

Association for Solution Focused Hypnotherapists

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY & PROCEDURE

1. Introduction

1.1 This document outlines the policy of the Afsfh in relation to the handling with confidentiality and respect the information we hold about clients who use our services.

2. Principles

2.1 The work of the Afsfh inevitably involves the need to know a good deal about our clients, we may not be able to provide a good service without access to that information.

2.2 Much of this information is highly personal and sensitive. We recognise that our clients have a right to privacy and dignity, and that this extends to our handling information about them in ways which cause as little intrusion as possible on those rights.

2.4 We want our clients to feel at ease with the therapist they work with. An important element in that relationship is the capacity of a client being able to share information with the therapist, confident that it will be used with appropriate respect and only in relation to the therapy provided.

2.5 As providing therapy can be a complex process, it is not possible to guarantee to a client that information they give about themselves will be handled only by the therapist to whom it was first passed, however, we can ensure that information is seen only by third parties on the basis of their need to know.

2.6 We sometimes have to share information with colleagues in other clinics but we only do so on the basis of their need to know and as far as possible only with the permission of the person concerned.

2.7 We will only break the rule of confidentiality in very extreme circumstances which justify our taking that action for the greater good of a client or, exceptionally, others.

3. Responsibilities of Therapists

3.1 Therapists working with a client have access both to the information passed to them when they start to work with that client and to knowledge which accumulates in the course of providing treatment. They have a duty of confidentiality:

- To treat all personal information with respect and in the best interests of the client to whom it relates
- To share with their supervisor, when appropriate, information given to them in confidence.

- To share confidential information when appropriate, with colleagues with whom they are sharing the task of providing treatment
- Only to pass confidential information to other third party agencies with the agreement of the client, or in emergencies when it is clear that it is in the interest of the client or is urgently required for the protection of the client or another person
- To refer to confidential information in training or group supervision sessions with respect and caution and preferably in ways which conceal the identity of the client to which it relates
- Never to gossip about a client or to pass information to any other individual other than for professional reasons.
- To provide lockable filing cabinets to hold clients records and ensure that records are kept secure at all times
- To arrange for information held on computers to be accessed only by appropriate people and that all data is encrypted for security purposes
- To ensure that all therapists are aware of and understand this policy.

Inappropriate breach of the rules of confidentiality will be treated as a disciplinary matter.

4. Exceptional Breaches of Confidentiality

4.1 There are rare occasions on which it is necessary for a Therapist acting in good faith to breach confidentiality in an emergency situation, for example, to protect the client or another person from grave danger, without obtaining the permission of the person to whom it applies.

4.2 In such a situation, the therapist should use their best judgment, and consult their supervisor as soon afterwards as possible.