

Diversity in Counselling Approaches

When most people think of counselling, they picture an office with a psychologist and a client facing one another. But community-based counselling shows us a whole spectrum of accessible and effective ways to connect, get support, and feel like you belong.



78% of organizations offer group counselling and psychoeducational workshops



31% of organizations offer traditional Indigenous cultural activities



39% of organizations offer multilingual counselling services

Community counselling looks like:

- Bringing people together in community kitchens
- Gardening programs that teach traditional Indigenous plant medicine and harvesting
- Peer-based counselling programs
- 1-on-1 sessions on evenings and weekends
- Delivering sessions on a sliding scale
- Art and theatre-based therapy
- Online support groups
- Street-based outreach
- Talking circles
- Psychoeducational workshops for managing stress and anxiety
- Having the option to have a telephone, video, in-person or outdoor walking session



What's different about community counselling?

Community counselling is often a lifeline for people who face barriers to accessing counselling through the formal health care system. And because community counselling looks at health through a multifaceted, place-based lens, it's able to support people across a range of needs.



"The most significant impact of the funding has been the ability to provide counselling at no cost. Many of the women and their families that we serve live in deep poverty and are distrustful of asking for help, fearful it will bring their children under government scrutiny [...] Even sliding scales are still prohibitively expensive for them. Anecdotally, when faced with these choices clients advise that what must be sacrificed is counselling rather than other priorities: food, shelter, transport."



"They directed me to a counsellor who is from the same culture. The same religion even. So she knows what I am talking about. The same language. It is hard when you are talking about your emotions to speak in a different language even if your language is good. Still, when you want to express your emotions deeply it is easier to use your own language."



"Other services such as peer support, therapeutic recreational groups, and group therapy also support alongside counselling. This offers engagement and develops comfort in the environment, which enhances the success of counselling services."