

Highlands Holistic has a high regard for personal information provided by clients, and taken during art therapy and counselling sessions. The policy below states how this information is collected and held, the purposes information is used for, how you might access your own personal information, and complaints processes regarding privacy. Please ask your practitioner if you would like clarification on any of the points below.

- Personal information includes your name, contact information, bank details, and information shared in sessions.
- This information is retained on a secure laptop and a secure hard drive. Both of these storage devices are kept under lock and key and are only accessible by secure passwords. Paper copies are scanned and then shredded.
- Personal information is used for:
 - The administrative purpose of running the practice;
 - Billing either directly or through medicare, a health insurer or compensation agency;
 - Use within the practice if discussing in the practitioner's supervision, for your ongoing optimum service provision;
- Personal information may be disclosed to your doctor(s), or other health professionals to facilitate communication and best possible care for you (for those other than your referring GP, your permission will be requested). In the case of insurance or compensation claim it may be necessary to disclose and/or collect information that concerns your return to work to an insurer or your employer.
- We do not disclose your personal information or persons outside of Highlands holistic without your express permission, other than in the above and below situations. At no time do we provide your information to overseas recipients or to direct marketing agencies.
- You may access your personal information by sending a written/email request and making an appointment to review that information with your therapist, after which you may take a copy away with you. The purpose of this is so you may ask for clarification of notes, and be supported in reviewing sometimes difficult information. Such appointments may be billed at a lower rate unless you have a health care card, in which case you will be bulk-billed. Your lawyer may also subpoena a copy of your file.
- In the instance that you are currently receiving art therapy or counselling, your notes are available to view in any session, and you may request to take a copy at each visit.
- Work completed in sessions will be photographed and stored in the same way as written notes, and you may take the originals away with you. Originals left at the practice will be destroyed at the conclusion of the client-therapist relationship.
- Should you wish for alterations to be made to your notes, this can be discussed in sessions with your therapist. Later changes may be made in the same way as your records are accessed. Changes will be discussed and it may be necessary to keep the original notes and make a note on this that you have requested a change, the reason for the change, and what that change is. This is in line with legal record keeping where files may be subpoenaed in future court processes.

- Highlands Holistic makes every effort to maintain your privacy, but should you feel that a breach has been made, you may wish to make a complaint. In the first instance, please direct the complaint to linda@highlandsholistic.com.au, as in many situations the perceived breach may be clarified and resolved. If you feel that you would like to take this further, please contact the AASW, the governing body for Social Workers. The AASW complaint form can be found on the Highlands Holistic website.

Limits to privacy

Under some circumstances, it may be necessary to provide information regarding a child at risk of serious harm, or a person to whom physical threats have been made, to the relevant authority (Family & Community Services or NSW Police). Highlands Holistic staff will make every effort to discuss such situations with you prior to disclosing of information, unless this will result in risk of harm to yourself, your child, another party or a staff member of Highlands Holistic. This is a legal requirement of your practitioner, under Mandatory Reporting laws.