

# Lifeline information sheet for professionals

**Lifeline** 0808 808 8000

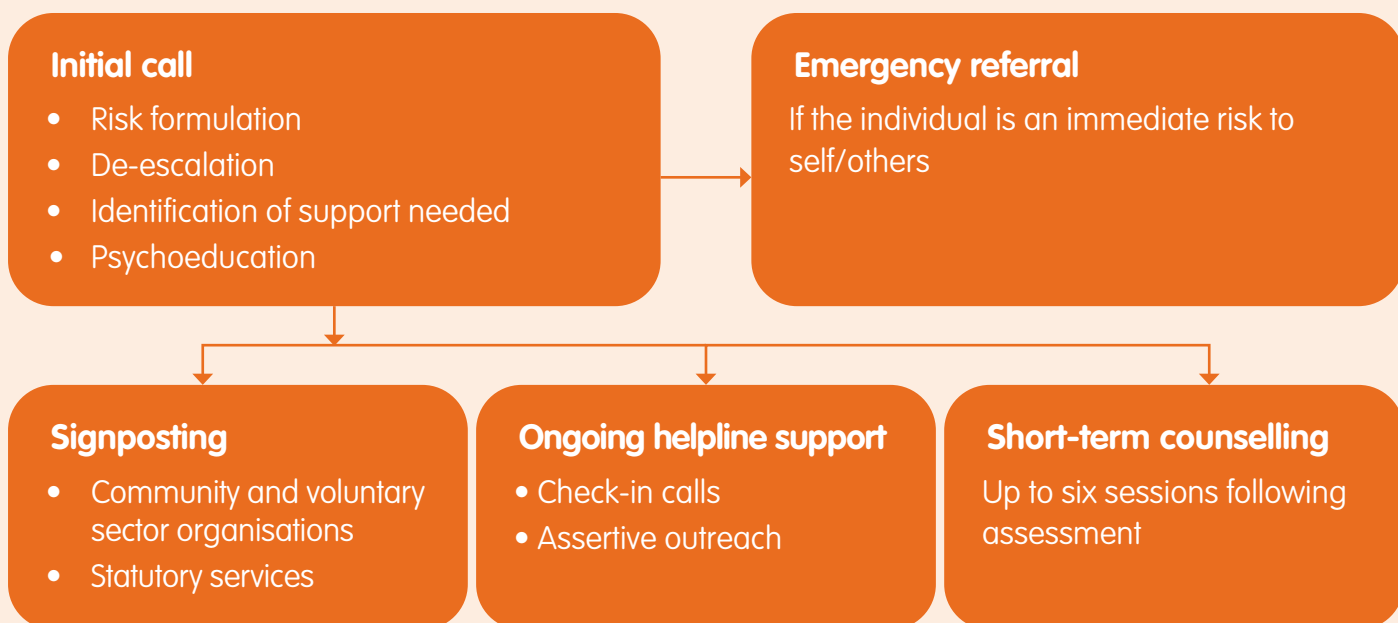
Call free, 24/7, 365 days a year  
Textphone 18001 0808 808 8000

## Who are we?

Lifeline is Northern Ireland's crisis response helpline for people experiencing distress or despair. Lifeline is available 24/7, 365 days a year. Calls to Lifeline are free and are answered by trained counsellors. Visit [www.lifelinehelpline.info](http://www.lifelinehelpline.info) for more information about Lifeline.



## What do we offer?



## Our team and approach

Lifeline's counsellors are experienced in supporting individuals with many complex challenges they face, including, suicide, self-injury, anxiety, depression and trauma-related presentations. Counsellors collaborate with referrers to determine the most appropriate support for individuals.

Lifeline provides support to people of every age, gender, race, religion, disability and sexual orientation. Textphone users can contact Lifeline on 18001 0808 808 8000. Interpreting support is available for British and Irish Sign Language users and for those whose first or preferred language is not English.

## Top three presenting issues

- Suicidal ideation
- Anxiety
- Depression

## How to refer to Lifeline

- Obtain consent from the person you wish to refer.
- Call 0808 808 8000.
- A counsellor will guide you through the referral process.
- It will take **approximately** 10-15 minutes.

## Helpline support

As well as receiving calls, Lifeline makes different types of calls to individuals who need support. The purpose of these calls is to provide support

and information to individuals, including those who may be at risk of suicide or self-harm.

Call type	Purpose
<b>Assertive outreach call</b>	To provide timely follow up for individuals referred by a third party with risk factors for suicidal behaviour or self-harm. If we are unable to reach the individual, we will phone their safety contact or the PSNI.
<b>Supportive outreach call</b>	To provide further information, education and identify support options via Lifeline or other services.

In some exceptional circumstances, a Lifeline counsellor may make the decision to share information outside of the Lifeline service without the consent (but with the knowledge) of the caller in

order to protect life. For example, Lifeline may share the caller's personal details with the emergency services if there is a risk to their or others' safety.

## Short-term crisis counselling

- Assessment to determine most appropriate support.
- Choice of remote or in-person counselling.
- First appointment typically within 10 days.
- Strengths-based, evidence-informed and client-centred approach.

Baseline criteria for short-term crisis counselling	
<b>Suicidal ideation</b>	The client is currently experiencing suicidal thoughts or is supporting someone else who is having these thoughts.
<b>Exposure to/bereaved by suicide</b>	The client either has directly experienced suicidal ideation in the past or been affected by the suicide of family or friends.
<b>Self-harm</b>	The client has recently displayed self-harming behaviour, especially when coupled with an intent to end one's life.
<b>AND</b>	
<b>Engagement</b>	The client demonstrates a willingness and ability to engage in the Lifeline counselling and is committed to participating fully in the sessions.

## Real-time collaboration

Lifeline aims to update the patient's GP/mental health (MH) professional within 24 hours, particularly in relation to risk. Where immediate action is required – Lifeline counsellors will request a call back from the GP or MH Professional.

Where an update is provided, we aim to share this in the form of a letter within seven days.

Thank you to those HSC teams/GP practices who have provided email addresses for prompt non-emergency information sharing. If you have not done so and would be interested, please contact [lifeline@belfasttrust.hscni.net](mailto:lifeline@belfasttrust.hscni.net)