

SOUTHOVER COUNSELLING GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS

Data Protection regulations are changing. As from May 2018 the rules regarding the collection and retention of personal information will be updated. As a counseling service we are aware of these changes and are in the process of reviewing all our notes, files and any information we currently store of an individual nature. We already have a confidentiality policy and all our records are securely maintained with limited access to those only directly concerned with counseling and managing our service. These are securely locked at Church End house, where counseling takes place.

In order for us to be able to fulfill our responsibilities as a service we need to record some personal information. This information includes, names, addresses, and contact details of individual clients as well as any relevant medical or personal history a client has chosen to share. This information is only kept for as long as is necessary and a coding system is used to anonymise clients.

Currently we store records for a period of three years after the cessation of counseling sessions, except where there is a mutually agreed decision to retain it for longer or where the counselor believes it to be in the best professional interest. Sometimes clients return to our service for further counseling, or wish to maintain a link for possible support.

When you enter an agreement for counseling you will be asked to sign a contract with the counselor. This will outline such matters as how long the session lasts and how much you have agreed to pay, as well as other aspects of the process. Details will also be explained regarding the information we currently hold and your rights to access this information.

We work with regard to ethical guidelines from the BACP and the ACC (British Association of Counsellors and Psychotherapists and Association of Christian Counsellors). All our counsellors receive regular supervision and continued professional development. This is in order that their work is discussed and monitored and so progress and standards are maintained. Supervision meetings are confidential and clients are not identified.

If you have queries regarding the storing of confidential and personal information then please contact the manager of the service, or discuss with your counselor. The service is also supervised by a Reference Group of professionals who have the responsibility and accountability for the standards of the service. Currently Rev. Steve Daughtery is chair of the Reference Group.

Contact for the manager is via our website or phone line and Reference Group members via Rev. Steve Daughtery, at the rectory, Southover High Street.

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