

## **DATA PRIVACY POLICY**

Clearview Counselling acknowledges that your privacy is very important and, as such, takes care to maintain client confidentiality. I am registered with the ICO (Information Commissioners Office) which means I need to tell you what data I am collecting from you and what I intend to do with it. These guidelines serve to protect your confidential material and ensure the integrity and professionalism of your Counsellor.

### **What information does Clearview Counselling hold?**

Before either face to face or online sessions begin, I will collect some personal information; for example name, age, address, email address, telephone number, any medication as well as details of your issue/s, your GP's details and an emergency contact. I will only collect information that is considered necessary for the effectiveness of face to face and online counselling and only I will have access to this information.

### **Data Quality**

I will always ensure personal information is gathered accurately. I will regularly check in with you as to whether there are any changes I should be aware of however please remember to advise me of any alterations so that all your data is current.

### **Data Use and Disclosure**

I will only collect information that is necessary for the outcome of positive face to face and/or online sessions. The use of information is to provide the best possible service to the client, to be there as a support and to protect the safety and well being of said client.

I will only disclose personal information if necessary (it will not be sold or used for unethical reasons).

Reasons for disclosure would be:

- If I believe a client is at risk of harm to themselves;
- If a client or anyone a client tells me about is at harm or risk of harm I may have to pass this information on to your GP or the police
- Upon receipt of a subpoena from a judge in a UK court of law, I am bound by British law to release your records. It is therefore important that you let me know of any impending court case

I would of course try to discuss and disclosures beforehand with you to obtain your consent but there may be times this is not possible.

### **Secure Storage**

Client information is stored on a secure encrypted platform which is designed specifically for Counsellors. My account is password protected and known only to myself. This secure storage platform is accessed via my laptop which is password protected and has anti virus systems installed. Hard copies of information that may be kept have any identifying information removed and the papers are kept securely in a locked box which only I have access to.

For online counselling only secure platforms are used; namely VSee and ProtonMail. These platforms are accessed via my password protected laptop and all virtual sessions take place in a secure and confidential environment.

Please note that client contact numbers are not stored in any mobile phones meaning that social media is not able to pick up any identifying client information via this route.

### **Confidentiality**

Clearview Counselling keeps all client data confidential and discussions during counselling sessions are subject to the same confidentiality. If your sessions are paid for or arranged via a third party, e.g. a friend, partner, spouse or family member, other than payment requests, invoices or receipts your counselling information will not be shared. If your sessions are paid for or arranged via your employer, company, charity or organisation the only information that will be shared is payment requests, invoices, receipts and confirmation that your counselling sessions are taking place.

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### **Your rights in relation to your personal data**

The new law gives you certain rights in relation to your personal data, in particular a right to a copy of your personal data, a right to request corrections, a right to have your personal data deleted and a right to make a complaint. You can exercise these rights at any time by contacting me directly.

### **Supervision**

It is a professional requirement that I attend regular clinical supervision to ensure that I am working to an acceptable professional and ethical standard. During supervision I may discuss client work. In order to protect your identity, your last name and any other identifying details are omitted. Please note that Supervisors are bound by the same code of ethics and confidentiality as Counsellors.

### **Professional Will**

In the unfortunate event I can no longer work with you due to unforeseen circumstances such as long term illness, death etc I have appointed a Clinical Executor who will have access to your details and will get in touch with you. They will not access your details before this time.

### **How long is your information retained for?**

Your information will be retained for 7 years from the date of completion of your sessions. This is the timeframe my insurance company requests. After this time it will be deleted from electronic storage and any hard copies of information shredded.

### **Opt in statement**

If you do not consent to me using your data in this way it is unlikely that I am able to work with you.

Do you consent to me using your data in this way? Please write yes or no.....

Full Name.....

Signature.....

Date.....

For more information regards your rights and/or if you are not happy with the way I use your data you can complain to ICO at [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk) or phone them on 0303 123 1113 (local rate) or 01625 545745 if you prefer to use a national rate number.

You may also contact the Information Commissioners Office to submit a complaint:

Information Commissioners Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF