

AG Psychology Ltd
Hamilton Business Centre
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PRIVACY POLICY

When working with any health professional, it is essential that you have total confidence that your information is stored and shared securely, safely, and in full compliance with relevant legislation. We are committed to protecting your information in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations 2018. Dr Geddes is registered as a data controller with the Information Commissioner's Office. This policy covers the procedures followed by us to protect the data of all clients. For the purposes of this policy, the term "client" covers each and all of our client groups.

Information collected

On initial inquiry, to allow us to provide a helpful response, brief details will be collected but generally restricted to name, contact details, and a summary of the issues involved. At this point I recommend that prospective clients provide minimal information about their mental health and personal circumstances on first contact. Should we agree to work together, we will arrange an assessment at which point further information, as appropriate, will be collected and stored. This will include a residential address; date of birth; contact telephone number; e-mail address; emergency contact details; GP information; and details of any other professional involved in your mental health care. Insurer details will be collected if relevant. Our guidelines and codes of practice require us to make and keep clinical notes about each client we work with, including those that contain sensitive information relevant to you and your therapy process. Additional information including psychological outcome measures are handled in the same way. Clients are able to offer feedback at any stage, which is anonymised and stored securely. There is no obligation to provide feedback but it can be a useful tool to help us in developing our practice, and to inform how we manage our services. We welcome ad hoc feedback during sessions, and this is part of the therapeutic relationship that we aim to establish with you whilst working together. Please note that client feedback will not be shared without permission.

Information is collected by us to help us provide the best and most effective service that we can. Specifically, contact details allow us to schedule or amend appointments easily; ideally, we would do this by email as the primary mode of contact. Again, we would ask you to be careful about the information that is contained in emails, and which email address you choose to use. If you would prefer not to be contacted via email then please let us know and we can agree on an alternative form of contact. Should you engage in online therapy, an email address is needed to send the appropriate links.

Email may also be used to share password-protected documents pertaining to therapy, pending mutual agreement. For self-funding clients, e-mail is used to provide a record of payment for services, which is sent via an encrypted link. We may contact clients by text message and/or email to advise of any last minute changes to an appointment. We do not use text for any other purpose, and encourage you to either contact us by telephone or email if you need to speak to us.

GP details are required so that we can contact your GP should we need to; for instance, if we felt there was an urgent need to share information regarding your physical and/or emotional health. We like to hold details of a contact we can call in the event of any emergency or risk arising either during a session, or coming to our attention in some other way. If relevant, insurers' details are collected to help us clarify the extent of any cover, and process invoices for payment.

Data Storage

We use Halaxy to collect and store data and clinical notes, as well as client details and any other relevant information/documentation. Information considered relevant to clinical work is kept to support the delivery of safe and effective psychological therapy and as part of our professional requirements placed on us as HCPC registered Practitioner Psychologists. Halaxy is a certified practice management software that is GDPR-compliant. Through this, data can only be accessed by ourselves through a two-factor authentication login on specific password or biometrics protected devices; data is stored across different servers to keep data and record safe. Client information held in hard copy (e.g. signed contract or completed feedback sheet) will be scanned into Halaxy and then shredded. As above, hand-written notes made during sessions will be shredded following transcription.

Dr Geddes engages in clinical supervision where case material might be discussed as part of their ethical and professional obligations. All client information is anonymised and supervision is protected by a confidentiality agreement. Client mobile numbers will be stored using client references only in devices which belong to us, and which are password or biometric protected. All numbers stored in this way will be deleted on the conclusion of therapy. In the event of information relating to a client being provided by or to a third party (e.g. if referred by or to another professional) only information needed for assessment and therapy will be kept, and only with your permission. In the event of any data breach, the ICO will be notified and clients will be notified within 72 hours where their information has been compromised.

Information sharing

The information provided by you is confidential, however there are limits to this, in keeping with HCPC Professional Practice Guidelines that require us, in certain exceptional circumstances, to share personal information. Examples include where we learn that there is a risk of harm to the client, to ourselves, another adult, or a child. We may also share information that is important and relevant to treatment being provided by a separate health professional; or when we have been ordered to do so by the courts. Should you be using an insurance policy to cover the cost of the sessions and ask us to bill the insurer directly, we will need to contact the insurance provider for verification, and to invoice for therapy sessions provided. Dates of therapy sessions and a record of attendance will be provided. Similarly, if therapy costs are covered by a third party individual or organisation, dates of sessions may need to be provided for invoicing purposes. Client requests for written reports or other evidence of therapy will be considered on a case-by-case basis, and you will be advised in advance of any costs involved in this additional work. Any such document documentation being provided will be

sent either by email in a password-protected document; in hard copy format handed to the client in person; or posted using Recorded Delivery. The mode of delivery will be mutually agreed.

Access and the “Right to be Forgotten”

You have the right to access any information that we hold about you; we ask that you make any request in writing or via email. We aim to provide access within one month of requests being received by us; this service is not charged for. Although GDPR legislation states that individuals have the right to be ‘forgotten’ i.e. for their information to be erased should they request, we are compelled by the HCPC to keep client records for a period of 7 years after therapy ends. Accordingly, all records held by us are destroyed/deleted at the end of the calendar year following expiry of that time limit.

Other websites

My website might contain links to other websites over which we have no control and are therefore not responsible for the protection and privacy of information provided to those websites by you. We encourage you to check the privacy policies of those websites before providing any information.

Social media accounts

AG Psychology Ltd might maintain a public profile on Facebook, Instagram and X. The purpose and nature of use of social media by us is detailed in a separate Media Policy available here. We strongly recommends that those wishing to enquire about or engage professional psychology services provided by us do not make an inquiry through social media as privacy cannot be guaranteed and social media inboxes are not routinely checked. If you have any query please email agpsychologyservices@gmail.com