

Privacy & Information Management Policy

Approving Authority	General Manager
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Policy Owner	General Manager
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Document Location	Sharepoint, Policies & Procedures
Description	This policy sets out the principles, objectives and responsibilities for maintaining the privacy of client information and information management principles at Therapy Pro.

Related Documents

- *Privacy & information Management Procedure*
- *Client Record Keeping Procedure*
- *Client Registration Form*
- *Client Consent Form*
- *Consent Policy*

1. Definition

Privacy and information management is the process of securely collecting, organising and storing client personal information.

2. Preamble

Therapy Pro is committed to safeguarding a client's privacy and personal information, and under obligations to comply with the *Privacy Act 1988*, will only collect, use, store and maintain personal information to meet responsibilities of providing quality services to clients. Information about a client will be stored securely. Legislation regarding disposal of records varies between States and Territories however in general records regarding adults will be kept for seven years following the date of last contact and records regarding children will be kept until the child attains the age of 25 years. Records will then be destroyed or permanently de-identified. In the Northern Territory, records of Indigenous Australians should be kept throughout the life of the individual.

3. Policy Statement

Therapy Pro will collect information in a fair, legal and transparent way, and will securely maintain and store information on clients whilst they are accessing Therapy Pro services. Therapy Pro will maintain secure information management systems and processes to make sure the privacy of clients is maintained. Clients information is securely stored and Therapy Pro retain client information for 7 years following the date of last contact for adults, and children's information is retained up until they are 25 years old. Clients can request access to their personal information held on file by Therapy Pro by telephone or in writing. Records will be transferred to another service provider only with the informed consent of the client concerned.

4. Policy Objectives

Client information will only be used for the purposes for which it was collected, or other purposes as agreed to by the client (for example referral to other services). If Therapy Pro is required to release personal information to comply with legislation, clients will be informed of this requirement. How, why and what Therapy Pro collects client information for, will be clearly explained to clients. The exception to this is where a therapist establishes risk of harm, abuse or neglect to the client or others, where a failure to disclose relevant client information would result in identifiable risk or harm to the client or others. Where this can be prevented, therapists may need to provide the minimal information necessary to avert harm, abuse or neglect of a person, to the relevant third parties.

5. Responsibilities

All Therapy Pro staff are responsible for:

- advising clients about how their private information will be collected, used, stored and accessed in order to provide quality services
- taking reasonable steps to preserve the security, privacy and confidentiality of sensitive and personal client information, and appropriately using the client information management system
- taking precautions to ensure any personal and sensitive information about clients is not misused, intentionally or unintentionally
- regularly reviewing and updating client information as necessary to ensure completeness, accuracy and currency
- providing feedback and suggesting ideas for improving the client information management system

- contacting the General Manager immediately to discuss situations where they believe that their duty of care to vulnerable people may require the disclosure of a client's personal information
- contacting the General Manager immediately to provide notice of any serious breach of a client's private and sensitive information, including unauthorised access to, unauthorised disclosure of, or loss of electronic data or records

The General Manager is responsible for:

- organising and making available to staff a client information management system to store and secure client information
- following up on requests by clients for access to their personal information.
- regularly reviewing the client information management system
- identifying and implementing improvements to privacy and information management processes
- responding to, and supporting, therapists to determine risk and any requirements to disclose client personal information to minimise or avert harm, abuse or neglect
- Implementing investigations into privacy breaches

6. Monitoring and reporting

Therapy Pro will take all reasonable steps to ensure that hard copy and electronic client information is secure and provide notice of any serious breach to affected individuals and the Privacy Commissioner in accordance with the formal legal requirement (effective Feb 2018) under the Privacy Act 1988. Where there are reasonable grounds to suspect a data breach, Therapy Pro will carry out an expeditious and reasonable assessment of the breach within 30 days to determine the kind of information leaked, the sensitivity of the information, the kind of persons who may have obtained the information and whether the information has been otherwise protected.

Therapy Pro will monitor the privacy and information management procedure of the organisation and take all reasonable steps to correct client personal information where it is found it is inaccurate, out-of-date, incomplete, irrelevant or misleading (considering the purpose for which the information is held).

In circumstances where it is required by law, or where it is permitted by law, or with the client's consent, Therapy Pro will disclose information to the client and appropriate third parties as is required.