

RNIB

Supporting people
with sight loss



Need to Talk

Emotional support and confidence
building for people affected by
sight loss

 **FIGHTING
BLINDNESS**
Cure. Support. Empower.

Interreg 
EUROPEAN UNION
Northern Ireland - Ireland - Scotland
European Regional Development Fund

Introduction

If you are experiencing sight loss, you may be worried about the future and the changes you are facing. Perhaps you are experiencing feelings of sadness, anger or anxiety and this is affecting you on a day-to-day basis. During these times, many people find it helpful to talk through their feelings with someone outside their usual circle of family and friends. If you need to talk - we're here to listen.

Need to Talk offers free counselling and confidence building for people with sight loss across Northern Ireland, Western Scotland and the border counties of the Republic of Ireland.

We are a team of counsellors and confidence building staff with extensive experience in supporting people impacted by sight loss.

Through confidential counselling and confidence building services, we'll help you face the future with confidence.

We support people of all ages, including children and young people (eleven years plus), and those who are supporting a person with sight loss who may also need someone to talk to.

Counselling service

After a simple referral to our team, we'll arrange a telephone assessment with one of our counsellors within five working days. This first assessment offers you an opportunity to talk about your situation and explore what further support you might find helpful.

If you go on to have counselling from our service, your Need to Talk counsellor will discuss and agree the number of sessions with you – commonly eight and up to ten. These will be arranged at mutually convenient times, always with the same counsellor. Telephone counselling will be delivered by RNIB counsellors. Come the time of your appointment, your counsellor will call you, so there is no cost to you for the call.

Face-to-face counselling will be delivered by Fighting Blindness in the border counties of the Republic of Ireland.

Although we do not have a crisis line we can give you information about other services and support in contacting them. If you need to speak to someone urgently, Samaritans are available 24 hours by free phone on **116 123** (UK and Ireland) or you can email **jo@samaritans.org**

“I have been struggling with sight loss for 30 years, trying to live in a sighted world where no one really understood. Now, since receiving counselling, I've a whole new lease of life. I am now filled with hopes and dreams and my world is a much brighter place filled with endless possibilities” – Helen



Online counselling

With online counselling you can access the support you need via your laptop, tablet or smartphone. You will be able to talk with your counsellor in one of the following ways:

Email

Email gives you the opportunity to reflect on the important issues that you will work through with the flexibility of sending your email whenever you want, day or night. You will receive a reply from your counsellor at a set day and time every week.

Video Conferencing

Video conferencing via your computer, tablet, or smartphone gives you the option to 'live chat' completely confidentially with your counsellor face to face, similar to Skype and Facetime.

Instant Messaging

With Instant Messaging you will be able to have a real time, text based conversation with your counsellor, similar to Facebook Messenger.

Whichever online option you choose we typically recommend up to eight online sessions, lasting up to fifty minutes each.

You can self-refer for online counselling by visiting our website rnib.org.uk/needtotalk where you will find more information.

Confidence building programme

Our online digital confidence building programme will support you in adapting to life with sight loss. We'll explore a range of topics covering mobility and daily living; emotional support and wellbeing; eye health, peer support and assistive technology.

With our digital confidence building programme, you can access the support you need via your laptop, tablet or smartphone at a time that suits you, in the comfort of your own home.

Confidence building groups: We can also offer face-to-face confidence building for people with sight loss from Northern Ireland and the border counties of the Republic of Ireland.

“It has been a wonderful experience. I hope other people will have a chance to participate in these groups so that they will know they are not the only one and you can talk it through with others.” – Mary

Confidentiality

Our Need to Talk programme is confidential. This means that what you say to us will remain within the NTT Sight Loss Counselling Team and will not be passed on to anyone else without your consent.

As part of our commitment to the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) and Irish Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (IACP) Ethical Framework for Counselling Professions, our counsellors review their work with their clients with another counsellor in supervision. Clients' anonymity is protected during this process and identifying information is not revealed.

The only reason why confidentiality might be breached during the work with your counsellor is if we have very serious concerns about your safety or that of others. In such exceptional circumstances we might need to ensure your safety, but would strive to discuss this with you and assist you in seeking emergency support.

We adhere to the BACP and IACP Ethical Framework for Counselling Professions and comply with the Data Protection Act.

**British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy
0145 588 3300 (general enquiries)
bacp.co.uk**

**Irish Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy
(IACP) +353 1 230 3536 (general enquiries)
irish-counselling.ie**



Need to Talk is a five year project (2017-2021) delivered through a partnership between RNIB in Northern Ireland and Scotland, and Fighting Blindness in the Republic of Ireland. The project is supported by the European Union's INTERREG VA Programme, managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB).

RNIB
Northern
Ireland

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RNIB
Scotland

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Get in touch

We can help you face the future with confidence. To find out about the counselling and confidence building services in your area, get in touch today with the Need to Talk delivery partners via the details below:

RNIB Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Areas covered: Northern Ireland wide. Scotland: Dumfries and Galloway, North, South and East Ayrshire, Lochaber, Skye and Lochalsh, Arran and Cumbrae, Argyll and Bute and Na h-Eileanan Siar (Western Isles).

Phone: 0303 123 9999

Email: needtotalk@rnib.org.uk

Fighting Blindness, Republic of Ireland

Areas covered: Counties of Donegal, Louth, Cavan, Sligo, Leitrim and Monaghan

Phone: +353 1 674 6496

Email: needtotalk@fightingblindness.ie

For more information please visit:

rnib.org.uk/needtotalk

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