

Strength and Strategies Counselling Services – Privacy Policy

Strength and Strategies Counselling Services is committed to protecting the privacy of its clients.

Our counselling services are bound by the legal requirements of the National Privacy Principles from the Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000.

This document describes the policy of Strength and Strategies Counselling Services for the management of our clients' information.

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, marital status, number of children you have, as well as details of issues which you have been discussing with your counsellor.

Clients' files are held in a secure location. The 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 the purpose of Professional Supervision is to enhance the quality of care you receive.

How we use your personal information

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

Strength and Strategies Counselling Services collects certain information for statistical and professional purposes. This information is not necessarily considered personal or sensitive information. Information is only considered to be personal information if the identity of the individual is apparent or can be reasonably ascertained from the information.

Your personal information may be used in order to compile statistics such as the number of clients we see on a monthly basis, the number of males/females, 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. It is subpoenaed by a court, or
2. You disclose information that informs us that you intend to harm yourself or another person or you know of such imminent risk to yourself or another person, or
3. Your prior approval has been obtained to:
 - a) Provide a written report to another professional or agency e.g. a GP or lawyer,
 - b) Discuss the material with another person e.g. a parent, partner or employer.

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

promptly 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, you should first contact Graeme Scott on 0423 595 716. You can also readily obtain online 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.