

Privacy Policy

The Cottage Counselling Centre is committed to protecting your privacy. Our counselling services are bound by the legal requirements of the National Privacy Principles from the Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000.

Your Personal Information

As part of providing a service to you, we need to collect personal information which may include your name, contact details such as address, phone numbers, date of birth, as well as details of issues which you have been discussing with your counsellor.

Your files are held in a secure location. Your counsellor will be consulting with their supervisor, and information about your counselling sessions may be discussed from time to time. These communications are confidential and de-identified, and the purpose of supervision is to enhance the quality of care you receive.

How we use your personal information

This information is gathered in order to document what happens during sessions, and enables the counsellor to provide a relevant and informed service.

Some information is collected for statistical and professional purposes. This information is de-identified, and is not personal or sensitive information.

This information may be used in order to compile statistics such as the number of clients we see on a monthly basis, the ages of clients counselled etc. This information may be used to administer, manage or develop our services.

Confidentiality

All personal information gathered during the provision of the service will remain confidential and secure, except when:

1. We have consent from you (or your legal authority) to share with a relevant person
2. There is an immediate risk of harm to a person or persons, and failure to disclose the information would place you or another person at risk
3. There is a legal obligation to do provide information
4. In consultation with a supervisor (in which case your identity is concealed)

Requests for access to client information

At any stage you may request to see information which is kept on file about you. The counsellor may discuss the contents with you, and/or give you a copy. Requests for access will be responded to within seven days, and an appointment will be made, if necessary, for clarification purposes. You have the right to request amendments if there are inaccuracies in this information.

Concerns

If you have a concern about the management of your personal information, please inform the Director. Upon request you can obtain a copy of the Australian Government's National Privacy Principles, which

describes your rights and how your information should be handled. Ultimately, if you wish to lodge a formal complaint about the use of, or access to, your personal information, you may do so with the Office of the Federal Privacy Commissioner on 1300 363 992, or GPO Box 5218, Sydney, NSW, 1042.