

## **INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

All clients have certain rights that are important to be aware of before treatment can continue. The information outlined in this document addresses issues such as the management of your personal information, limits of confidentiality, and finally my current fees and cancellation policy.

### **PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES**

Therapy addresses issues of a highly personal nature and it is important for the success of treatment that you have confidence in my ability to manage your records responsibly. As part of providing a psychological service to you, I will need to collect and record personal information that is relevant to your personal situation. Collection of personal information is a necessary part of psychological assessment and therapy.

Information I gathered as part of your assessment and treatment is only intended for me. The information is retained in order to document what happens during sessions and enables me to provide a relevant and informed psychological service. All client records must be kept for a minimum of seven-years from the time of your last contact or until the age of 25 if you start therapy before the age of 18 years old.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

With the exception of certain specific exceptions described below, you are entitled to confidentiality in relation to your personal information. I undertake everything reasonably possible to ensure that the personal information you provide to me during therapy will remain confidential and secure.

However, it is important to know there are certain, limited circumstances in which all psychologists, including me, may be compelled to provide information contrary to the obligations of confidentiality which I would otherwise owe to you. This can occur when:

- The information you have given to me is subpoenaed (officially requested) by a court of law;
- Failure to disclose the information would place you or another person at serious risk of harm; or
- Your prior approval has been obtained to:
  - Provide a written report to another professional or agency, e.g. A GP or a lawyer; or
  - Discuss the material with another person, e.g. a parent or employer.

#### *Additional issues regarding confidentiality*

- As part of good professional practice, Psychologists engage in peer supervision. If I was ever to discuss anything about the treatment, I am providing to you with my supervisor I would do so in a way that ensures that you cannot be identified. That is to say, I would de-identify the information in such a way that you could not be identified as the person I am talking about so that privacy is respected and protected;
- Under sections 182(1), 184 and 162(1)(c)-(d) of the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic.), I am required to report any information which I reasonably believe may indicate a child (somebody under the age of 18) may be the victim of physical injury or sexual abuse.

## **EXCHANGE OF CLIENT INFORMATION**

Sometimes as part of the assessment and therapy process, it can be helpful for me to seek information from other people or agencies that are relevant to you and your therapy (e.g., your GP, Medical Specialist, parent(s)/partner(s), support worker etc.) Where this is the case for you, we will discuss whether you are comfortable with this and I will seek your express consent before I make any such contact.

Please note that if you intend to claim rebates from Medicare or have another organisation (such as NDIS or TAC) paying for your treatment, then I am required to provide summary reports periodically outlining my assessment, diagnosis, treatment plan and/or treatment progress. Under the Medicare *Better Access Scheme* these reports will be sent to your referring doctor (GP/Psychiatrist).

## **USING A MENTAL HEALTH CARE PLAN**

You will need a valid MHCP and a referral letter from your GP/Psychiatrist in order for you to:

- book any sessions with me; and
- claim the Medicare rebate of \$128.40 (the Medicare Rebate) for your sessions with me.

In order for you to take advantage of the full 20 sessions per calendar year, your MHCP needs to be reviewed by a GP/Psychiatrist:

1. after your sixth session and before your seventh session; and
2. after your tenth session and before your eleventh session.\*

It is your responsibility to ensure you see your GP/Psychiatrist and provide your referral to me prior to your relevant appointments in order to claim the Medicare rebate. While I am still able to see you without a MHCP or necessary reviews of your MHCH, you will not be entitled to a Medicare rebate for any such sessions.

\* This assumes you have not used any of your annual 20 Medicare sessions with any other Psychologist.

## **ENDING THERAPY**

ACTIVE clients are those who make sufficiently regular appointments within a 1-3-month period.

If for any reason you decide to cease therapy, I request that you inform me of this decision either in person or by phone/email. In the event that you cease contact and/or are uncontactable for a period of 1-3 months, I reserve the right to designate you as a NON-ACTIVE client. This is to ensure other clients are not prevented from seeking treatment. NON-ACTIVE clients may resume treatment in the future; however, this will be subject to appointment availability (i.e., wait times are likely to apply).

## **FEES (applicable from 1 January 2021 until further notice)**

Fees are due at the completion of your consultation or in accordance with the cancellation policy outlined below.

**Standard 50-minute session = \$200\*\***

\*\* If you are entitled to a Medicare Rebate (\$128.40) your out of pocket cost = \$71.60

**Concession rate (must have a valid Health Care Card, Pension Card or Student Card) \$180\*\*\***

\*\* If you are entitled to a Medicare Rebate (\$128.40) your out of pocket cost = \$51.60

## **NDIS Billing**

Clients who have an approved NDIS plan and are given approval for psychological therapy will be accepted subject to availability.

## **ELECTRONIC STORAGE OF DATA - AUTOMATIC PAYMENTS**

In order to ensure we can spend the full 50 minutes of our sessions on treatment and to reduce the administrative overhead on my practice, it is my preference that we agree on an automatic payment method. If you opt to set up automatic payments, your credit/debit card information will be securely stored, and the agreed fee will be charged automatically at the end of your scheduled session.

I use a third-party client management system called Halaxy. Halaxy advises that its "payments gateway is powered by Braintree Paypal, one of the world's largest online payment providers that has a stringent data and security policy when it comes to storing cardholder details." When your card details are entered into Halaxy, they are stored and tokenised by Halaxy's payments gateway, meaning that once initially entered and captured your card details are not visible to me or Halaxy. If your card details need to be altered or updated, this requires your card to be completely re-entered, as a tokenised card is unable to be edited.

Your data will not be used for marketing purposes by me or any third parties. Some features of Halaxy require limited sharing of your non-clinical information with Halaxy's third party service providers to enable them to deliver their services to you and I (for example, to send SMS, your mobile number will be sent to the SMS gateway electronically so that SMS appointment reminders can be sent).

## **CANCELLATION POLICY (as of 1 January 2021)**

If, for some reason you need to cancel an appointment, please give **at least 24 hours' notice by email, text message or telephone**. If you fail to provide this notice, you will be charged a cancellation fee of \$150.

If you have any unpaid fees you will be unable to attend any further sessions until your outstanding fees are paid off. This is to prevent the accumulation of unnecessary debt which can cause financial stress to you and to me. I reserve the right to cancel any future appointments if payment is not made within 48-hours of a future appointment. You will be notified via email or phone should this occur as soon as reasonably possible. For the avoidance of doubt, no cancellation fee will be charged for any such cancellation by me.

I understand that sometimes very extraordinary circumstances mean that you are unable to provide 24 hours' notice of your inability to attend a booked appointment with me. In turn, I ask that you understand that it is difficult for me to book another client in your place at very short notice. For this reason, cancellations without adequate notice can cost me money and jeopardise my ability to keep my fees at their current level.