

# Need to talk

Emotional support and Living with Sight Loss courses for people affected by sight loss



## Introduction

**If you're experiencing sight loss, you are probably worried about your future and the changes you're facing. You may have feelings of sadness, anger or anxiety and this could affect you daily. During these times, many people find it useful to talk through their feelings with someone outside their usual circle of family and friends. So, if you need to talk – we're here to listen.**

Through the Need to Talk service, Fighting Blindness offers free counselling and Living with Sight Loss courses for people with sight loss across the border counties of the Republic of Ireland, including counties Donegal, Louth, Cavan, Sligo, Leitrim and Monaghan.

Our team of counsellors and Living with Sight Loss coordinators have lots of experience gained over many years of working with people affected by sight loss.

Through confidential face-to-face, telephone or online counselling and Living with Sight Loss courses, we'll support you through these difficult times.

We work with people of all ages, including children and young people (11 years plus), as well as people who are supporting a person with sight loss who may also need someone to talk to.

# Counselling service

## Face-to-face

Fighting Blindness delivers a face-to-face counselling service as part of RNIB's Need to Talk Project. To find out more, please contact Fighting Blindness by telephone or email:

Phone: **+353 1 674 6496**

Email: **needtotalk@fightingblindness.ie**

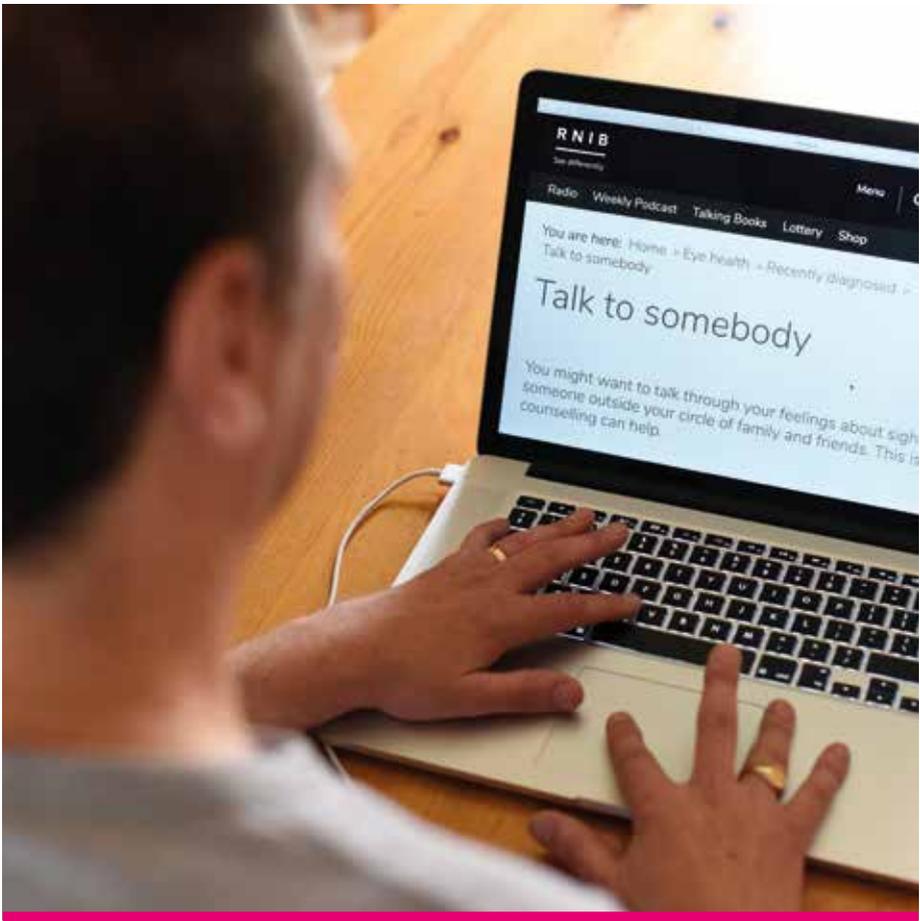
## Telephone counselling

After a simple referral to our team and within five working days, we'll arrange a telephone assessment with one of our counsellors. Your initial assessment gives you an opportunity to talk about your situation and explore what further support you might find useful.

If you then go on to have a series of counselling sessions from us, your Need to Talk counsellor will discuss and agree with you the number of sessions – usually between eight and 10. These will be arranged at times that are convenient for you and will always be with the same counsellor. The calls are free as your counsellor will call you.

In a crisis, we can give you information about other services and help in contacting them. If you need to speak to someone urgently, Samaritans are available 24 hours by free phone on **116 123** (UK and Ireland) or you can email **jo@samaritans.org**

**"I heard a radio ad for the Fighting Blindness counselling service. I bit the bullet and called them. I met a wonderful counsellor who helped me more than I can express. I can honestly say that Fighting Blindness changed my life. They saved me."**  
Angela



# Online counselling

With online counselling you can get the support you need using your laptop, tablet or smartphone. You'll be able to talk with your counsellor in one of the following ways:

## Email

Email gives you the opportunity to think about the important issues that you will work through, with the added flexibility of sending your email reply whenever you want, day or night. You will receive a reply from your counsellor at a set day and time each week.

## Video conferencing

Video conferencing (for example with Skype) using your computer, tablet or smartphone gives you the opportunity to chat, face-to-face in real time, in complete confidence with your counsellor.

## Instant messaging

With instant messaging (for example with WhatsApp) you will be able to have a real time, text-based conversation with your counsellor.

Whichever option you decide to use we usually recommend up to eight online sessions, lasting up to 50 minutes each.

## Living with Sight Loss courses

Losing your sight shouldn't mean losing your independence. Through our Need to Talk service we offer face-to-face and online Living with Sight Loss courses to help rebuild your confidence.

Our online Living with Sight Loss courses will support you in adapting to life with sight loss. We'll explore a range of topics covering mobility and daily living, emotional support and wellbeing, eye health and peer support.

You will also be able to get the support you need using your laptop, tablet or smartphone at a time that suits you, in the comfort of your own home.

Our face-to-face courses are a combination of facilitated sessions and relaxed talks, focusing on the different sources of help and support that are available and how to get them.

**"It has been a wonderful experience. I hope other people will have a chance to participate in these groups so that they know they are not the only one and you can talk it through with others."**

Mary

## Your privacy and safety

As part of our commitment to the Irish Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (IACP) and Ethical Framework for Counselling Professions, our counsellors review their work with their clients with another counsellor in what's called "supervision". Your anonymity is always protected during this process and any identifying information is not revealed.

The only circumstances where your identity might be revealed during the work with your counsellor is if we have very serious concerns about your safety or that of others. In such exceptional circumstances we might need to ensure your safety, but would strive to discuss this with you and assist you in getting emergency support.

We adhere to the IACP Ethical Framework for Counselling Professions and comply with the Data Protection Act.

Irish Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (IACP)

**01 230 3536** (general enquiries)

**[irish-counselling.ie](http://irish-counselling.ie)**

## See differently

### Get in touch

You can get in touch with Need to Talk's counselling and Living with Sight Loss team by telephone or email:

Phone: +353 1 674 6496

Email: [needtotalk@fightingblindness.ie](mailto:needtotalk@fightingblindness.ie)

Our aim is to get back to you within five working days of receiving your details. However, it may take a little longer at busy times, or when we have problems contacting you.

Need to Talk counselling services and Living with Sight Loss courses are provided free of charge.

For further information please visit  
[www.fightingblindness.ie/needtotalk](http://www.fightingblindness.ie/needtotalk)

Need to Talk is a five-year project (2017-2021) delivered through a partnership between RNIB in Northern Ireland and Scotland, and Fighting Blindness in the Republic of Ireland. The project is supported by the European Union's INTERREG VA Programme, managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB).

© RNIB registered charity in England and Wales (226227), Scotland (SC039316), Isle of Man (1226). Also operating in Northern Ireland.