

Privacy Policy for Management of Personal Information (v4.1)

This document describes the privacy policy of Australian Clinical Psychologists for the management of clients' personal information. The psychological service provided is bound by the legal requirements of the Australian Privacy Principles set out in the *Privacy Act* 1988 (Cth) and the NSW Health Records and Information Privacy Act (2002).

Personal information

Your information is held in a secure electronic document management system which is accessible only by your psychologist and authorised staff or service providers. The information on each file includes personal information such as name, address, contact phone numbers, medical history, referrals, notes of sessions, and other personal information collected as part of providing the psychological service.

How your personal information is collected

Your personal information is collected in a number of ways including when you provide it directly to your psychologist, electronic and hardcopy forms, correspondence via email and text messages. Other health practitioners, service providers, case managers, insurers and lawyers provide personal information via referrals, correspondence, phone calls and reports.

Purpose of holding personal information

Your personal information is gathered and used for the purpose of providing psychological services, which includes assessing, diagnosing and treating, or providing a report. The personal information is retained in order to document what happens during sessions, and enables the psychologist to provide a relevant and informed psychological service. In specific circumstances deidentified data such as scores on questionnaires might be used for research purposes. This data will not include anything that can identify you such as name or date of birth.

Consequence of not providing personal information

Psychologists are required to keep clear and accurate client records as part of their professional obligations. If you do not wish for your personal information to be collected, we may not be able to provide the psychological service to you. Please discuss any concerns you have with your psychologist.

Confidentiality of information

All personal information gathered by the psychologist during the provision of the psychological service will remain confidential though there are exceptions.

Your consent will be requested

1. to provide verbal or written reports to another professional or agency such as a GP, insurer, case manager, rehab provider or lawyer; or

2. to discuss the material with another relevant person, such as a parent, employer or other health provider; or
3. when making associated referrals for yourself or others such as family members as agreed with the psychologist; or
4. to disclose the information in another way requested by you.

Psychologists are required to consult and receive supervision from colleagues from time to time. If your information is shared in this context, your information will be deidentified in such a way that you remain anonymous.

Exceptions to Confidentiality

There are situations where your personal information may be released without obtaining your consent, including when:

1. it is subpoenaed by a court; or
2. the psychologist believes you or another person is at risk of serious harm, or
3. it is required because the psychologist must make a mandatory report, or
4. disclosure is otherwise required or authorised by law.
5. For research purposes, though no identifiable information will be released such as name or date of birth (data will be anonymous).

Use of artificial intelligence (AI)

A note-taking tool, Heidi, that utilises AI will be used with your consent. Heidi is compliant with the Australian Privacy Principles and the Privacy Act. All data is encrypted and stored within Australia. Audio recordings are not retained. Notes generated by Heidi will be reviewed and amended by your clinician and stored as part of the usual client file. Data will only be used to provide you with a service.

Requests for access and correction to client information

At any stage you may request to see and correct the personal information kept on file. The psychologist may discuss the contents with you and/or give you a copy, subject to the exceptions in the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth). If satisfied that personal information is inaccurate, out of date or incomplete, reasonable steps will be taken in the circumstances to ensure that this information is corrected. All requests for access to or correction of personal information should be directed to your psychologist. These requests will be responded to in writing within 30 days, and an appointment will be made if necessary for clarification purposes.

Concerns

If you have a concern about the management of your personal information, you may inform your psychologist. Upon request you can obtain a copy of the Australian Privacy Principles, which describe your rights and how your personal information should be handled. Ultimately, if you wish to lodge a formal complaint about the use of, disclosure of, or access to your personal information, you may do so with the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner by phone on 1300 363 992, online at <https://www.oaic.gov.au/privacy/privacy-complaints/lodge-a-privacy-complaint-with-us> or by post to: Office of the Australian Information Commissioner, GPO Box 5288, Sydney, NSW 2001.