

# Information Management Policy

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## 1. Purpose of the Information Management Policy

Information management encompasses all the systems and processes within the Infocus Counselling Service for the creation and use of service and client information.

This policy provides guidance regarding recordkeeping and information coordination for members of the Infocus Counselling team at Arche Health. References are made throughout this policy to more specific documents on client communication and relationships with external partners.

## 2. Definitions

### 2.1 Information

Information is codified knowledge that is transferred and stored by means of documents, records, publications, databases, tools, images, plans, sound or video recordings, and so on.

### 2.2 Information management

Information management includes the creation, collection, storage, access, use and disposal of information assets.

### 2.3 Identifiable Information

Identifiable information refers to individual records containing age, sex and statistical components that could enable an individual's identity to be ascertained.

## 3. Principles for the management of information

- The Infocus Counselling Service values people, processes, technology, content and information life cycles and strives to ensure information is effectively managed.
- Consistent, accurate, coordinated information is essential for effective client support and to prevent duplication of employee/contractor efforts.
- Information management contributes to timely and relevant decisions, and compliance with laws, regulations, policies, standards and accreditation requirements.

## 4. Outcomes

Information management systems enhance Infocus Counselling's ability to meet its strategic goals, and actively contribute to the service's ongoing sustainability.

Information management systems foster the organisation's ability to build and maintain external relationships, and are understood and used by all staff, and allow for more effective communication with and about Infocus clients.

Records generated by the Infocus Counselling Service are authentic, reliable, have integrity, and are usable.

## 5. Functions & Delegations

Position	Delegation & Task
Board or Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Endorse Information Management Policy;</li><li>• Support new and existing information management systems and supporting policies and procedures;</li></ul>
Infocus Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lead information management processes including information sharing and systems review as part of core business processes;</li><li>• Comply with and support new and existing information management systems and supporting policies and procedures;</li><li>• Orientate new staff members to information management systems;</li></ul>
Infocus Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Contribute to information management processes including information sharing and systems review as part of core business processes; Comply with and support new and existing information management systems and supporting policies and procedures.</li></ul>

## 6. Risk Management

- Mechanisms are in place to ensure that information management is effective and regularly monitored;
- All Infocus staff members are made aware of this policy during orientation.
- Staff members are provided with ongoing support and to assist them to effectively manage information;
- This policy must be read in conjunction with the Arche Health Privacy and Confidentiality Policy.

## 7. Policy Implementation

This policy is to be part of all Infocus staff orientation processes and all staff should be familiar with their functions and delegations outlined in this policy. This policy should be referenced in relevant policies, procedures and other supporting documents to ensure that it is familiar to all staff and actively used. This policy will be reviewed regularly together with any associated policies.

## 8. Policy Detail

Effective information management within the Infocus Counselling Service is crucial for Arche Health to achieve its objectives. All Infocus team members have a responsibility to utilise, develop and review existing information management systems as appropriate to their position.

Infocus Counselling's information management system:

- Satisfies statutory requirements regarding preservation and availability of mental health records;
- Protects against risk;
- Enables Arche Health to demonstrate compliance with accreditation requirements.

## 9. Ownership

Staff and managers know their responsibilities in relation to mental health documents and records. There is an up-to-date list of authorised custodians of key information assets and records.

The Infocus Counselling Service requires all mental health professionals and staff to return all of the program's information assets when their employment or contract with the organisation finishes or is terminated.

Arche Health's intellectual property rights are protected. Where appropriate, copyright will be asserted, monitored and enforced.

All team members adhere to copyright owned by others.

## 10. Classification

The Infocus Manager ensures there are consistent practices regarding naming, filing and describing documents; a standard classification system is used across the service.

When updated versions of documents are completed, the Infocus Manager or Infocus Coordinator archives old versions of the documents and informs all team members. This ensures that available documents are the correct and up-to-date versions.

Team member productivity is supported through the use of templates, such as:

- Invoicing templates
- Client progress notes
- GP progress/final report templates, as well as other correspondence templates
- Client letter correspondence templates

## 11. Accuracy

Infocus Counselling Service aims to ensure information it collects, uses or discloses is accurate and complete at the time it is collected. In the event that clients wish to correct errors in their personal information, corrections will be made where it is reasonable to do so. However, it may not be possible to correct information which has been de-identified. In such instances, clients will be informed of the reason why the information cannot be corrected or changed.

## 12. Accessibility, storage & security

Infocus Counselling Service aims to store most client and organisational information electronically to increase information accessibility and minimise unnecessary use of paper.

Where paper files are created (for example, hand written visit notes) the document must be stored securely. If the client has an electronic record, the hard copy document must be scanned and attached to the electronic record within seven days of the document being created/received. Once the document is stored electronically the hard copy document must either be stored securely or destroyed.

Confidential documents and records are classified consistently and are protected, with access available to authorised staff only. See the Arche Health Privacy and Confidentiality Policy for more information.

## 13. Retention of Records

Retention of health records will be in accordance with The Department of Health WA's Patient Information Retention and Disposal Schedule Version 3, 2008.

Apart from the exception below, all patient records will be destroyed seven years after the final consultation date (provided the client has attained the age of 25 years).

Records related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients with a date of birth prior to and including 1970 must be held indefinitely.

### 13.1 Electronic Records

Electronic records are subject to the same provisions as hard copy records. Where they are not printed and attached to a hard copy file they will be managed in electronic form to remain accessible for as long as they are required. Electronic records of continuing value shall be maintained over time through successive upgrades of hardware and software in such a way as to retain the integrity, accessibility, usability and authenticity of the records.

## 14. Information coordination

Infocus Counselling shares and re-uses information and information systems subject to law and policy requirements.

Re-usable information is made widely available across the program to avoid redundancy and duplication of effort, and is organised and described in a way that makes it visible and easily re-used.

### 14.1 Information coordination – External stakeholders

Infocus Counselling provides information to its external stakeholders through the following:

- Website
- E-mails
- Participation in relevant external forums, groups and meetings

Where the Infocus Manager attends external meetings and committees, an electronic records of these meetings (for example, agenda, minutes and accompanying documents) are to be kept by staff in an appropriate electronic folder as designated by Arche Health.

Similarly, records of conferences and forums attended by staff members (including copies of presentations, if applicable) are to be stored in a relevant electronic folder as designated by Arche Health.

Relevant information from external meetings, events and publications should be fed back to Infocus team member's staff during staff and team meetings or via e-mail.

### 14.2 Information coordination – Internal

The Infocus Counselling Service's primary means for internal information coordination consists of informal monthly meetings, e-mails and face to face communications. Management meetings are held on a quarterly basis and all documentation relating to these meetings are recorded and filed electronically.

The CEO will report notable items from Board meetings to staff in staff meetings whilst decisions regarding program activities and minutes from tri-annual Mental Health Clinical Governance meetings are to be tabled at board meetings.

## 15. Quality

High value, reusable information and organisational records are easily distinguishable from lower value, more transient information.

If they are unsure whether information is confidential or commercially sensitive, team members are to refer to the Infocus Manager before transferring the information externally (this includes adding information to the Arche Health website).

## 16. Records

Records generated by Infocus Counselling are authentic, reliable, have integrity, and are usable. Managing information to meet the service's operational and legal requirements includes:

- Managing records throughout their life cycle;
- Documenting activities and decisions;
- Filing, securing and storing information;
- Documenting, protecting and preserving information critical to the InFocus Counselling Service systems.

## 17. Client Communication

The Infocus Counselling Service collects and provides information to and about clients through communication mechanisms such as (but not limited to):

- Telephone calls;
- Letters;
- E-mails;
- Individual and group meetings;
- Supervision sessions;
- Client files;
- Team and management sessions;
- Inter-organisational meetings to support mutual clients (where applicable)

The communication may occur:

- Directly with the client or family and carers;
- Internally, within the Infocus Counselling Service (for example, team meetings, supervision sessions, client files);
- Externally (for example, external supervision sessions, and other organisations supporting mutual clients).

Any communication regarding a client will be made in accordance with Arche Health's Privacy and Confidentiality Policy. Information collected and provided that relates to a particular client is recorded in the relevant client file.

## 18. Client Information

- Client data collected by the Infocus Counselling Service includes information relating to the client's cultural background, age, gender, language, physical and mental health, drug use, legal involvement and quality of life;
- Additional data may be collected with the consent of clients;
- De-identified client data will be forwarded to government-endorsed national and state agencies, if and where applicable.
- Infocus Counselling ensures that clients are aware of the data being recorded, the purpose for recording the data, and which data will be transmitted to other bodies (including funding bodies and national statistical agencies) and for what purpose;
- Client data is used only for the purposes for which it is collected, unless data has been de-identified or consent has been obtained to use the data for other purposes.