

What happens, *and why.*

Your assessment, the workshop, and the group — what each step is, why it helps, and how it works. Plain answers, no surprises.

Dr Sarah Anticich · Clinical & Organisational Psychologist · for MacMurray Centre · July 2026

First, the thing that matters most: nobody here thinks your symptoms are imagined. Your gut and your brain are wired together in both directions — that is physiology, not imagination. This pathway works on the stress and worry loops that keep real symptoms going, while your doctors keep caring for your gut.

STEP ONE

Your assessment and *triage.*

WHAT.

Before your first appointment you complete three things online, in your own time: a consent form, an intake form about you and your symptoms, and a short questionnaire — about five to eight minutes — asking how things have been over the past two weeks. Some people are then invited to a 50-minute one-to-one appointment with Dr Sarah Anticich to talk things through properly.

WHY.

So you start in the right place. Some people need one workshop; some do best in a small group; some need one-to-one support first. The questionnaire helps us see what your symptoms are costing you — sleep, food, work, confidence — and a clinician, not a computer, makes the final decision about what to offer you.

HOW.

You refer yourself, or your doctor refers you. We respond within two business days.

You complete the online forms — from home, no waiting room.

We recommend a starting point and explain why. Nothing is locked in: if a step is not helping, we adjust.

STEP TWO

The *workshop*.

WHAT.

A half-day session, in a group, that explains what is actually happening between your gut and your brain — and teaches your first practical tools, including a two-minute reset you can use the moment symptoms spike. You leave with a toolkit and a plan.

WHY.

Because understanding changes things. When you can see why a flare spirals — body first, thinking second, choices third — the fear around symptoms starts to lose its grip, and the fear is often what keeps the cycle going. Many people find the workshop alone gets them moving again.

HOW.

No diagnosis needed to attend, and no one is asked to share their story — you can simply sit, listen and learn. You book a date, pay at booking, and receive a preparation pack. Southern Cross members may be able to claim — we include a claiming guide.

Afterwards you choose: continue with the tools on your own, join the four-week group, or talk with us about one-to-one support.

STEP THREE

The four-week *group*.

WHAT.

Four weekly sessions with the same small group of people who actually get it. Week by week you build the full skill set: settling your nervous system, sorting facts from fear, getting back to the food, places and activities that have shrunk — and a personal plan for flares and setbacks.

WHY.

Because gut symptoms are isolating, and isolation makes them worse. Sitting with others who live the same pattern takes the shame out of it — and skills learned together tend to stick. Four focused weeks is enough to change the trajectory without taking over your life.

HOW.

What is said in the group stays in the group — confidentiality is agreed by everyone in session one.

Speaking is always optional. Come regularly, arrive on time, participate at your own pace.

You fill in a short questionnaire before and after, so you can see your own progress in numbers — and, with your consent, your doctor sees it too.

CONTACT

Questions, or ready to start? consultant@sarahanticich.co.nz · executiveframe.co.nz/health-dgbi.html · Auckland · Christchurch · Queenstown · telehealth nationwide. If you are ever in crisis, this service is not an emergency service — call 111, or contact your GP or public mental health team.

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