

## **Privacy Statement – General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)**

The Data Protection Act 2018 controls how your personal information is used by organisations and businesses. As a counsellor working in private practice, it is my responsibility to ensure that personal information I collect from you is handled in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

### **What information may I collect?**

- Any contact details needed for administrative purposes, such as name, address, contact no. and email address.
- Any contact details needed in an emergency situation – GP details, parents details (if under 18) next of kin etc.
- Any information needed as part of the therapy, which may include family history, medical history, current difficulties, goals for therapy etc.. I will keep these written notes as brief as possible.

### **What will I use this information for?**

- To contact you for administrative purposes, such as in the rare event I needed to cancel your appointment.
- To help keep you safe in an emergency situation.
- To help us work together towards your therapeutic goals as effectively as possible.

### **How will I keep your information safe?**

- Paper copies of any personal information I hold, such as your contact details and contract, are kept in a locked filing cabinet that only I have access to (keys are stored in a safe). Any brief sessional notes I make are kept in a separate lockable filing cabinet.
- Paper copies will be made of any files sent via email, then electronic data will be deleted.
- All electronic enquiries are erased after one month.
- I will hold your written information for 7 years following the end of counselling, as required by my insurance company. After this time, all paper records are shredded.

### **How I may share your information?**

Your Information may be shared in these circumstances only.

- Supervision: I attend regular supervision to ensure my practice remains safe and ethical. Whilst I may share some session details, I will protect your anonymity by never giving out any identifying details about yourself or your family.
- Emergencies: If I have good reason to believe you are at serious risk of harm, I may share your details with your next of kin, GP, emergency services, multi-agency safeguarding team or mental health crisis team.
- With consent: If requested to, I may agree to sharing your details with next of kin or outside agencies, only with your full informed consent.

### **What are your Rights?**

- You have the right to ask for a copy of your personal information at any time. You also have the right to ask me to amend or change any incorrect information about you.
- You have the right to ask me to erase any information I hold about you, unless it is information that I have a legal obligation to retain.