



Peer Counseling Program

The **Peer Counseling Program** is a volunteer-based peer-to-peer counseling program for adults who are at least 60 years old and living in Ramsey or Hennepin County. Trained **Peer Counselors** aged 55 years or better and staff work with older adults who have mild to moderate mental health issues.

The most common client issues are depression, anxiety, grief and loss, and adjustment issues related to aging. These issues may be triggered by a loss of mobility, the death of a loved one, a new medical diagnosis, or a change in residence. Counseling services are provided in the client's home.

After an initial seven-week, 36-hour training, the volunteer Peer Counselor works with one to three assigned clients on a weekly basis. When a counselor helps a client reach agreed-upon goals, that counselor is then assigned to new client. Ongoing training is also provided. The average volunteer commitment is 20-24 hours per month.

Additionally, Peer Counselors provide reminiscence, life review and wellness groups to clients and others in the community.

Client Criteria:

- Age 60 or better
- Experiencing mild to moderate depression or anxiety or grief and loss due to a significant life event
- Resident of Hennepin or Ramsey County
- Person does not reside in a nursing home
- Person agrees to participate in program evaluation
- Cognitively able to participate in the program
- Agrees to in-home assessment interview
- Will accept private weekly counseling meetings

Little Brothers – Friends of the Elderly is an international, nondenominational, volunteer-based, nonprofit organization. We are committed to reducing social and emotional isolation, loneliness, and mental health difficulties, while promoting well-being and independence among older adults in the Twin Cities Metro Area.

Volunteers: **612.746.0753** or volunteers@littlebrothersmn.org.

Client referrals: **612.746.0738** or counseling@littlebrothersmn.org.