

Privacy Policy

Introduction

PANDSI is committed to protecting and upholding the right to privacy of clients, staff, volunteers, Board/Management Committee members and representatives of agencies we deal with. In particular PANDSI is committed to protecting and upholding the rights of our clients to privacy in the way we collect, store and use information about them, their needs and the services we provide to them.

PANDSI requires staff, volunteers and Board/Management Committee members to be consistent and careful in the way they manage what is written and said about individuals and how they decide who can see or hear this information.

PANDSI is subject to legislation as listed below and in particular the *Privacy Act 1988* as amended. PANDSI provides health services to people affected by perinatal depression and is required to comply with the Privacy Act.

Definition of terms

Client: refers to individuals, both female and male, who access PANDSI services.

For any other terms used, see the PANDSI Glossary of Terms, as updated.

Means of Collection of Client Information

PANDSI will collect information about clients by communicating with clients and other persons such as service providers, government agency representatives, friends, family members etc. with whom the client has authorised PANDSI to communicate. In collecting information PANDSI staff will only collect personal information by lawful and fair means. PANDSI will not collect personal information unless the information is reasonably necessary for the organisation's functions or activities. PANDSI staff will ensure that clients are aware that PANDSI is collecting personal information about the client either at or before the time of collection or, if that is not practicable, as soon as practicable after.

Application

PANDSI privacy policy applies to all business and is particularly important in

- Initial contact procedures
- The creation and administration of Enquiry forms
- The creation and administration of Active client files
- The procedure and administration of Exited client files
- The procedure and administration of Reactivated client files

PANDSI will ensure that it meets its legal and ethical obligations as an employer and service provider in relation to:

- protecting the privacy of clients and organisational personnel
- ensuring clients are provided with information about their rights regarding privacy
- ensuring clients and organisational personnel are offered privacy when they are being interviewed or discussing matters of a personal or sensitive nature
- ensuring all staff, Board/Management Committee members and volunteers understand what is required in meeting these obligations.

The Privacy Contact Officer

The Privacy Contact Officer will be the Chief Executive Officer. The Chief Executive Officer will be responsible for:

- ensuring that all staff are familiar with the Privacy Policy and administrative procedures for handling personal information
- ensuring that clients and other relevant individuals are provided with information about their rights regarding privacy
- handling any queries or complaints about a privacy issue

Privacy information for clients

At intake the client support worker will ensure:

- clients will be told what information is being collected, how their privacy will be protected and
- their rights are explained in relation to this information including the right to have access to the information, to make comments and offer corrections to the information
- the procedures are explained for complaints or dispute resolution, including how an individual may complain about a breach of the Australian Privacy Principles.

Privacy for interviews and personal discussions

To ensure privacy for clients or staff when discussing sensitive or personal matters, PANDSI will:

- offer appropriate quiet office space at PANDSI premises or arrange for discussion to occur in a place of the client's choosing that offers privacy to their satisfaction
- where phone calls may be made by staff discussing clients, provide suitable quiet office space for the purpose and take reasonable steps to ensure conversations are not overheard by others, with the exception of support workers who may need to work together with individual clients and hence need to share information
- take steps to ensure all staff and volunteers are made aware of PANDSI Privacy Policy, are regularly reminded of the importance of privacy, and are advised about their obligations to protect privacy in the event that they do accidentally overhear or view information of a private nature.

Correction of Personal Information

If PANDSI holds personal information about a client and either:

- (a) PANDSI is satisfied that, having regard to a purpose for which the information is held, the information is inaccurate, out of date, incomplete, irrelevant, or misleading; or
 - (b) The client requests PANDSI to correct the information;
- PANDSI must take such steps as are reasonable in the circumstances to correct that information to ensure that, having regard to the purpose for which it is held, the information is accurate, up to date, complete, relevant and not misleading.

Storage of Information and Disclosure

PANDSI does not authorise disclosure of information to outside organisations except where this is required by law, such as when it is reasonably believed that there is a risk of harm to a client, a child or another person.

PANDSI information systems may, from time to time, involve web-based data storage.

Participants in research projects

People being invited to participate in a research project must be:

- given a choice about participating or not

- given the right to withdraw at any time
- informed about the purpose of the research project, the information to be collected, and how information they provide will be used.
- given copies of any subsequent publications.

The collection of personal information will be limited to that which is required for the conduct of the project.

Individual participants will not be identified.

Organisational participants in research projects will generally be identified in PANDSI research, unless the nature of a particular project requires anonymity or an organisation specifically requests it.

References:

Health Records (Privacy & Access) Act 1997

<http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/a/1997-125/default.asp>

Federal Privacy Act (1988) and the Australian Privacy Principles, which govern the collection, use and storage of personal information.

<http://www.oaic.gov.au/privacy/privacy-act/the-privacy-act>