

## **Privacy Policy**

As a client of Psychology Link Australia (PLA), it is important that you feel confident that your personal information is managed in a professional and secure way. PLA follows the regulatory framework set by the Psychology Board of Australia's Code of Conduct. Please take the time to read the following document and if you have any questions, please discuss these with your psychologist.

### **Collection, Recording, and Use of Information**

In order to provide a therapeutic service to our clients, it is necessary for your psychologist to collect and record information such as your name, contact information, medical history, and other relevant information. Your personal information is recorded in order to document what happens during sessions and enables your psychologist to provide a relevant and informed service to you. Use of information for research, quality assurance, and education activities may occur. All information in these cases will be de-identified. You will be informed when such activities are being conducted and given the opportunity to 'opt out' of any involvement.

### **Confidentiality and Disclosure of Information**

All personal information gathered by your psychologist during the provision of the psychological service will remain confidential 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 psychologist, 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 professional or agency (e.g., a GP, a school, or a lawyer); or
  - b) Discuss the material with another person (e.g., a parent, school, employer, health provider, or third party funder); or
  - c) 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 was collected.

Your personal information will not be used, sold, rented, or disclosed for any other purposes.

Medicare requires that your psychologist must provide summary reports regarding you/your child's treatment progress if they are using a Mental Health Care Plan (MHCP) or Enhanced Primary Care (EPC). Under the Medicare scheme these reports are sent to your referrer (e.g. your GP, Paediatrician, or other medical service provider). For clients using NDIS funding, a treatment summary report is usually required every 12 months, upon renewal of your NDIS plan.

### **Access to and Storage of Information**

Services provided by PLA are bound by the legal requirements of the National Privacy Principles from the Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000. Ethical guidelines state that records regarding adults should be kept for seven years following the date of last contact, and records regarding children should be kept until the child is 25 years of age. Client files are securely stored with the psychologist and are only accessible by your treating psychologist.

PLA uses Halaxy for our practice management software and can store client information required for the use of administrative purposes (such as making bookings, sending appointment reminders). Halaxy data is stored in protected data centres hosted on Amazon Web Services (AWS), with physical data centres located in Australia. The data is protected by bank-grade security, 256-bit encryption, and is backed up daily. For payments, Halaxy uses a separate, tokenised system through Braintree/PayPal so that card details are not stored within Halaxy itself.

PLA uses CoviU, a video/phone platform, for our telehealth services. Audio, video, and data exchanged during a call/video call are not stored; they are transmitted peer-to-peer and remain encrypted between participants.

Our website may use cookies to enhance your experience while navigating our site. Cookies are small files placed on your computer or device that allow us to track certain information about your visit. This includes analysing website traffic, personalising content, and serving targeted advertisements. We may also use cookies from third-party services such as Google Analytics to collect anonymous data for statistical purposes. We use Google Analytics to help analyse how users engage with our website. Google analytics tracks basic data points for analysis, you are not able to be personally identified through this process. By using our website, you consent to the use of cookies in accordance with this Privacy Policy. You can adjust your browser settings to refuse all cookies or to indicate when a cookie is being sent. However, if you do not accept cookies, you may not be able to access some portions of our website or experience full functionality.

A client has a right to access information in their client file, unless one of the exceptions to National Privacy Principle 6 applies. These exceptions restrict access where:

- Giving access would pose a serious threat to the physical or mental health of any individual,
- Giving access would jeopardize (something), and/or
- Giving access would hinder any law enforcement activity.

If you wish to view and/or have a copy of any information contained in your file, then by law it is necessary to make the request in writing and send it via email to your treating psychologist .

Upon receiving your request, your psychologist will discuss your access options with you. Please allow 14 days for these arrangements to be made. A full session fee will be charged to you.

#### **Changes to this Privacy Policy**

PLA reserves the right to modify and update our Privacy policy as required, at any time. Any changes on this page are effective immediately upon posting.

#### **APS Charter for Clients of psychologists**

The APS Charter for Clients explains your rights as a client. A copy of the APS Charter is provided on the PLA website for you to view and/or download.