



## Hassle Free Clinic - Making the Links

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### **Policies & Procedures**

The information below provides details regarding policies and procedures of the Making the Links program at Hassle Free Men's/Trans\* Clinic. Making the Links is a free and confidential short-term individual counselling program for gay, bisexual, men who have sex with men (MSM). It seeks to address some of the barriers/underlying issues (e.g. anxiety, depression, grief/loss, low-self esteem, body image issues, relationship difficulties, substance abuse, etc.) that are contributing to a client's engagement in high-risk behavior.

#### **❖ Availability of Short-term Counselling**

In the intake session, a psycho-social assessment will be conducted to determine whether Making the Links is a suitable fit for the client's unique needs. Depending on the client's circumstances, clients may be offered short-term counselling with Making the Links and/or referred to an appropriate resource in the community. Clients requesting or needing long-term treatment are referred to appropriate agencies and/or provided with a list of Toronto-based psychotherapists.

#### **❖ The Philosophy of Short-Term Counselling**

The *Making the Links* Counselling Program strives to help clients develop clear and specific goals that can be addressed within a maximum of 10 sessions. This is a change-oriented model of counselling that encourages clients to collaborate actively with their counsellor in a process that emphasizes their competence, strengths, and possibilities, rather than their limitations. The emphasis will be on exploring, strengthening and developing a client's coping mechanisms/risk reduction strategies. The goals will also be used so that both clients and the counselor can measure their progress and know when counselling is complete.

#### **❖ Appointments**

Making the Links tries to meet the needs of all clients. In order to accommodate many clients, we need to ensure that every available space is used. Therefore, please keep your appointments as scheduled. In the event that you are unable to attend, please notify your counsellor at least 24 hours in advance. Clients cancelling or not showing repeatedly for regular counselling appointments will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis but may be refused additional service if we deem it appropriate to do so.

Appointments are scheduled to last upwards of 55 minutes. We have a maximum waiting period of 15 minutes past your scheduled appointment time. After this grace period, you may be asked to reschedule.

❖ **E-mail and Internet Policy**

E-mail is not a confidential form of communication and therefore we not conduct counselling by email and discourage the use of email communication between clients and counsellors beyond the scope of scheduling appointments. Making the Links counsellors do not accept invitations from clients to participate in their online social networks, nor do they invite clients to participate in their own personal online social networks (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc.)

❖ **Questions or Comments**

Should you have any questions, concerns or suggestions regarding the information provided above or any other aspects of the counselling process, feel free to discuss them with your Counsellor or the *Making the Links* Program Manager at any time. Clients are free to discontinue counselling at any time, although it is usually advisable to discuss the reasons for considering discontinuing with your counsellor prior to acting on your decision.

**I have read and agree to the above Hassle Free Clinic - *Making the Links* Policies and Procedures.**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Client:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Print Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Print Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)