

LET'S CHAT ABOUT...



Privacy Statement

Respecting your privacy

Let's chat about is committed to respecting your privacy. I am required by law to protect any personal information I collect about you. I comply with all Victorian legislation relating to confidentiality and privacy, including the *Health Services Act 1988* (Vic) and the *Health Records Act 2001* (Vic). When you become a client of *Let's chat about*, I record your name, address, contact details, information about your health and the treatment you receive, and contact details of your local doctor and next of kin. Each time you attend a *Let's chat about* service; I add new information to your record.

Collecting your information

I collect only the personal information that I need to provide you with care and treatment. I always try to collect it in a fair, lawful and non-intrusive way. I collect information directly from you rather than from third parties. I do my best to tell you if I collect information about you from a third party. When I collect information from you, I tell you why I am collecting it and seek your consent.

Using and disclosing your information

I use your personal information only for the main purpose that I need it, or for a directly related purpose. I cannot use or disclose your personal information unless it is required, authorised, or permitted under law. I understand that I am legally obliged to keep your information confidential. Keeping your information up to date I do everything I can to make sure that the information I hold about you is accurate, complete, and up to date. The *Public Records Act 1973* requires me to hold some records for extended periods. I do not keep information longer than I need to.

Storing and protecting your information

I control and monitor access to my record keeping and computer systems. My physical or paper records are securely stored and can be accessed only by authorised personnel. My computer systems can be accessed by authorised users only. Any suspected infringements of privacy are thoroughly investigated. I have prevention strategies to identify any weaknesses in our procedures and systems. I continually review these strategies

Making your personal information available to other people

I do not make your personal information available to other people unless they need it to provide you with care and treatment, and I do this only if the law allows. For example: I may share information about your care with your local doctor or another hospital if they need it to provide you with care or treatment and will seek your consent prior to release. I cannot transfer your health information outside Victoria unless the organisation receiving it is subject to laws that are very similar to those that apply to *Let's chat about* or it is in your interests for me to transfer your health information, but it is impractical to obtain your consent. There may be other times when the law says that I have to disclose your personal information. For example: I may have to disclose your medical record in court; or I may have to provide personal information about you if there is a serious and imminent threat to someone's life, health, safety, or welfare, or if there is a serious threat to public health, safety, or welfare.

Accessing your information If you ask

I will give you access to information I hold about you. However, I do not have to give you access if the law says I do not have to disclose your information or if it means I would unreasonably disclose information about other people. When you request access to your information, I ask you to complete a special application form. You can contact me if you want to have access to the information I hold about you, believe information I hold about you is inaccurate and want to ask me to amend it, want to know more about the type of information I hold, why I hold it, and how I deal with it; or have concerns that I may have infringed your rights to privacy.

- Donna Schwarz-Nielsen *MSW(Q), BBS (Psych)*