**Confidentiality, Information Storage and Sharing**

**Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)** are part of the National Health Service (NHS). All NHS services, including GPs, hospitals and clinics, have a duty to record information about the assessments and treatment provided and to keep information about patients confidential.

**Confidentiality**

Confidentiality is very important to us. Confidentiality means that no information that we have about you or your family will be shared with anyone outside of the NHS without permission. We will only share information about you when we feel it is absolutely necessary, and we will always explain what information we are sharing and why.

**Information storage**

We record our work with you on an electronic health record system called **TRAK.** This system helps us store information about people and improves clinical care by the information being available in a single source rather than there being multiple paper files about you.

The information we record includes assessments, outcomes and interventions, as well as discussions we have with other professionals, for example, teachers, social workers and others involved in your care. These records will only be read by NHS staff who have **permission**, on a need-to-know basis.

The NHS may also use the information (in a way that you can’t be identified) for audits which help us look for ways to improve the service.

**Sharing information**

In addition to storing information, we write letters which summarise our work with you. This is shared with you and with the professional who made the referral to the service. Your parents/carers do not automatically have the right to know about your appointments or what is discussed. This will depend on your age, maturity and ability to make decisions about your care (**capacity**). The clinician working with you should seek your permission before sharing information with parents/carers.

If you do not have capacity to make decisions about your care, then we will discuss our work with you with the people who have “Parental Rights and Responsibilities.” This will usually be your parent or carer, but in some cases may be a social worker. Where possible we would encourage you to allow us to communicate with your parents/carers so that they can also provide support, care and guidance to you.

As part of your CAMHS care, we ask to **gain** or **share** information from/with other organisations or professionals working with you. This can help with the “Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)” process and could involve us linking with schools, voluntary agencies or non-NHS service providers. Gaining information from other professionals, such as teachers, may be part of your assessment and if you do not agree with us gaining this information it may be difficult to proceed with some assessments and interventions.

At your first meeting your CAMHS clinician will discuss information sharing relevant to your care and agree which professional or agencies you agree can receive information from CAMHS about you. We understand that this may change and you will be able to review this again with your clinician if you wish to make changes.

There are some situations where we have to, by law, give people information **with** or **without** your permission. We have a duty to inform Social Care and/or police if there are **child protection** concerns that any child or young person is at risk of physical, emotional or sexual harm, or presents a danger to other people. In these situations we will always try to talk to you about things first.

**Accessing your records**

Accessing your records is free and healthcare professionals have a legal requirement to allow you to see them. You can request your records by completing a ‘subject access request’ at <https://www.nhslothian.scot/YourRights/DataProtection/Pages/Subject-Access-Requests.aspx>

**Questions and concerns**

If you have any questions or concerns about confidentiality, or how we store or share information, please talk to your CAMHS clinician. If after doing this you still have concerns, you can contact the NHS Lothian Legal services team by letter or via the website below.

If you are ever in a situation where you are not sure about confidentiality, please ask. It is your right to know what happens with the information you tell people.

More information on our responsibilities about information storage and sharing can be found on the NHS Lothian website: <https://www.nhslothian.scot/YourRights/DataProtection/Pages/default.aspx>

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