

## A Few Words from CLAIR on Using the JET Online Counselling Service

March 2022

Dear JET Participants,

CLAIR has established the “JET Online Counselling Service” (available via Skype and webmail) for JET Programme participants with the aim of enhancing mental health support for current JET participants, so that they may continue to excel at foreign language instruction, international exchange, sports instruction, and other internationalisation activities in their communities, under optimal mental and physical health. We ask that you please read the following carefully so that you are able to make use of this service for your own well-being.

In November 2021, CLAIR conducted a survey concerning mental health, receiving a response from roughly 1,300 JET Programme participants out of about 5,000 (20%+). Of those who responded, about 600 participants (~46%) expressed concerns related to their current life in Japan, citing less interaction with friends/co-workers/etc., and worries related to their future careers, among others. This survey has helped CLAIR better understand the nature of some issues JET participants are grappling with. In light of all this, we expect that these services may be useful in solving problems for JET participants, but it is of course impossible to solve every problem 100 percent. Counselling allows one to have someone listen to their problems, and is a process which enables people, with the help of a counsellor, to identify and organise their own problems. However, please keep in mind that ultimately it is you who must solve your problems, and in certain situations, there may be problems that cannot be solved.

Additionally, this service is unable to provide a diagnosis of a mental illness or disorder, and the counsellors are unable to prescribe medication. Depending upon the circumstances, it may be necessary to see a specialist medical practitioner, such as a psychiatrist, and assume a more active role in taking care of one’s own mental health. For JET participants, this type of medical care is covered by national health insurance, and we recommend keeping this in mind as a possible course of action.

Previously, information related to the participant, including the content of consultation, was reported to CLAIR in order to confirm that the services were only being used by JET participants and to ensure that our service providers were offering adequate consultation. However, from now on, any use of the services outlined below, including the content of consultations, will be kept completely anonymous not only from contracting organisations, but from CLAIR as well. We hope this change encourages JET participants to use the services with a greater peace of mind.

CLAIR provides two counseling services: web-mail counselling and counselling via Skype. While web-mail counselling can be used an unlimited number of times, counselling via Skype may be used up to 7 times in one year. Therefore, it is recommended to try web-mail counselling first, and then use Skype counselling as needed.

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We ask that participants make additional arrangements for their own counselling in situations where there are long-term issues or problems that go beyond the scope of this service. The JET Mental Health Counselling Assistance Programme is also available to subsidise counselling costs not covered by health insurance. Therefore, please consider making use of this programme, in conjunction with any counselling arrangements made independently.

Furthermore, as it can take up to several days to receive a response or appointment from this service, it should not be used for emergency or crisis situations. Should such a situation arise, please refer to the various helplines and resources listed in the appendices of the General Information Handbook (GIH), available at the following link: <http://jetprogramme.org/en/gih/>.

In closing, we hope that you will keep the above points in mind when making use of this service to aid in resolving any mental health issues you may encounter, to ensure that you are able to work to the best of your abilities, and that you lead both a mentally and physically healthy life in Japan.

Best Regards,

Director, Department of JET Programme Management  
Council of Local Authorities for International Relations (CLAIR)