



# Impact of Psychological Counselling Service at Penny Brohn UK

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## Background

For people with cancer, research has shown counselling may be beneficial for wellbeing, anxiety, depression and helping with the sexual side-effects of cancer<sup>1-3</sup>. Penny Brohn UK (PBUK) is a cancer charity that supports people to live well with cancer. It offers face-to-face or telephone counselling for anyone aged over 18 with a cancer diagnosis and their close supporters.



## Method

PBUK's counselling service was evaluated using the validated person-centred outcome measure MYCaW (Measure Yourself Concerns and Wellbeing)<sup>4</sup>, measuring the impact of cancer support services on the severity of people's cancer related concerns and wellbeing. Concerns were rated at the start of counselling and re-rated at the end of the last session. Qualitative data was captured on the MYCaW tool regarding other things going on in people's life affecting health and what was important about the service they received. Data was analysed using the accompanying qualitative coding framework.

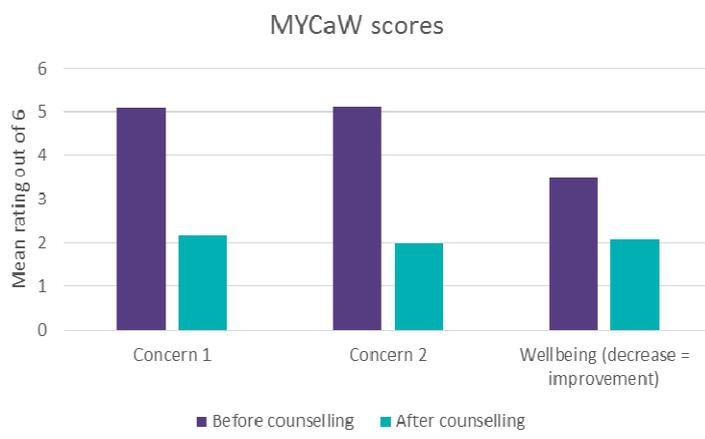
Data was analysed for all clients who had attended counselling appointments in January - December 2017 and provided full pre- post-counselling MYCaW data.

## Results

40 clients provided pre-post MYCaW data and attended an average of 6 sessions (range 1 to 18). **Psychological and emotional concerns** were top rated for concern 1 and 2 (81% and 78% respectively).

After counselling both concern 1 and 2 showed a statistically significant improvement ( $p < .000$ ). 90% of clients showed a clinically significant improvement in their concerns (1 or more score change on MYCaW).

Qualitative data indicated that counselling at PBUK gave clients the opportunity to talk, provided time for themselves and made them feel supported and understood.



*"Sense of wellbeing, compassion & understanding received here has helped me to feel stronger."*

*"Time to talk to someone without worrying about how what I say affects them. Being able to say what I feel, even if it makes no sense, and having time to process that with someone."*

## Conclusion

Counselling at PBUK led to a statistically significant improvement in cancer-related MYCaW concerns and wellbeing. A larger sample is needed to explore this further.

## References

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