

Privacy Policy

How your personal information is collected and stored is an important issue. This policy has been developed in response to the Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004 (PHIPA). It outlines for each client how information might be collected, stored or disclosed and the process should you have a complaint about the personal information contained on your file.

Collection of Information

Within my role as a Social Worker I seek to collect, disclose, and store information responsibly and only to the extent necessary. Information collected will include personal information such as personal characteristics, gender, age, home address and phone number, place of employment, cell and business numbers, ethnic background, family status, health and personal history. Not to collect such information would hinder my service to you, particularly in an emergency situation.

Information may also be collected for secondary purposes or a reason secondary to the primary purpose of my professional role. Some examples of a secondary purpose for information collection may include making a referral on behalf of a client, invoicing for clinical services, collecting on unpaid accounts, providing or seeking information to/from a referral source or collateral source, or for supervision or educational purposes.

Disclosure of Information

From time to time it may be necessary to share your personal information with other professionals, agencies or individuals for a specific purpose related to your treatment, Parenting Coordination, Custody Access Assessments, Mediation and Arbitration. It would be rare to disclose such information without your written consent. However, in an emergency situation where the client was considered to be a danger to his/herself or others, or in the event that a child is thought to be in danger, consent need not be sought. If your file contains information about others, this information would typically not be shared without the consent of the individual it relates to.

Third parties pay for the cost of some clinical services provided (e.g., insurance companies, lawyers, Employee Assistance Programs). In these cases personal information and case progress and participation will be shared. If you are receiving services under an Employee Assistance Program, information is not shared with your employer but it is shared with the service provider.

Protecting Personal Information

Paper information is either under supervision or secured in a locked cabinet in a restricted area. Computers have passwords and email is encrypted. Electronic information is directed through a direct line. Only reputable mail carriers or couriers are used.

Retention and Destruction of Personal Information

For legal and accountability purposes to regulatory agencies (e.g., Ontario College of Registered Social Workers and Social Service Workers, Ontario Association of Professional Social Workers) files are retained for a period of 10 years following the eighteenth birthday of the youngest client. Paper files containing personal information are destroyed by shredding. Electronic information is deleted and when the hardware is discarded it is physically destroyed.

Securing Your File

With some exceptions (e.g., information from other professionals or collateral sources, or if the information contained in a file is considered detrimental to your mental, emotional or physical health), you have the right to see what personal information is contained in your file. The current, regular fee applies for the time it takes to review the file prior to disclosing it to you or copying it. Requests for information contained in your file will be provided within 30 days or sooner. Requests for your file must be in writing to Jacqueline Vanbetlehem.

Accuracy of Information

If you believe there is a mistake in the information contained on your file please ask to have it corrected. This applies to factual information and not the perceptions or opinions of the practitioner. If there is a disagreement that a mistake was made, a brief written statement from the client will be included on the file disputing the information. If erroneous information has been sent to any third parties, such information will be corrected.

Complaints

If you have a question or wish to make a complaint, you may address it to the attention of Jacqueline Vanbetlehem.

For further information or to see the PHIPA, direct inquires to the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario

80 Bloor Street West, Suite 1700
Toronto, Ontario M5S 2V1
Phone (416) 326-3333
Web: www.ipc.on.ca
E-mail: commissioner@ipc.on.ca

I have read and understand the above policy.

Signature

Date