

Privacy and Confidentiality Statement

This document explains how your personal information is used, stored, and protected in my practice. It also outlines your rights and the steps I take to honour your confidentiality.

As a Therapeutic Counsellor, I hold your trust and privacy with great care. Please feel free to ask about anything in this notice, either now or at any point in our work together.

My Commitment to Your Privacy

I am committed to protecting the personal information you share with me. This includes your contact details, session notes, and any other information you give me in the course of our work together.

I collect this information to support your care, to provide an ethical and professional service, and to comply with legal and regulatory requirements. Flourish Oxford is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), which means I am committed to protecting your personal data and using it lawfully and transparently.

All information is handled in accordance with:

- The **UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)**
- The **Data Protection Act 2018**
- The ethical framework of my professional body (e.g. BACP, UKCP)

Why I Collect Information

I collect and securely store information for the following reasons:

- To offer you appropriate and personalised therapy
- To keep a basic record of our work together
- To fulfil legal, ethical, or contractual obligations (e.g. supervision, safeguarding)
- To manage practical aspects such as scheduling and communication
- To maintain clear, accurate notes using secure technology that supports clinical care

Use of Heidi AI Scribe

To reduce administrative burden and ensure accurate records of our work, I use **Heidi**, a GDPR-compliant, AI medical scribe software designed to automate clinical documentation. This tool enables me to focus more fully on our therapeutic work by supporting the secure and efficient creation of session summaries.

- Heidi uses encrypted technology and is designed specifically for healthcare professionals.
- Session notes generated through Heidi are stored securely and never used for purposes outside clinical documentation.
- No recordings of sessions are stored.
- Only brief, anonymised content may be processed, and your identity is never shared with the platform.
- The system complies with UK data protection standards.

How Your Information Is Stored

- Client notes are stored securely and separately from your identifying contact details.
- Records are held for **up to 7 years** after therapy ends (or until the client is 25 if under 18), in line with professional guidelines.
- After this time, your records will be securely destroyed.
- Digital data (e.g. emails, documents) is stored on password-protected devices and encrypted where possible.

Sharing of Information

What you share in therapy is confidential. I will not share your personal information without your consent, unless I am legally or ethically required to do so.

I may need to break confidentiality in the following situations:

- If I believe you or someone else is at serious risk of harm
- If I become aware of abuse or neglect of a child or vulnerable adult
- If I am legally compelled to share information (e.g. by court order)

I also discuss aspects of my work anonymously with a qualified clinical supervisor, in line with ethical practice. This is to ensure you receive safe and effective therapy.

Your Rights Under Data Protection Law

You have the right to:

1. **Access your information** – You can request a copy of the personal data I hold about you.
2. **Request corrections** – If you believe your information is inaccurate or incomplete, you may ask for corrections.
3. **Request erasure** – In some circumstances, you can ask for your data to be deleted. Please note that I may need to retain some information for legal or ethical reasons.
4. **Restrict processing** – You may request that I limit how I use your data.
5. **Object to processing** – You may object to how your data is being used in certain cases.
6. **Withdraw consent** – If you gave specific consent (e.g. for communication methods), you may withdraw this at any time.

If you wish to exercise any of these rights, please contact me directly.

Electronic Communication

You are welcome to contact me via email or text for scheduling purposes. Please be aware that these methods are not fully secure, and I advise avoiding any sensitive content. If you prefer to receive information in a particular way, I am happy to accommodate reasonable requests.

Emergencies

As a sole practitioner, I am not able to offer crisis support. If you are at immediate risk or feel unsafe, please contact emergency services (999), your GP, or a local crisis line such as **Samaritans (116 123)**.

Data Breaches

In the unlikely event of a data breach, I will take all necessary steps to contain the breach and inform you and the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), where legally required.

Questions or Concerns

If you have any concerns about how your data is handled, please raise them with me directly. If we cannot resolve the issue together, you can contact the **Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)** at www.ico.org.uk or call 0303 123 1113.