

CROOKES COUNSELLING & CONSULTING SERVICES PTY LTD

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POLICY FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF PERSONAL INFORMATION

This document describes the policy of **Crookes Counselling and Consulting Services** for the management of the practice's clients' information. The psychological service provided is bound by the legal requirements of the Australian Privacy Principles set out in the *Privacy Act* 1988 (Cth).

Client Information

Client files are held in a secure filing cabinet which is accessible only to authorised employees. The information on each file includes personal information such as name, address, contact phone numbers, medical history and other personal information collected as part of providing the psychological service

Purpose of Collecting & Holding Information

Your personal information is gathered as part of your assessment and treatment, is kept securely and, in the interests of your privacy, used only by your psychologist and the authorised personnel of the practice (as necessary). Your personal information is retained in order to document what happens during sessions and enables your psychologist to provide a relevant and informed psychological service to you.

How client's personal information is collected

Your personal information is collected in a number of ways during psychological consultation with **your practitioner**, including when you provide information directly **your practitioner** using hard copy forms, correspondence via email, when you interact directly with **Crookes Counselling & Consulting Service** employees such as receptionist and when other health practitioners provide personal information to **your practitioner**, via referrals, correspondence and medical reports.

Consequence of not providing personal information

If you do not wish for your personal information to be collected in a way anticipated by this Privacy Policy, **your practitioner** may not be in a position to provide the psychological service to you. You may request to be anonymous or to use a pseudonym, unless it is impracticable for **your practitioner** to deal with you or if **your practitioner** is required or authorised by law to deal with identified individuals. In most cases it will not be possible for you to be anonymous or to use pseudonym, however if **your practitioner** agrees to you being anonymous or using a pseudonym you must pay consultation fees at the time of the appointment.

Disclosure of personal information

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

1. It is subpoenaed by a court, or disclosure is otherwise required or authorised by law; or
2. Failure to disclose the information would in the reasonable belief of **the practitioner** place you or another person at serious risk to life, health or safety; or
3. Your prior approval has been obtained to:
 - (a) Provide a written report to another agency or professional, e.g. a GP or a lawyer; or
 - (b) Discuss the material with another person, e.g. a parent, employer, health provider, or third party funder; or
 - (c) Disclose the information in another way; or
 - (d) Disclose to another professional or agency (e.g. your GP) and disclosure of your personal information to that third party is for a purpose which is directly related to the primary purpose for which your personal information as collected.

Your personal information is not disclosed to overseas recipients, unless you consent or such disclosure is otherwise required by law. Your personal information will not be used, sold, rented or disclosed for any other purpose.

In the event that unauthorised access, disclosure or loss of a client's personal information occurs, **Crookes Counselling & Consulting Services** will activate its data breach action procedures and use all reasonable endeavours to minimise any risk of consequential serious harm.

Requests for access and correction to client information

At any stage you may request to see and correct the personal information about you kept on file. The psychologist may discuss the contents with you and/or give you a copy, subject to the exceptions in the Privacy Act 1998 (Cth). If satisfied that personal information is inaccurate, out of date or incomplete, reasonable steps will be taken in the circumstances to ensure that this information is corrected. All requests for access to or correction of your personal information held about you should be lodged with **your practitioner**. These requests will be responded to in writing within 30 days and an appointment will be made if necessary for clarification purposes.

Concerns

If you have a concern about the management of your personal information, please inform **your practitioner**. Upon request you can obtain a copy of the Australian Privacy Principles, which describes your rights and how your personal information should be handled. Ultimately, if you wish to lodge a formal complaint about the use of, disclosure of, or access to, your personal information, you may do so with the Australian Information Commissioner on 1300 363 992, online at <http://www.oaic.gov.au/privacy/making-a-privacy-complaint> or by post to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner, GPO Box 5218, Sydney, NSW 2001.