



Data Protection Information for users of Northumbria Counselling & Psychotherapy Service.

What information is held and why?

In order to carry out a professional and effective counselling service N.C & P maintains a record of client attendance and counsellors maintain clinical case notes. General statistics are kept about numbers attending the Service and types of issues presented with. These statistics do not contain information from which an individual can be identified and are solely used to monitor and improve the effectiveness of the Service.

Security

Records are retained securely while you remain registered with Northumbria Counselling and Psychotherapy, and are then disposed of confidentially. If you are referred as part of an E.A.P or company for staff counselling and access to your records are required, after you have completed counselling you will have to contact the E.A.P./Company concerned, clinical records are not held on behalf of EAPs or Companies.

Access

Under the Data Protection Act (1998) you have the right to access the notes held in your file. However if the notes include information that would identify a third party this will be removed to preserve the confidentiality of the third party unless the third party gives consent for access. (See note about EAPs above there is a fee payable for this service.)

Confidentiality

Our Service adheres to the strictest standards of confidentiality. Staff working for the Counselling service will not pass on personal information about clients, including information on attendance, to anyone outside of the service subject to the following exceptions:

- When the client has been referred as part of an EAP/private company, and they have requested follow up reports.
- Where the counsellor has the explicit consent of the client to disclose the information.
- Where the counsellor would be liable to civil or criminal court procedures if the information was not disclosed.
- Where the counsellor believes the client or a third party is at risk of harm or abuse or harm or danger to others.
- In the event of a perceived terrorist act.
- Producing reports with general statistical information.

In any of these circumstances the counsellor will seek to obtain consent to disclose information from the client. If there is no indication that permission to disclose will be given and the crisis or danger is sufficiently acute, the counsellor may pass on the information directly.

In line with their professional requirements counsellors may discuss process notes/experiences with a clinical supervisor which may be internal or external to N.C.&P. In these processes the identity and circumstances of clients are presented anonymously.

If you have any queries or concerns about our data protection policy, please feel free to speak to your counsellor.

The Data Protection Act (1998) requires us to obtain your consent for this record keeping. We need your signature to show that you have explicitly agreed with all the items previously mentioned within this document. When you begin your therapy at N.C.&P you will be asked to sign and date this document confirming that you have read and understood our Confidentiality policy.

Signature Date