

D11 NOSS Accessibility strategy 2013 to 2025 with action plan.



The NOSS accessibility strategy aims to increase the extent to which all clients can utilise the service by providing choice and removing barriers to accessing counselling for all removing barriers to access.

The NOSS accessibility strategy provides an outline of the main components of access planning and highlights areas and themes to be incorporated in action plans.

NOSS supports private clients and organisations UK wide and supports a wide range of referral issues.

The BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions remains the main point of reference for decisions and delivery of support.

We provide primarily, but not exclusively, workplace support. Organisations provide access to support in a number of different ways, and staff from contracted organisations are not expected to pay for support.

Access to NOSS support varies according to the organisation's own specification and includes the following:

- Direct (self) referral
- Management referral
- Via Occupational Health teams.

Referrals to NOSS are accepted by phone 24/7/365, email or in person and we deliver support in accordance with the contract specification. We actively ensure that our contact with clients is welcoming and unbiased

NOSS promotes accessibility by its policy of inclusion and by ensuring that we offer a balanced range of professionals / counsellors to provide choice for clients in relation to, but not limited to, age, gender, language, disability, experience or specialisms.

We will ensure that all methods of communication, written, electronic or verbal meet the needs of our client base on an organisational and individual basis. NOSS will continue to develop their website to promote access to communication in the widest form appropriate.

We will identify the accessibility needs by jointly (as appropriate) undertaking strategic and local accessibility assessments to identify any client group who have the least accessibility to or use the service and develop joint access action plans with contract holders/companies / or organisations (as appropriate) to address issues of accessibility.

We will endeavour to raise the awareness of all NOSS staff and associates, through training and development, to the specific needs of all client groups and in particular those who have been identified in action plans as having the least accessibility to our service. that have been identified in action plans, who have the least accessibility to or use the service.

Create, monitor and review joint action plans to measure service accessibility through reporting and review meetings

Review the physical environments in which we conduct counselling sessions with the aim of meeting the needs of service users (as far as possible) and/or to offer choice of location for service delivery.

Our communications with contract managers which is frequent includes reviewing who (not individuals) and where referrals either by self or management referral have been received from, in order to better understand where referrals have not come from thus enabling a review of communications with those areas. This is undertaken monthly.

Alongside contract managers, we will regularly (monthly) review the source of referrals (self-referral as well as management referral) in order to better understand areas that are possibly under utilising our service, with the aim of reviewing and improving communications with those under-represented areas.

The NOSS Accessibility Strategy and action plan is review annually and will be published within a section within the NOSS Annual Report which is available on the NOSS Website.

It must be noted that some of the details in the action plan are not task and finish but represent an ongoing commitment to improving accessibility for all who require / seek support from NOSS.

2021 to 2025 Action Plan to be read in conjunction with the above strategy		
Issue	Action	Timescale
Coronavirus 19	<p>Delivery of a safe service is paramount to all.</p> <p>Updates to contract managers, NOSS head office and counsellors as and when appropriate to ensure that Counsellors know and understand the options for delivery available for all clients.</p> <p>Face to face either on or off site, telephone and online visual (e.g. Zoom, MS Teams, What's App, WebEX etc.</p> <p>Particular note is briefings for referring managers and clients who have additional or specific access requirements.</p>	Current and ongoing as long as restriction the UK apply.

<p>Skills Audit of Counsellors</p>	<p>Languages Culture Ethical considerations All Service delivery specialisms particularly relating to equality, diversity and inclusion issues</p> <p>Outcome reported to contract managers and noted where appropriate on intranet pages and NOSS website.</p> <p>Develop and extend training and build confidence for counsellors to deliver support for clients who have specific needs such as sight, hearing or a physical or mental cognitive requirement that requires additional support.</p>	<p>April to July 2021 (Audit) and on-going to 2025 for reporting and training.</p>
<p>Access to all support documents in English or as specified with contract specifications</p>	<p>Translation of documents either to download or as appropriate written reports to be in the requested and agreed language.</p>	<p>January 2021 to 2025</p>
<p>Written information to be available</p>	<p>Ensure documentation is available in a format suitable to the client.</p> <p>In accordance with the Equalities Act 2010 promote access to written documentation that meets the needs of the person requesting the information</p> <p>Size of font at least 12pt, sans serif, no underlining or italic text, ensure at least 70% contrast between the text and the background, double line spacing.</p> <p>Avoid the use of coloured text and picture with text over the image.</p> <p>Statement on the NOSS website stating 'If you require a document on this web site in an alternative format such as large print</p>	<p>January 2021 to 2025</p>

	<p>or a different background please email reception@noss.uk.com or phone 01978 780479.</p>	
Feedback	<p>Review and amend as required the information collected in feedback (C013 and C014 NOSS Feedback forms) Look at the questions relating to accessibility in all forms.</p> <p>Republish NOSS feedback forms as required and refresh links.</p>	July to December 2021

Review 07/2022 to be reviewed annually.