

## **PRIVACY NOTICE**

### **Your information and what we do with it**

Alliance Psychological Services Limited takes your confidentiality and privacy rights very seriously. This notice explains how we collect, process, transfer and store your information legally. This is called Fair Processing and is a requirement of the Data Protection Act 1998. The Data Protection Act 1998 requires Alliance to:

- Process information lawfully
- Only obtain adequate and relevant information
- Ensure information is accurate
- Not keep information longer than necessary
- Process in accordance with your rights
- Keep your information secure
- Not transfer your information without adequate protection

### **Why do we collect information about you?**

Your information is used to guide and record the treatment and care you receive. This information is vital in helping to ensure you receive good quality care.

Keeping records means that:

- We have all the information necessary for assessing your needs and providing excellent care
- Your concerns can be properly investigated if you raise a complaint
- Professionals involved in your care have accurate and up-to-date information
- Accurate information about you is available if you:
  - Move to another area
  - Need to use another service
  - See a different healthcare professional

### **What information do we collect from you?**

Our staff working with you – such as psychological therapists, administrative staff and other staff involved in your care – keep records about your health and any care and treatment you receive. This may include:

- Basic details such as name, address, date of birth, and contact numbers
- Notes and reports about your health and any treatment, care or support you need and receive
- Relevant information from other professionals
- Sensitive personal data – for example, details of why you would like to seek support from Alliance, details of a disability, details of support you may have had in the past and notes written by therapists following sessions or after other contact with us
- Dates of appointments
- Family Details – for example details of other family members with whom you have given us consent to speak to

Most of your records are electronic and will be held on a computer system and secure network.

## **Who might we share your information with?**

Your information will be shared with the team who are caring for you and are providing treatment to you. If you are a child/young person under 13 we will share information with your parents/carers where we feel it would be in your best interest. If you are a child/young person over 13 years we may need to ask for your consent to do so. We will always aim to discuss with you what information we will share.

Alliance and other agencies work together so we may need to share information with other professionals and services involved in your care. For instance, when your therapist needs to discuss your case with other professionals (who do not work for Alliance) in order to plan your care. We do this in order to provide the most appropriate treatment and support for you, or when the welfare of other people is involved. We will only share information in this way if we have your permission and it is considered necessary.

If you change your mind about your consent, please discuss this with your therapist as this could have implications in how you receive your care.

However, a person's right to confidentiality is not absolute and there may be other circumstances when we must share information with other agencies. In these rare circumstances we are not required to seek your consent. Examples of this are:

- If there is a concern that you are putting yourself at risk of serious harm
- If there is concern that you are putting another person at risk of serious harm
- If there is concern that a child/young person is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm
- If we have been instructed to do so by a Court
- If the information is essential for the investigation of a serious crime
- If your information falls within a category that needs to be notified for public health or other legal reasons

Your personal information will only be used for purposes that benefit treatment and care. It will never be used for marketing or insurance purposes.

## **Enhancing our services and performance**

To help us monitor our performance, evaluate and develop the services we provide, it is necessary to review and share basic information, for example with commissioning teams. You can be assured that we do not use information that may identify you. The information we share is anonymised and aggregated and all access to and use of this information is strictly controlled. We never use this information to make decisions about your direct treatment and the care you receive.

## **What do we do with your information?**

Everyone working in Health and Social Care has a legal duty to keep information about you confidential. Anyone who receives information from us is also under a legal duty to keep it confidential.

As well as ensuring you receive the appropriate care, your records can also provide us with an important source of information when we need to:

- Review the care we provide to ensure it is of the highest standard
- Investigate complaints, legal claims or untoward incidents
- Prepare statistics about services
- Audit accounts and services

- Conduct research and development to help us look after the health of the general public and to make sure our services can meet future demand
- Teach and train health and social care professionals

Unless we are investigating a complaint you have made, the records we use for the above purposes will not include any of your personal details. Sometimes for statistical, research or training purposes it is helpful to have more details as this can help us to identify particular trends or needs. However, we will only use your personal information in this way if you give us your consent.

### **How we store and secure your information**

The majority of patient information is stored electronically. At present your information is stored on a range of applications and systems, this includes dedicated clinical applications in addition to Alliance's in-house system.

All of the clinical systems used by Alliance are implemented with robust information security safeguards to protect the confidentiality, integrity and availability of personal confidential information.

All staff should adhere to a confidentiality agreement as part of their contract with Alliance and all staff must comply with the various security operating procedures. Any breach of these is treated seriously, and could result in disciplinary action, including dismissal.

### **How we transfer your information**

Alliance applies best practice according to the Data Protection Act to transfer any information about you, securely. For example; electronic information, where appropriate, is sent via an Alliance approved encrypted method, to ensure it cannot be intercepted, read, or tampered with during transmission. Hard copy information is posted via recorded delivery.

### **How long do we keep your information?**

We only keep your personal information as long as necessary to fulfil the purposes we hold it for, including satisfying any legal or reporting requirements. This will be for a specified amount of time.

That length of time may vary depending on the reasons for which we are processing the personal information and whether we have a legal or contractual obligation to keep it for a certain amount of time.

Once the retention period has expired, personal information will be confidentially disposed of or permanently deleted.

### **How can I access the information you hold about me?**

You have a right to see the information we hold about you, both on paper or electronically. Your request must be made in writing or by email and we will request proof of identity before we can disclose personal information.

### **Further information**

To learn more about how Alliance uses, manages and maintains confidentiality of patient information, please speak to your therapist, or contact:

The Information Governance Manager  
Alliance Psychological Services Limited

24 Yarm Road  
Stockton-on-Tees  
TS18 3NA  
Tel: 01642 352747 option 4  
Email: [info@alliancepsychology.com](mailto:info@alliancepsychology.com)

### **Caldicott Guardian**

The Caldicott Guardian is a senior person within Alliance who makes sure that personal information about who uses the service is used legally, ethically and appropriately and that confidentiality is maintained. They play a key role in ensuring that Alliance satisfies the highest practical standards for handling personal information. The Caldicott Guardians main concern is information relating to patients and their care, but the need for confidentiality extends to others including their relatives, carers, staff and others. If you would like to discuss any of the above with the Caldicott Guardian, but not as part of a complaint process, please contact them on [CaldicottGuardian@alliancepsychology.com](mailto:CaldicottGuardian@alliancepsychology.com).