

Please Note: *If there is anything on these pages that you do not understand, please discuss with the clinician.*

Policy for Management of Personal Information

This document describes the policy of HealthWISE New England Northwest for the management of the practice's client information. The psychological service provided is bound by the legal requirements of the:

- National Privacy Principles from the Privacy Act (1988)
- Health Privacy Principles from the Health Records & Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW)

Your Mental Health Records

Your clinician will need to collect and record personal information from you that is relevant to your current situation. This is a necessary part of your health assessment and treatment. You do not have to provide all your personal information, but if you do not, this may affect the health service that HealthWISE can provide, so please discuss this with your clinician.

Purpose of collecting and holding information

Information gathered is accessible only by authorised employees of HealthWISE. This information is retained in order to document what happens during sessions, and enables your clinician to provide a relevant and informed mental health service. De-identified clinical information may be provided to the Hunter New England Central Coast Primary Health Network for use by the Australian Government Department of Health for research and service development purposes. This would include details such as your date of birth, gender, and types of services used, but would not include your name, address or Medicare number. Information will not be provided to the Department of Health if you do not give your consent.

Release of Information

As you were referred to HealthWISE by your GP or health professional, your clinician is required to discuss your referral and intervention with your practitioner and provide written summary reports of your progress.

Confidentiality

All personal information gathered by your clinician during the provision of the health service will remain confidential and secure except where:

1. It is subpoenaed by a court; or
2. Failure to disclose the information would place you or another person at serious and imminent risk; or
3. Your prior approval has been obtained to
 - a) provide a written report to another professional or agency. e.g. a GP; or
 - b) discuss the material with another person, e.g. a parent;
4. Disclosure is otherwise required or authorised by law.

Further Information

Consultations

HealthWISE provides services:

- Face to face
- By phone
- On secure video consultation platforms

You can arrange your preferred consultation method with your clinician.

Cancellation Policy

Please be aware of our cancellation policy. If you need to cancel or postpone your appointment, please give at least **24 hours'** notice. Failure to attend, or cancelling your appointment at short notice may reduce the number of sessions available to you. Two missed appointments will result in cancellation of your service and your GP will be advised. Please advise of cancellations by phone on **6766 1394** during office hours.

Access to Your Records

At any stage, you are entitled to access information about yourself kept on file, unless the relevant legislation indicates otherwise. Your clinician may discuss with you appropriate forms of access. All requests by patients for access to information held about them should be lodged with the Clinical Team Leader, HealthWISE New England Northwest, PO Box 1916, Tamworth NSW 2340. The Team Leader will respond to these requests within 14 days and an appointment will be made if necessary for clarification purposes. You may be charged a fee if you request copies of your personal information or health record.

Concerns

If you have a concern about the management of your personal information, please contact the Clinical Team Leader on 6766 2822. Upon request you can obtain a copy of the 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 2001
- Office of NSW Privacy Commissioner on (02) 1800 472 679, or GPO Box 7011, Sydney, NSW 2001

Feedback

We welcome your feedback to help us to continuously improve our services. To give feedback on your HealthWISE experience or make a complaint you can talk to a staff member, complete a feedback form, use the feedback button on our website or contact Health Care Complaints Commission www.hccc.nsw.gov.au or Ombudsman NSW www.ombo.nsw.gov.au.