of the item, and local industry and regional contexts.

RANGE STATEMENT

Grief and loss may include but is not limited to:

- Significant loss for example:
 - relationships
 - employment
 - missed opportunities
 - goals and visions
 - infertility

Range of responses to grief and loss may include but are not limited to:

Different responses to grief will be evident depending on circumstances of loss, e.g. post loss, suicide, homicide, disaster, indirect loss, vicarious traumatising.

Responses may include:

- Disbelief
- Avoidance
- Anger
- Sadness
- Withdrawal
- Dissociation
- Suicidal ideations
- Self-harming
- Stress reactions
- Post traumatic stress disorder
- Depression
- Numbing
- Denial
- Anxiety

RANGE STATEMENT

Counselling strategies may include but are not limited to:

Depth of knowledge and levels of application of counselling approaches and theories is presented at the Essential knowledge and skills section of this unit of competency:

- Narrative therapy
- Grief and loss model
- Group therapy
- Gestalt therapy
- Person-centred therapy
- Existential therapy
- Research-informed practice

Safety and assessed risks may include:

- Processes for proactively enquiring about the presence of family domestic violence with the intention of preventing further violence or harm
- Processes for evaluating the nature of specific risks to safety for individual clients including depression, using assessment and structured clinical judgement
- The content of risk may relate to:
 - exposure to further violence
 - mental health issues
 - children's and parenting issues

RANGE STATEMENT

Other support services may include:

- Crisis intervention services
- Legal or medical services
- Family domestic violence services
- Child support services
- Culturally specific services
- Accommodation services
- Access to services/information
- Financial services
- Child support agency
- Mediation services
- Living skills and problem solving programs
- Educational programs
- Specialist services (include GP and psychiatrist)
- Grief support for grief and loss (therapeutic and self help)

Terminate counselling sessions may include:

- Planned termination of counselling
- Dealing with client decision to terminate the sessions
- Counsellor assessing and identifying issues of concern in a client case where to continue counselling would be unethical and/or place the client and/or others at risk

Interruptions to counselling may include:

- Counsellor illness
- Counsellor planned leave
- Counsellor changes employment
- Interruptions due to organisation change
- Counsellor ceases practice
- Other external factors e.g. client illness, expert recommendations that counselling cease

Feedback strategies may include but are not limited to:

- Interviews with colleagues
- In session feedback (with longer term work of grief)
- Evaluation forms
- Complaints
- Recommendations
- Suggestions
- Focus group work

Unit Sector(s)

Not Applicable