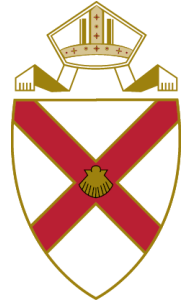


THE BISHOP OF ROCHESTER

The Right Revd James Langstaff



To: Diocesan Staff

February 2020

Pastoral Care, Counselling and Well-being Arrangements

I am writing to inform you of changes to the pastoral care and counselling arrangements for Diocesan staff supporting the ministry in the Diocese of Rochester. I see this as an important dimension of my pastoral care. While much care and support is given informally by colleagues, friends and others, circumstances do sometimes arise when some more professional and structured care or counselling is necessary. That is what is offered through these new arrangements, and I know that a number of people have been grateful for this type of support over these last years.

A diverse network of qualified, experienced practitioners working within or near to the Rochester Diocese have been recruited to provide well-being and counselling support. The network will offer free short-term therapy to diocesan and cathedral office employees; clergy, spouses and household family members; Head teachers and youth and children's workers. Six initial sessions will be offered to individuals with the possibility to increase to a maximum of twelve following discussion and review.

Following referral or self-referral, people will contact the network lead who will undertake a telephone screening interview to ascertain their availability, locality and primary reason for wanting a service. Very often a person may approach the service with the knowledge (indeed encouragement) of colleagues or a Bishop. Our arrangement, however, ensures that you are free to approach the network lead yourself without colleagues or others being aware. In cases of self-referral, a maximum of six sessions will be paid for without reference to me; thereafter, agreement will be needed between the service and me, but still maintaining the person's anonymity where necessary.

The initial point of contact is with

Dr Deborah Watkins

Diocese of Rochester Counselling and Well-being Network Lead

e-mail: counselling@rochester.anglican.org

phone: 07827 157328

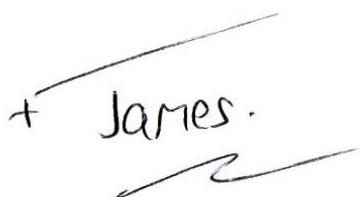
For each referral, Deborah will allocate a practitioner from our network for an initial assessment which will generally take place in their practice space. This will be an independent counsellor, therapist or mental health professional who is monitored and supported by the network. We ensure that the practitioner holds appropriate qualifications, has professional liability insurance

and is a member of an accredited professional body. Privacy and confidentiality will be maintained within professional, ethical guidance. This means that disclosure of information is only made to ensure or enhance the quality of work, to protect an individual or others, for safeguarding reasons and when a practitioner is legally required or authorised to do so. Be assured that all those working within the Diocese of Rochester Counselling and Well-being Network are passionate about providing a safe, effective, supportive service in line with diocesan values and commitments.

Your well-being to support the diocesan ministry is vital for the health and fruitfulness of the church's mission. That is why I think that these arrangements for your care and support are of great importance, and I am very encouraged by the establishment of this innovative new service.

Finally, when circumstances arise in which some counselling support may be helpful, I would encourage you to err on the side of seeking that earlier rather than later. To do so is not the admission of some kind of failure, but simply to recognise the vulnerability which goes with being human.

With my prayers and good wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+ James." with a flourish underneath.

Bishop James
Bishop of Rochester

A handwritten signature in black ink that appears to read "Matthew Girt" with a flourish underneath.

Matthew Girt
Diocesan Secretary