

# Employee Support Service

## What is the Employee Support Service (ESS)?

The ESS is a confidential counselling and advice service to assist all of us in dealing with personal issues that could pose a threat to our health, well-being, relationships or jobs.

The service is free – the University of Limerick bears the cost of this service. The service is voluntary – the decision to use the service and avail of counselling rests with the individual.

The service is confidential and independent – and provided by an external company.

## How does the Support Service operate?

EAP Consultants, an external provider, engage a range of professional and experienced counsellors and practitioners for this service. All counsellors/practitioners meet the training and experience requirements of professional bodies such as the Psychological Society of Ireland (PSI) or the Irish Association of Counsellors and Psychotherapists (IACP).

To access this, you call the freephone helpline number. Users may prefer to access this number from a private telephone as UL telephone bills are itemised. From here, you will be referred to the appropriate counsellor. You will be able to avail of up to six counselling sessions in a twelve-month period.

## Who can use it?

This service is provided for all University of Limerick employees and their family members. A family member is defined as a partner or adult child (18+ years) residing at the same address as the employee.

We all go through stages where life seems tough and you may be finding it hard to cope with day-to-day issues. This service can also be used to help with a variety of difficulties such as bereavement, stress, relationship problems, issues with alcohol, drugs, or gambling, etc.

## When is it available?

Access to the helpline is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The first counselling session will be provided within 2-5 days. The counselling will usually take place in the counsellor's office at a mutually suitable time.

**How do I access the service?**

You call the freephone helpline. A wallet card will be sent out by post with this number.

**Can I be assured of confidentiality?**

Absolutely. If you have a problem that is troubling you, then you can get help and support. When you do, you will find that the counsellors deal with the issue in a private and confidential manner. They are bound to confidentiality by their professional code of practice.

**Will my employer know I am using the service?**

No. **The University will not be told** who is using this service and receive only anonymous figures for evaluation of the service.

**Where can I get further information?**

Contact the helpline for further information.

***No matter what problem you are experiencing, professional and confidential help and support is just a phone call away.  
Call today.***