

# What is Pre-Trial Therapy?



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Pre-trial therapy is any type of therapy you have between the day when the police receive the report of what happened to you, and the day the case goes to trial.

Pre-trial therapy can be useful, because your therapist can support you emotionally while the investigation goes on. It can also help you to handle the emotions and feelings that come up for you during the investigation.



When you think about starting therapy, your well-being is the most important thing. That's why it is always your choice, no-one else's, about when to start.

# What happens in Pre-Trial Therapy?

You will have regular sessions with your therapist. They will help you handle your emotions and feelings about what is going on for you. You will be asked to sign a “client contract”. This is an agreement that includes the main points in this leaflet. You sign to say you understand and agree to them.



Your therapist will make short notes at each session. You will be able to read those notes, if you want to, to check you are happy with them. It's important for you feel in control of what's written down in the sessions.

Sometimes, reading the notes can be difficult and upsetting. Your therapist can help you work out how to do this in a way that feels right for you.



# How is Pre-Trial Therapy different to other types of therapy?

Once a criminal investigation has started, all the people working in therapy and specialist support services must follow the same guidelines. The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) writes these. You can read the CPS Guidelines [here](#).



If you talk about any new information about what happened to you, your therapist may need to give this new information to the police. Also, if your therapist becomes worried that you or someone else is at risk of harm, they may have to share that information.

Sometimes, the police or CPS might ask to see the notes made in therapy. There are strict rules about when they are allowed to do this.



# Why would the police want to see my therapy notes?

The police will not be allowed to see all your therapy notes. They can only ask for specific bits of information that they think will help with the investigation or the gathering of evidence. This is called “a reasonable line of enquiry”.



If the police do ask to see the notes, your therapist will always ask you first whether you want to share them. You do not have to – nor does your therapist. But very rarely, if you don't share the notes, the crown court can be asked to make a court order. This would require you to share the information the police have asked. It may also mean that some parts of your notes could be seen in court by the defendant.

For this reason, your therapist follows CPS advice to keep notes of sessions short, and not to include unnecessary details.



**Who can I talk  
to if I have  
any questions  
about this?**





Your therapist will go through the things in this leaflet with you at your first appointment. Other professionals who are supporting you can give you information and answer your questions, too.



You can also talk to the officer in charge of your investigation, or your independent sexual violence advisor (ISVA) or your victim support service.



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