

1. Introduction.

This document contains important information about how Elephant Counselling manages personal data. It is written with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and the obligations under the BACP Ethical Framework for Counselling Professionals in mind.

2. Personal data that is held.

2.1 Initial Consultation Information: Includes basic contact details, next of kin and GP details. The recording of short factual notes of the information provided by the client during the initial consultation.

2.2 Counselling Process Data: In addition to the above, once a counselling arrangement has been offered and agreed and a contract has been signed, Elephant Counselling will collect and hold the following data:

2.2.1: Counselling notes: Brief and factual notes will be recorded, detailing accurate accounts of the contents of each session.

2.2.2: Elephant Counselling Risk Register:

If it is believed that a client to be at risk of serious harm it is likely that their details will be entered onto the Elephant Counselling Client at Risk register. The purpose of the register is to ensure that the clients next of kin and GP details are accessible in case there is a need to take emergency action to protect them. Clients will be informed that they have been placed on the Client at Risk register and also informed of their removal as they are no longer a concern OR that they have decided to terminate their contract at Elephant Counselling. Entry onto the Client at Risk register may include brief notes of actions taken by the counsellor.

2.2.3: Financial Records:

Elephant Counselling will keep basic records of financial transactions between clients and the service in keeping with standard book keeping and accountancy principles.

3. What is done with your data:

The data is stored and managed for the sole purposes of providing you with a safe. Ethical and professional counselling service.

3.1: Confidentiality:

All information provided is treated as highly confidential and is managed by professionally qualified, BACP accredited counsellors.

4. Destroying and Deleting Personal Client data:

4.1: If a client withdraws from the service or the therapeutic journey comes to an end:

- Personal information is removed from administrative systems for managing appointments and cancellations with immediate effect.
- Personal information is removed from the Client at Risk register (if applicable).
- The retention of Initial Consultation Information and Counselling notes for a period of three years from the end of the clients counselling, after which time they will be securely destroyed.

4.2: Exceptions to the above:

- Agreed in writing with you.
- If required for legal reasons.

4.3: How we store your information

- Your information is securely stored.

Elephant Counselling will keep client notes for 7 years. It is then disposed by securely shredding and disposing.

5. Supervision: Elephant Counselling counsellors are required by their professional body to see a supervisor on a regular basis. A supervisor is an independent, experienced counsellor who provides support and guidance to their supervisees to help them work in the best interests to their clients.

Counsellors will discuss details of client's therapy in supervision, however they will not disclose their client's identity. In the unlikely event that a client's identity becomes known to the supervisor the same ethical, professional and contractual obligation to protect client confidentiality as the client's own counsellor will apply.

Supervisors do not have access to client records.

6. Breaking confidentiality: Protecting confidentiality is a priority for Elephant Counselling, but there are circumstances under which we will consider breaking confidentiality. By this, Elephant Counselling means sharing information about the client, possibly without your prior consent, with another person or organisation outside those directly involved within Elephant Counselling. In making the difficult decision to break confidentiality we will consider both legal and ethical obligations. Elephant Counselling will only consider breaking confidentiality under the following circumstances:

6.1: Safety & Well Being: If it is believed, based upon information disclosed during a consultation or counselling session, that either yourself or any other person is at imminent risk of serious harm or death, and we are

unable to get your consent to reach out for help, Elephant Counselling will consider breaking confidentiality in order to protect the person at risk. Whilst it is aimed to do this with the client's consent and / or knowledge, Elephant Counselling reserves the right to make this decision in the client's absence or in contravention of your stated wishes if it is felt that the risk is high.

It is most likely that Elephant Counselling would contact the client's GP, Mental Health Services, emergency services or statutory social services and / or next of kin, depending upon the exact nature of Elephant Counselling's concerns. In doing so Elephant Counselling would only share as much information about the client as deemed strictly necessary at the time for protection purposes.

6.2 Legal Reasons: Elephant Counselling would be required to break confidentiality and share client information in the following circumstances:

- If Elephant Counselling were compelled to do so by a statutory law enforcement agency (e.g the Police) or a court of Law.
- If Elephant Counselling receives information relating to certain legal offences, including terrorism, drug trafficking and offences relating to children, Elephant Counselling might have a legal obligation to proactively report this information to the statutory authorities.
- If Elephant Counselling receives information about a serious potential crime and it is believed that it would be a breach of the BACP Ethical framework not to report back. (e.g if not reporting the information could result in serious harm to others or to society in general.)

7. Right to your personal information: You have a legal right to see personal information held by Elephant Counselling. If you would like to see your personal data, please write or send an e-mail to Elephant Counselling with the details of your request. Please be as specific as possible about the details of your request.

10. Declaration: I declare that I have read and agree to my personal data being held and managed by Elephant Counselling as set out above.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

7.1 Your data protection rights:

- Under data protection law, you have rights including:
- Your right of access - You have the right to ask us for copies of your personal information.
- Your right to rectification - You have the right to ask us to rectify information you think is inaccurate. You also have the right to ask us to complete information you think is incomplete.
- Your right to erasure - You have the right to ask us to erase your personal information in certain circumstances.
- Your right to restriction of processing - You have the right to ask us to restrict the processing of your information in certain circumstances.
- Your right to object to processing - You have the right to object to the processing of your personal data in certain circumstances.
- Your right to data portability - You have the right to ask that we transfer the information you gave us to another organisation, or to you, in certain circumstances.

You are not required to pay any charge for exercising your rights. If you make a request, we have one month to respond to you.

8. Report Writing: Elephant Counselling is not able to write reports or letters to third parties about a client's therapy or reasons for seeking therapy even if requested by the client.

It is possible to provide a headed letter of attendance confirming the dates and frequency of sessions if requested in writing.

9. Contact: For more information about how Elephant Counselling manages personal data, please contact Matt at Elephant Counselling at:
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