



ABOUT THE CLERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

A guide for parish clergy in the Diocese of Sydney

What is the Clergy Assistance Program?

Professional, confidential counselling for clergy licensed to a Sydney Anglican parish and their spouses.

As they serve in ministry, clergy may face a range of personal and parish issues which can impact on their relationships, ministry and wellbeing. The Clergy Assistance Program is provided by the Anglican Diocese of Sydney, in partnership with Anglicare, to support clergy and their spouses in their roles.

Clergy and their spouses may access the Clergy Assistance Program together or independently of each other. Confidentiality is offered to all those accessing the Clergy Assistance Program, and information is only shared between clergy couples with the consent of both parties.

Contacting the Clergy Assistance Program offers a safe and confidential opportunity to discuss issues and concerns with a clinically trained Christian counsellor who supports the values and ethos of the Diocese of Sydney.

What can be discussed at counselling?

Counselling provides the opportunity to talk about a wide range of concerns such as –

- personal and pastoral relationships
- interpersonal conflict
- family crises
- life changes
- grief and loss
- decision making
- sexuality and gender issues
- depression
- anxiety
- work-related stress
- addictions.

Clergy in the Diocese and their spouses are encouraged to contact the Clergy Assistance Program as soon as problems or early warning signs appear. Independent, professional assistance can help you deal with issues in a timely manner and avoid the risk of them escalating into a far more serious problem.

Confidentiality

The Clergy Assistance Program is a confidential service. The Diocese does not receive personal information about the clergy and their spouses who access this service. Discussions in counselling remain confidential and no personal information will be shared with anyone without a client's written permission. The only exception to this is where disclosure is required by law.

Confidentiality is offered to all those accessing the Clergy Assistance program and information is shared between clergy couples only with the consent of both parties.

Client records are securely filed in Anglicare's electronic case management system and maintained in accordance with National Privacy Principles.



External professionals

At times, the counsellor may form the view that a client requires the assistance of an external mental health care professional. Where this is the case the client will be provided with a number of suggested options, each of which will require the client to obtain a referral from their general practitioner. A client may also request the support of the Program to see an external professional of their choice.

Eligibility and costs

This service is funded by the Diocese for clergy licensed to a parish and their spouses.

The Diocese funds up to six sessions of counselling through the Clergy Assistance Program for individual clergy and their spouse each calendar year. Clergy and spouses may attend sessions together or separately.

Where counselling involves an external professional, the Program will also make a contribution toward the cost of these sessions provided that these sessions have been arranged on referral from the Program.

To contact Anglicare phone: 02 4228 0283

During office hours Monday – Friday (9am - 5pm)	A trained intake person will answer your call to make an appointment.
Outside office hours	A recorded message may be left for a response by Anglicare on the next working day.

To email the Program: clergyassistanceprogram@anglicare.org.au

Counselling sessions can be arranged at Anglicare sites and other locations as required.