

PREPARED FOR

Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling

# Setting Up a Workplace Counselling Programme

From First Counsellor to Scalable Wellbeing Infrastructure

Presented by Dr. Priya Dubey Sharma

Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling

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## Programme Overview

This programme empowers organisations to establish robust in-house counselling services, demonstrating how internal programmes often achieve superior utilisation and impact compared to external Employee Assistance Programmes. Learn to design a programme tailored to your unique organisational needs and cultural context for maximum benefit.

### Learning Objectives

- ✓ Understand the distinct advantages and disadvantages of in-house, external, and hybrid counselling models, enabling you to make an informed choice for your organisation's specific needs and resources.
- ✓ Develop expertise in selecting qualified counsellors who possess the right professional credentials, cultural sensitivity, and ethical framework to serve your employees effectively.
- ✓ Master the intricacies of programme design, including establishing accessible entry points, determining appropriate session limits, and creating clear referral pathways for specialised support.
- ✓ Learn to strike a crucial balance between maintaining strict confidentiality for employees and ensuring organisational accountability for programme oversight and employee well-being.
- ✓ Acquire practical methods for measuring the effectiveness and impact of your workplace counselling programme, allowing for continuous improvement and demonstration of ROI.
- ✓ Gain insights into the current landscape of the Indian counselling profession, including qualifications, regulatory considerations, and strategies for fostering cultural acceptance of mental wellness support.

#### WHO SHOULD ATTEND

This programme is designed for Chief Human Resources Officers (CHROs), HR Directors, and CEOs of mid to large-sized organisations seeking to implement or enhance their internal workplace counselling initiatives.

## Programme Content

### 1. In-House vs. External vs. Hybrid Counselling Models

Explore the fundamental differences between purely internal, outsourced Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs), and hybrid models. Understand how an in-house approach can foster greater trust and cultural resonance, potentially leading to higher engagement and more relevant support for employees. We will discuss the operational, financial, and strategic considerations crucial for deciding which model best aligns with your organisational goals and employee demographics.

 **Activity:** Group discussion on preferred models based on organisational case studies.

### 2. Counsellor Selection: Qualifications, Cultural Fit, and Confidentiality

Delve into the critical criteria for selecting counsellors who not only meet professional qualification standards but also demonstrate a deep understanding of the Indian cultural context and workplace dynamics. We will examine best practices for establishing robust confidentiality protocols, ensuring employees feel secure in seeking support, and structuring reporting mechanisms that uphold privacy while allowing for necessary oversight.

 **Activity:** Role-playing exercise on initial counsellor screening questions.

### 3. Programme Design: Access, Session Limits, and Referral Pathways

Learn to architect a user-friendly and effective counselling programme. This section covers strategies for ensuring easy access to services, such as discreet booking systems and clear communication about the programme's availability. We will also address how to determine appropriate session limits that provide sufficient support without creating dependency, and how to design seamless referral pathways for employees requiring specialised care beyond the scope of in-house services.

 **Activity:** Brainstorming session on accessible programme communication strategies.

#### 4. Confidentiality and Organisational Accountability Balance

Navigate the sensitive intersection of employee confidentiality and organisational responsibility. Understand the legal and ethical imperatives surrounding privacy in counselling and learn practical methods for safeguarding employee information. Simultaneously, explore how organisations can maintain appropriate oversight and accountability for the programme's ethical conduct and overall effectiveness without breaching trust.

 **Activity: Case study analysis on managing confidentiality breaches.**

#### 5. Measuring Programme Effectiveness

Discover evidence-based approaches to evaluating the impact and ROI of your workplace counselling programme. We will cover key metrics such as utilisation rates, employee feedback, changes in absenteeism, and potential impacts on productivity and morale. Learn how to collect and interpret data to demonstrate the value of the programme and identify areas for enhancement.

 **Activity: Developing a basic measurement framework for a hypothetical programme.**

#### 6. The Indian Counselling Landscape and Manas Partnership

Gain a nuanced understanding of the evolving Indian counselling profession, including prevalent qualifications, the current regulatory environment, and societal attitudes towards seeking mental wellness support. This section will also outline the Manas partnership model, illustrating how our expertise can support your organisation in building and managing a culturally competent and effective in-house counselling service.

 **Activity: Q&A session on the Indian counselling context and Manas's role.**

## Action Plan

Concrete steps for implementation.

Action	Owner	Timeline	Notes
Form a cross-functional committee (HR, Legal, Senior Management) to oversee programme development.	HR/Manager	Week 1	Ensure diverse representation to capture various organisational perspectives.
Conduct a needs assessment survey among employees to gauge interest and preferred access methods.	HR	Month 1	Anonymise survey responses to encourage honest feedback.
Develop a detailed programme policy document outlining scope, confidentiality, and referral procedures.	HR/Legal	Week 2	Consult with legal counsel to ensure compliance with all relevant laws.
Identify and vet potential in-house or partner counsellors based on defined selection criteria.	HR	Month 1	Prioritise culturally competent professionals with relevant experience.
Design and implement a communication plan to launch the programme and educate employees.	HR/ Communications	Month 2	Utilise multiple channels (email, intranet, town halls) for broad reach.
Establish baseline metrics and a system for ongoing programme evaluation and reporting.	Leadership/HR	Quarter 1	Define key performance indicators (KPIs) aligned with organisational well-being goals.

## About Manas



### Dr. Priya Dubey Sharma

Founder & Consulting Psychologist | Applied, Organizational & Behavioural Psychologist | PhD | 18+ Years

Dr. Priya Dubey Sharma brings 18+ years of applied psychology to corporate wellness. She has worked with SBI, educational institutions, and corporate teams across India. Her evidence-based approach combines CBT, mindfulness, and culturally contextualised psychology for measurable outcomes. She is the creator of the Performance FOMO Index™ and the High-Functioning Distress Framework™.

### Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling

A MSME-registered organisation dedicated to evidence-based mental wellness.

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Ready to Partner With Us?



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**Disclaimer:** This document has been prepared by Dr. Priya Dubey Sharma – Founder & Consulting Psychologist (Applied, Organizational & Behavioural Psychologist, PhD, 18+ years), Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling (UDYAM-MP-10-0120839). Content is for programme overview and educational purposes only. Nothing herein constitutes legal advice regarding POSH Act compliance – organisations should consult qualified legal counsel for specific legal guidance. For clinical or psychological support, please reach out to the Manas Team for personalised guidance, or consult a qualified Psychiatrist or licensed mental health professional. © 2026 Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling. All rights reserved. Confidential – prepared specifically for the named organisation. For queries: [manu@manas365.com](mailto:manu@manas365.com) | +91 99818 13224 This document does not constitute a legal instrument and carries no legal standing or admissibility in any court of law or official proceeding.