

28% of people in the UK have consulted a counsellor or psychotherapist

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28% of people in the UK have consulted a counsellor or psychotherapist, suggests a BACP survey carried out earlier this year.

Our 2014 public attitudes survey, conducted by Ipsos MORI in March, was completed by 2084 adults aged 16-75 from across the UK. The results of this survey are the most recent figures in our ongoing efforts to track the changing attitudes to counselling and psychotherapy in the UK.

This year's figures show a significant increase in the number of people accessing therapy since our last public attitudes survey in 2010 when only one person in five said that they had consulted a counsellor or psychotherapist.

Women are most likely to have had therapy, with nearly a third (32%) saying they had used the services of a counsellor or psychotherapist, compared to 23% of men.

People aged between 35 and 44 are most likely to have had counselling or psychotherapy – with 38% – well over a third – having had it.

In total, over half of Britons have either had therapy themselves, or know someone who has.

BACP Governor, Dr Andrew Reeves, says:

“The significant increase in the number of people consulting a counsellor or psychotherapist is evidence that people are seeing more and more value in these extremely effective interventions.

“These results strongly suggest that the stigma attached to seeking counselling has diminished considerably since our previous attitudes surveys in 2004 and 2010.

“Seeing a counsellor or psychotherapist is increasingly considered an ordinary, everyday activity which many people choose to do in order to improve their mental wellbeing.”

Clearly, therapy is longer perceived as being the preserve of the very rich or the very ill. The fact that most people in the UK have either had therapy themselves, or know someone who has, suggests that it has become truly mainstream in much of society.

Our public website, www.itsgoodtotalk.org.uk, contains a wealth of information for anyone considering therapy including information sheets, videos, links to recent research, and a ‘find a therapist’ directory which people can use to find a private therapist suitable for them in their local area.

An infographic illustrating the key findings of our latest survey will be published soon. In addition, further press releases, focusing on specific areas covered in the survey, will follow.

Notes to editors

BACP is a professional body and a registered charity that sets standards for therapeutic practice and provides information for therapists, clients of therapy, and the public. We have over 40,000 members, working within a range of settings, including the NHS, schools and universities, workplaces and private practice, as well as third sector environments including voluntary, community and pastoral settings.

We are committed to providing prompt responses to media enquiries, drawing on our extensive member network of experts and spokespeople. For all media enquiries, call our media team on 01455 883 342, or email media@bACP.co.uk. For non-media enquiries please call our main switchboard on 01455 883 300.

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