

Confidentiality Policy

General principles

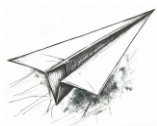
All information a client chooses to share about themselves with Paper Plane Counselling and Amy Mills is treated with respect, stored securely and kept confidential. This means that, usually, other people are not told about the client's counselling or supervision sessions without their prior knowledge and explicit consent. This includes not disclosing the fact that the client is attending counselling or supervision sessions with Paper Plane Counselling, nor disclosing the client's data (including contact information, correspondence and the content of the therapeutic sessions).

Client contact information, assessment information and brief notes of the content of client sessions are recorded and stored securely in accordance with the systems described in our Privacy Policy and our Information Governance Policy and Procedure. Our systems comply with New Zealand's Privacy Act 2020, New Zealand's Health Information Privacy Code 2020, New Zealand's Health (Retention of Health Information) Regulations 1996 and the UK's Data Protection Act 2018.

Sometimes Paper Plane Counselling Ltd may receive information about a client from another service (e.g. a GP practice). In accordance the Information Privacy Principle 3A (IPP3A) amendment to New Zealand's Privacy Act 2020, Paper Plane Counselling will let the client know what information has been received, why it was shared and remind the client of their privacy rights - unless a clear legal exception applies. Any information that is received about a client is kept confidential and protected.

Confidentiality has limits and there are circumstances that can arise when client information needs to be disclosed in order to comply with the New Zealand Association of Counsellors' (NZAC) [Code of Ethics](#), the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy's (BACP) [Ethical Framework](#) and New Zealand law. The bullet points below detail situations when it may be necessary to share clients' confidential information, in alignment with these codes of ethics and New Zealand law. In the event that this happens, Paper Plane Counselling and Amy Mills will make every effort to discuss the situation with the client first before sharing information in order to agree what information to share and with whom, unless to do so would be to compromise the safety of the client or others. In situations where information is shared, Paper Plane Counselling and Amy Mills will provide the minimum information necessary and only to those people to whom it is absolutely necessary.

- In accordance with ethical guidelines, Amy Mills consults a supervisor on a regular basis to ensure her practice remains ethical and that she is working in the best interests of her clients. Supervision relationships are contracted and managed with a confidentiality agreement in place. Amy's supervisor(s) are verbally told broad overarching themes of counselling and supervision sessions. Her supervisor(s) are not told clients' real names nor contact details and the supervisor(s) do not have direct access to written records of clients' electronic or paper-based data. The supervisor(s) contracted by Paper Plane Counselling are experienced therapists who themselves adhere to either the BACP's Ethical Framework and / or the NZAC's Code of Ethics. Supervision sessions are conducted either online via encrypted software platforms or in person.
- Amy Mills may contact a client's GP or another professional if she believes that the client is likely to cause significant harm to themselves or somebody else in the immediate or foreseeable future. This will be done if judged to be in the client's best interests in order to keep them and/or other people safe.
- Amy Mills may contact another professional if she believes that the client is at risk of being seriously harmed by somebody else in the immediate or foreseeable future. This will be done if judged to be in the client's best interests in order to keep them and/or other people safe.



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- Amy Mills may contact relevant authorities if she believes another person (particularly children or vulnerable adults) is at risk of significant harm in the immediate or foreseeable future. This is in order to safeguard their development and wellbeing and applies to both “real world” and online risks.
- The client’s data may be shared with another organisation if it is deemed legally necessary to do so under New Zealand law. For example, this happens if Amy becomes aware that the client is planning, or has participated in, a crime that may likely cause, or has caused, serious harm to other people (e.g. murder).
- If Paper Plane Counselling or Amy Mills are subpoenaed to give evidence in court then she is legally required to do so and to discuss the client’s data if necessary.
- If the client makes a complaint about Amy Mills to her professional membership body (either the British Association for Counsellors and Psychotherapists’ (BACP) or the New Zealand Association of Counsellors’ (NZAC)), Amy is able to disclose material relating to the client’s counselling or supervision sessions to the professional membership body as part of the process of responding to the complaint.
- In the event of Amy Mills becoming incapacitated due to an unforeseen emergency then the contact details of all current clients will be passed to the supervisor(s) contracted by Paper Plane Counselling. This person(s) will contact all clients currently engaged in sessions to explain the situation and discuss alternative support if necessary.

Working with other agencies

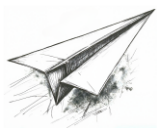
When a client contracts privately with Paper Plane Counselling, other agencies (e.g. GP practices) are not routinely informed that the client is attending therapeutic sessions with Paper Plane Counselling except in the event of the situations described in the bullet points above.

If the client wishes Paper Plane Counselling to inform another agency that they are attending counselling sessions, then they will be asked to sign a consent form for this. For child clients, the parent or legal guardian of the child client will be asked to sign written consent and the child client will be asked for verbal consent. No information is given to the other agency about the content of sessions without the explicit and additional consent of the client (and the child client’s parent or legal guardian).

If a client is working with one or more professionals from another agency (including but not limited to Social Services, Probation Services, Adult Mental Health Care Services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) then the client will be asked if they wish Paper Plane Counselling to have contact with these professionals and if so will be asked to sign explicit written consent for this. In certain circumstances, this consent will be required in order to form a contract with Paper Plane Counselling. When Paper Plane Counselling has contact with other professionals in this manner, this is for the purpose of working to best support clients by ensuring that care is “joined-up” and is not being duplicated or is inadvertently conflicting. The fact that the client is attending sessions is disclosed but the content of sessions remains confidential between Paper Plane Counselling and the client, with the exception of the circumstances described in the bullet points above under General Principles.

Clients referred and/or funded by a third party

If a client is referred and/or funded by a third party (e.g. an employer or an insurance provider) then the external agency will already be fully aware that the client is attending sessions with Paper Plane Counselling.



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Paper Plane Counselling will routinely inform the external agency of the dates of all sessions held and whether the client attended or not for the purpose of invoicing. The content of counselling or supervision sessions is not shared with the external agency.

Some referring agencies request a report from Paper Plane Counselling about the progress of the client's counselling sessions. If this applies, Paper Plane Counselling will inform the client of what information the referring agency requests at the initial assessment stage and will agree with the client what information will be shared. The client will be offered a copy of any such report written about them by Paper Plane Counselling.

Additional considerations for child clients and their parents or legal guardians, who are contracting directly with Paper Plane Counselling

Paper Plane Counselling works with child clients under the age of 16 only with the explicit and informed consent of the child client's parent or legal guardian. Therefore, the parent or legal guardian is fully aware that the child client is attending counselling sessions, and is aware of the location of these sessions and the time they are taking place.

Either the child or their parent or legal guardian may make initial contact with Paper Plane Counselling to discuss the issues which are prompting the referral of the child for counselling. Any details disclosed by the parent or legal guardian about the client's situation may be disclosed to the child at the initial assessment appointment unless the parent or guardian explicitly agrees with the counsellor that they will not be shared.

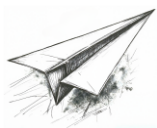
The child client is offered an initial assessment appointment. If they choose to attend this by themselves, without a parent or legal guardian present, then the content of what they discuss is confidential to them and is not shared with the parent or legal guardian. However, if the child client chooses for the parent or legal guardian to be present, then confidentiality extends to them but what is discussed is not shared with anyone else.

If the child client chooses that the parent or legal guardian is not present at the initial assessment meeting, the parent or legal guardian will be offered a telephone call with the counsellor to discuss the practicalities of setting up counselling sessions (including times of sessions, boundaries of confidentiality, fees), answer any questions and discuss hopes and anxieties.

The parent or legal guardian is asked to keep in touch with the counsellor for the purpose of bringing the child client to sessions (if necessary), for arranging payment of any necessary fees and for making the counsellor aware of any change of circumstances which might affect the child client's counselling. In the case of online sessions, the parent or legal guardian has a responsibility to ensure that the child client is in a safe and comfortable place during their counselling sessions where they cannot be overheard nor their screen seen by others.

The content of a child client's counselling sessions is confidential as outlined above in the General Principles.

The parent or legal guardian is not routinely told the content of any of the child client's counselling sessions. If the parent or legal guardian has a question or concern which they want to ask the counsellor, the counsellor will only speak with the parent or legal guardian with the child client's knowledge and agreement that the conversation will take place and what information will be shared with the parent or legal guardian. Afterwards, the child client will be told the key themes which were discussed in each conversation between Paper Plane Counselling and the child client's parent or legal guardian.



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If the counsellor becomes concerned that the child client is at risk of causing significant harm to themselves or somebody else, or is at risk of being seriously harmed by someone else, in the immediate or foreseeable future then the counsellor will first discuss the situation with the child client and seek to agree who to share information with in order to keep the child client (or another person) safe. This may include informing the child client's parent or legal guardian if the child client is in agreement, or without the child client's agreement if it is essential that the child client's parent or legal guardian is aware of the situation in order to keep the child client or somebody else safe.

Child clients referred through schools in Aotearoa New Zealand

When Paper Plane Counselling is supplying counselling work within a school setting, key school staff will be responsible for co-ordinating student referrals. Therefore, these people will have knowledge that these students have been referred for counselling, when counselling is offered and the duration of counselling sessions.

Students from Year 1 to Year 8 who are referred for counselling will usually be required to have informed written consent from their parent or legal guardian before counselling sessions begin.

Students from Year 9 and above are usually considered able to request and consent to counselling sessions themselves and additional explicit parental consent is usually not required.

Relevant school teaching staff will be informed that the student is attending counselling sessions for the purpose of allowing them to leave lessons in order to attend counselling sessions and accounting for their whereabouts.

The content of a student's counselling sessions remains confidential to the student except in the circumstances described above under General Principles, and is not discussed with school staff or students' whānau unless the student has explicitly consented to this.

A termly report on counselling activity will be provided for the school's senior management team and board of governors. This will include statistics relating to the service's use by students that term (e.g. number of sessions attended overall). It will include reference to common themes arising in counselling sessions across the counselling service and trends in attitudes to school life. It will not include any details that can be identified as belonging to an individual student.