

Informed Consent for Centacare Services

Your consent is needed for us to provide a service. Please make sure you read and understand this form and speak to your worker if there is anything you do not understand.

NATURE OF SERVICE

Centacare provides a range of services and programs. Within these programs, individual services vary depending on the worker and the client, and the particular reason you are seeking our services. Your worker will explain the service that they will provide to you, as well as any benefits and risks involved. Your worker is there to help you, so ask questions to make sure you understand the services you will be receiving.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

We need to collect information about you that is relevant to the service that we provide. The way we collect, store and manage this information is explained in our **Privacy Policy for the Management of Personal Information**, which is set out below. This policy also explains our confidentiality obligations, and the situations where we might need to disclose your information without your consent.

You should read this policy before you sign this form, as it forms part of your consent. Please ask your worker if you have any questions about confidentiality or privacy.

FEES

Some of our services attract fees. Fees are charged according to our Fee Schedule. Your worker will discuss any fees with you, and make sure that you understand and agree to any costs, before you start using our services.

TELEHEALTH SERVICES

If you agree, where appropriate, services may be provided to you by telephone or videoconferencing. To access Telehealth, you need to have the necessary technology, as well as access to a quiet, private space.

Telehealth services may be subject to limitations such as unstable network connections, which may affect the quality of the service provided. Internet communications can also be more vulnerable to privacy breaches. We will use secure video conferencing software to limit the risks to your privacy.

ONLINE SYSTEMS AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

We take steps to make sure our website and online interactions with individuals and organisations are as secure as possible.

Some of our workers use secure online assessment tools which may store information such as your name, date of birth, and assessment results.

Some of our workers use therapy-specific AI tools as part of record keeping. Your worker will always tell you if they would like to use these tools, and ask whether you agree. You are allowed to ask questions and to say that you do not want your worker to use AI tools when providing services to you. Saying no does not impact your access to services. Your personal information and audio recordings are stored temporarily in these tools to allow sessions to be summarised, and then immediately deleted.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

If your worker becomes aware of a conflict of interest, they may refer you to another Centacare worker, or possibly another service, and they may not be able to tell you why. Your worker will do their best to avoid this occurring but it may not always be possible.

WITHDRAWING YOUR CONSENT

You can withdraw your consent at any time by telling your worker or putting your request in writing. You cannot withdraw consent for a service that has already occurred.

PERIOD OF CONSENT

This consent is valid for 12 months. We might ask you for consent again before 12 months if there is a major change to the service you are receiving.

COMPLAINTS

If you have any concerns about your contact with Centacare, please discuss them with your worker, or you can forward them in writing to: director.centacare@centacarecwo.org.au

Privacy Policy for the Management of Personal Information

Centacare is committed to protecting the privacy of your personal information. We comply with The Privacy Act 1988 and the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs). The information below explains what we do with your personal information and the rights and obligations that both you and we have regarding your personal information.

CENTACARE WILL ENSURE

- Personal information is treated sensitively and in line with our legal and ethical obligations
- Everyone who has access to personal information at Centacare, including administrative and IT support staff, or any subcontracted entity, understands what they need to do to protect privacy, and is bound by these terms and obligations
- You receive information about your privacy rights
- Our privacy policy is accessible and provided in the format requested, where reasonable.

INFORMATION WE KEEP ABOUT YOU

Information we keep includes personal information such as your name, contact details, and other information that is relevant to your current situation. This may include information about your health and background, and about your family and other relationships that you or other people tell us about.

HOW WE COLLECT YOUR INFORMATION

We mostly collect your personal information directly from you, for example when you fill out forms, communicate via email, participate in an assessment, meet with us or speak to us on the phone.

We sometimes receive information from other people or organisations (such as GPs, specialists, insurers, schools etc), through referrals, reports, letters, emails and phone calls.

We also sometimes obtain information by communicating with other people about you, if you have asked us to speak to them and provided consent for this.

WHY WE HOLD YOUR INFORMATION

We need personal information about you to provide appropriate and thorough services.

We need to keep this information to:

- communicate with you
- provide relevant and informed services
- keep a record of what happens during services
- meet our ethical and legal obligations
- meet requirements of the programs that fund our services.

HOW WE STORE YOUR INFORMATION

Your file may include paper files and electronic files. We store paper files in secure, locked filing cabinets. We store electronic files in a secure Client Management System. Information is also held in a secure internet-based appointment scheduling program, and on secure online assessment platforms.

Information is kept for a minimum of 7 years or, for clients who are under 18, until they are 25 years old. By law, we may have to keep files for longer than this in some situations.

WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU DO NOT PROVIDE INFORMATION

We have obligations to keep clear and accurate records. If you do not want your personal information to be collected, we may not be able to provide services to you.

ACCESSING AND CORRECTING YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION

You can ask to see and correct the personal information we hold on file about you at any time. These requests should be made in writing. We will respond to written requests within 30 days. An appointment may be necessary to clarify your request.

We will arrange for access in a way that is reasonable and practical, unless there is a legal reason why access should not be granted. We will take reasonable steps to amend our records if we are satisfied that the personal information we hold about you is inaccurate, out of date or incomplete.

DISCLOSURE OF YOUR INFORMATION

Personal information that we collect about you remains confidential. We only disclose information with your consent, except when:

- a court subpoena or other law says we need to disclose it
- we are required to make a mandatory report about a concern
- not disclosing it may put you or others at risk of serious harm
- we can't get your consent due to a medical crisis
- you would reasonably expect us to disclose information to another professional or agency (such as to inform your GP of treatment and progress, to claim Medicare rebates on your behalf, or to obtain funding or payment for the services we provide)
- your worker needs to consult with other professionals within and outside the organisation to provide better services. If this occurs, the professional being consulted has the same obligations to keep your information confidential and whenever possible, your personal details will be de-identified.

DATA BREACH POLICY

In the event of unauthorised access, disclosure, or loss of your personal information, we will activate our Data Breach Response Plan and use all reasonable efforts to minimise any risk of harm from the breach.

CONCERNS

If you have a concern about how we have handled your personal information, you can talk to your Centacare worker, ask to speak to the program manager, or email director.centacare@centacarecwo.org.au. We will follow our Feedback and Complaints Policy.

We can give you information about escalating your complaint to a government agency or the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC). Contact details for the OAIC can also be found online at <https://www.oaic.gov.au>.

Consent Declaration

This is your agreement that you have read and understood the consent and privacy information that is set out above. Please speak to your worker before you sign this if you have any questions or concerns, or you do not understand something. We also ask you about whether you agree to us contacting you in the future for research purposes, which is optional.

- ☐ I have read and understood the consent information and Privacy Policy provided above, and agree to these conditions for the service provided to me, including the collection and storage of my personal information by Centacare Central West & Orana
- ☐ I consent to being contacted by Centacare Central West & Orana to participate in follow-up surveys, research or evaluations.

Client name: _____

Your name (if you are signing as an authorised representative of the client):

Signature: _____

Date: _____



Additional Consent for use of the Data Exchange

Some of our programs are funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services (DSS). We need to tell you about the information storage service we use for those programs, which is called the ‘Data Exchange’, so that you can decide whether you consent to us storing your information this way. Your worker will tell you if this is relevant to the services you receive.

DSS STANDARD PRIVACY NOTICE

We collect some personal details from you on this form. Your personal information is protected by law, including by the Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) (Privacy Act).

HOW WE USE THE DATA EXCHANGE

We use an IT system called the 'Data Exchange' to manage your details and the services we provide to you. This system is run by the Australian Government Department of Social Services (DSS). DSS stores your personal information in the Data Exchange and only shares it with us so we can manage your services.

Your record in the Data Exchange can include your name and address, which helps us manage your details. However, you do not need to provide this information to DSS. If you choose not to, it will not affect the services you receive. You can also ask for this information to be removed from the Data Exchange at any time.

HOW DSS USES YOUR INFORMATION

DSS uses your de-identified (anonymous) information in the Data Exchange for things like policy development, managing grants, research and evaluation. DSS may share this anonymous data with other organisations for reporting and research purposes. Your personal details are removed before this happens so you cannot be identified.

DSS collects information in the Data Exchange so that government agencies can understand and improve how services are helping Australians. By agreeing to have your information shared in the Data Exchange you are supporting understanding and improvement of the services that you use.

MORE INFORMATION

To learn more about how DSS manages your personal information, including how you can access or correct your details or make a privacy complaint, visit the [DSS website](#) and read their privacy policy.

Data Exchange Consent Declaration:

- ☐ I have read and understood the DSS Standard Privacy Notice above and I consent for DSS to collect my personal information from Centacare Central West & Orana for storage on the Data Exchange.
- ☐ I consent to being contacted by DSS to participate in follow-up surveys, research or evaluations

Client name: _____

Your name (if you are signing as an authorised representative of the client):

Signature: _____

Date: _____