

Practice policy 4: Confidentiality

1. Respecting confidentiality of all interactions with Clients, along with any information about them, is a fundamental requirement for keeping trust. The management of confidentiality requires the protection of personally identifiable and sensitive information from unauthorised disclosure.
2. The obligation to maintain confidentiality continues after the therapeutic relationship has ended.
3. A court of law or similar statutory body may require disclosures. Any disclosures should be undertaken in ways that best protect the Client's trust.
4. Where disclosure is made without consent of the Client Psychotherapists should be willing to be accountable to their Clients and to CSRP for their management of such disclosure.
5. Circumstances when confidentiality may be breached include situations such as supervision or consultancy, and where there may be a risk of harm to the Client or others with whom the Client may be involved
6. In the circumstances of possible danger to the Psychotherapist, the service, or to others, there are particular legal and social dimensions that the Psychotherapist must bear in mind, for example within the provision of the Children Act 1998, the Children (Scotland) Act 1995, the Terrorism Act 2000 and the Drug Trafficking Act 1994.
7. When sexual and relationship psychotherapy, supervision and training in a group format is offered, the Psychotherapist must recognise the increased difficulty in maintaining confidentiality and discuss this with potential participants.
8. If a Psychotherapist is formally accused of wrongful conduct, then the need for the Psychotherapist to divulge information about a Client is recognised. The breaking of confidentiality will be kept to a minimum in consultation with advisors. The Psychotherapist will continue to have regard for the wellbeing of the Client.
9. When only one partner of a couple consents to the release of information, the Psychotherapist may only release information relating to the consenting Client, and should protect the identity and the confidentiality of all information deriving from the non-consenting Client.
10. Working online brings particular issues of confidentiality, (see section G: Conducting psychotherapy online, in Guidance for Ethical Practice) and particular attention is paid to security over the method of payment.
11. Informed written consent must be obtained before any information from the clinical work may be used for publication, training or research.