

## Privacy Policy

### Our commitment to you

We recognise the importance of protecting and maintaining your personal information as a client of our practice. Any personal information that we collect or hold about you will only be used for the purpose of providing you with our counselling service, or as allowed by law. We will take all reasonable steps to protect your personal information from unauthorised access, misuse, loss and unauthorised disclosure or modification.

We are committed to providing you with the highest quality professional service while protecting your privacy and abide by the legal requirements of the Australian Privacy Principles set out in the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth).

This policy outlines how we collect, use, store, and deal with your personal information.

### Why we collect your personal information

We and our ISP may collect personal information (including an opinion) when you use our site or communicate with us by electronic means and attend both our in-person or telehealth sessions, including:

- **contact information** – such as your name, geographical location, email address and telephone number, your browser's and device's characteristics and referring URLs;
- **site information** – personal information you provide to our site and dates and times of site visits;
- **biographical information** – such as information about your background, medical history, education history, work history, and other relevant biographical information that may be considered; and
- **sensitive information** – but only where relevant and with your consent, any information about your racial or ethnic origin, political opinion, membership of a political association, religious beliefs or affiliations, philosophical beliefs, membership of a professional or trade association or union, sexual preferences or practices, criminal record, or health information.

We collect information by electronic collection methods, such as cookies and tags. A "cookie" is a text file that our site sends to your device to uniquely identify you or to store information or settings. A "tag" links web pages to web servers and their cookies and may be used to transmit information collected to us. Your browser may notify you of these electronic collection methods and allow you to restrict or disable them. However, without them you may not be able to fully experience all our site's features.

We also collect your personal information during counselling consultation, including in providing information directly to us, using hardcopy forms, correspondences via email, when you interact directly with our employees such as the receptionist, and when other health practitioners provide your personal information to us, via referrals, correspondences, and medical reports.

Your physical client files are held in a secure filing cabinet and any electronic filing of your client files and records are stored on an electronic document management system located at our business address location. Any other personal information that you have submitted to us by electronic means may also be stored by our domain host, email provider, backup service provider. These may be located overseas.

Your personal information is gathered and used for the purpose of enabling us to deliver to you our counselling services, including, but not limited to, assessing, diagnosing, and treating your presenting mental health issues. Your personal information is retained to document what happens during sessions which in turn enables us to provide you with relevant evidenced based and informed counselling service.

### How do we use your personal information

We use the information we collect to:

- provide counselling services, including assessing, diagnosing and treating a presenting issue;

- respond to and communicate with you about your requests, questions and comments;
- help diagnose technical and service issues;
- operate and improve our business, for statistical and security purposes, analysing and enhancing our products, services and site, developing new products and services, managing our business and marketing; and
- provide services to you or by third party mental health professionals (which may only be used by them for the delivery of similar mental health services) where you are required to provide consent to this release and disclosure or that we are obliged by law.

### **Disclosure of personal information**

Your personal information will remain confidential except when:

- it is subpoenaed by a court, or disclosure is otherwise required or authorised by law; or
- failure to disclose the information would in the reasonable belief of the practice, place you or another person at serious risk to life, health or safety; or
- your prior approval has been obtained to:
  - provide a written report to another agency or professional, e.g. a GP or a lawyer;
  - discuss the material with another person, e.g. a parent, employer, health provider, or third party funder;
  - disclose the information in another way; or
  - disclose to another professional or agency (e.g. your GP) and disclosure of your personal information to that third party is for a purpose which is directly related to the primary purpose for which your personal information was collected.

Your personal information is not disclosed to overseas recipients by us unless you consent to it or such disclosure has been provided to you in this policy or is otherwise required by law. Your personal information will not be used, sold, rented or disclosed for any other purpose.

Unless we provide you with specific notice, we will not use or disclose your personal information other than for the primary purpose for which it is collected, unless you would reasonably expect us to use or disclose the information for a secondary purpose or your consent has been collected to use the information for additional purposes.

We may send you information and communications about our products and services that we consider may be of interest to you. We may send this in various forms, including mail, SMS, fax and email, in accordance with applicable laws, such as the *Spam Act 2003*. If you indicate a preference for a method of communication, we will endeavour to use that method whenever practical to do so.

In addition, at any time you may opt-out of receiving marketing communications from us by contacting us by email or by using opt-out facilities provided in the marketing communications. Please understand that if you opt out of receiving promotional correspondence from us, we may still contact you in connection with your relationship, activities, transactions and communications with us.

We may create anonymous data records from your personal information by completely excluding information (such as your name) that makes the data personally identifiable to you. Typically, we use this anonymous data to analyse request and usage patterns so that we may enhance the content of our services and improve functionality. We may use anonymous data for any purpose and disclose anonymous data to third parties at our sole discretion.

We adopt all relevant exemptions permitted under Australian law in relation to employee records.

We will not disclose sensitive information unless it is necessary for us to conduct our business with you. However, if you elect to provide us with unsolicited sensitive information, it may be retained.

### **Security and retention**

Your client file and records are held in a secure filing cabinet in hard copy form and we also hold your information in an electronic form at our business location.

We have put in place reasonable physical, electronic and management controls to keep information that we collect secure and protected from unauthorised disclosure or other access, misuse, interference, and loss. Due to the open nature of the Internet, the risks associated with storage and transmission of information electronically cannot be eliminated. We cannot offer any guarantee that all information will be free from unauthorized access by third parties and your use of the site acknowledges your assumption of this risk.

We will only retain your personal information for as long as is necessary to fulfill the purposes for which it was collected, including for satisfying any legal, accounting or reporting requirements or to comply with our data retention practices.

### **Consequence of not providing your personal information**

If you do not wish for your personal information to be collected in a way anticipated by this Policy, we may not be able to provide our counselling service to you as a client. In some circumstances, you may be able to request to be anonymous or request for us to use pseudonym unless it is impracticable for us to deal with your treatment and therapy or that we are required or authorised by law to deal with your information as identified individuals.

### **Corrections and access**

We will take reasonable steps to ensure that the personal information we collect, use, or disclose is accurate, complete and up to date.

You may at any stage request to see and correct the personal information about you kept on file. The Counsellor may discuss the contents with you and/or give you a copy, subject to the exceptions in the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth). If satisfied that the personal information is inaccurate, out of date or incomplete, reasonable steps will be taken in the circumstances to ensure that this information is corrected. These requests will be responded to in writing within 14 days and an appointment will be made if necessary for clarification purposes. Depending on the type of request that you make, we may respond to your request immediately.

If we decline to correct your personal information, we will provide you with our reasons for not doing so.

### **Contacting us and changes to this policy**

If you have a query in relation to this policy or you would like to notify us that you no longer wish to receive marketing material from us, wish to access or correct your personal information or to make a complaint about our handling of your personal information, please contact us as follows:

Privacy Officer  
Van Ryan Therapies  
Level 1, 18 National Circuit, Barton ACT 2600  
P: 1300 826 792  
E: admin@vanryantherapies.com.au

If you have concerns about the management of your personal information or that we may have breached our obligations, please contact our Privacy Officer in writing. We will respond to you within 30 days. If you are not satisfied with our response, you may raise your complaint with the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner by:

- (a) telephone on 1300 363 992;
- (b) email at [enquires@oaic.gov.au](mailto:enquires@oaic.gov.au);
- (c) making a submission online at <http://www.oaic.gov.au/privacy/making-a-privacy-complaint>; or
- (d) post in writing to the Office of the Australia Information Commissioner, GPO Box 5218, Sydney, NSW 2001.

This Policy may be updated periodically on our website to advise you of any change to our Policy. You agree to the terms of the Policy in the current form and any later release versions that may be available on our website from time to time.

Date of this policy: **1 September 2021**  
Version: **1.0**  
Approved by: Mr Daniel Johnson