Ocean & Oaktrees
CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY

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Informed Consent Policy

Effective date: November 2026
Policy owner: Jennifer Fleming, Clinical Psychologist
Next review: November 2027

1. Our Commitment to Informed Consent

At Ocean & Oaktrees Clinical Psychology, we believe that effective psychological care is built upon trust, collaboration, respect and informed choice.

We recognise that engaging in psychological treatment or assessment is a personal decision. Every client has the right to understand the services being offered, participate in decisions about their care, ask questions and make choices consistent with their individual needs and circumstances.

Informed consent is an ongoing and collaborative process, rather than a one-time agreement.

This policy explains how we obtain and maintain informed consent, your rights and responsibilities as a client, and the professional obligations that guide our practice.

2. What Is Informed Consent?

Informed consent means making a voluntary and informed decision to participate in psychological services after receiving information that is relevant, understandable and sufficient to make that decision.

Before commencing services, we will explain, as appropriate:

- The nature, purpose and expected scope of the service.
- The proposed assessment or treatment approach.
- Potential benefits, risks and limitations.
- Reasonable alternatives, including choosing not to proceed.
- Confidentiality arrangements and their limitations.
- Fees, payment arrangements and cancellation conditions.
- How personal information and clinical records are managed.
- Your right to ask questions, decline particular interventions or withdraw consent.
- Any additional considerations relevant to your circumstances.

Information will be communicated in a manner that considers your age, communication preferences, language, cognitive abilities, cultural background and individual needs.

We encourage you to seek clarification whenever something is unclear.

3. Consent to Psychological Treatment

Psychological treatment is a collaborative process involving assessment, formulation, therapeutic interventions and ongoing review.

Treatment approaches may include evidence-based psychological therapies such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), Schema Therapy, Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing (EMDR), trauma-focused interventions and other approaches within your psychologist's professional competence.

The specific approach will depend on your presenting concerns, clinical needs, preferences and available evidence.

Before introducing significant treatment interventions, your psychologist will explain their purpose, anticipated benefits, relevant risks and reasonable alternatives.

Participation in psychological treatment is voluntary.

You may ask questions, express concerns, decline a particular intervention or discuss changes to your treatment at any time.

Your psychologist will work collaboratively with you to establish and review treatment goals.

4. Potential Benefits and Risks of Psychological Treatment

Psychological treatment can support improved emotional wellbeing, understanding of personal experiences, development of coping strategies, changes in behaviour and greater psychological flexibility.

However, therapeutic outcomes vary, and no specific result can be guaranteed.

Potential benefits may include:

- Greater understanding of thoughts, emotions and behaviour.
- Reduced psychological distress.
- Improved emotional regulation and coping skills.
- Increased self-awareness and psychological flexibility.
- Improved relationships and communication.
- Greater capacity to manage challenging experiences.
- Progress towards personally meaningful goals.

Potential risks or difficulties may include:

- Temporary increases in emotional distress.
- Discomfort when discussing sensitive or traumatic experiences.
- Increased awareness of difficult memories or emotions.
- Changes in relationships or personal circumstances.
- Fatigue or emotional exhaustion following sessions.
- Uncertainty or discomfort associated with changing established patterns of behaviour.

Some interventions may involve additional considerations depending on your psychological presentation and circumstances.

Your psychologist will discuss foreseeable material risks associated with proposed treatment and work collaboratively with you to manage these.

You are encouraged to communicate any concerns or unexpected changes in your wellbeing during treatment.

5. Consent to Psychological Assessment

Psychological assessment may involve clinical interviews, standardised questionnaires, psychometric testing, observations, collateral information and review of relevant records.

Assessments may be undertaken for purposes including diagnostic clarification, treatment planning, cognitive or neurodevelopmental assessment, functional evaluation or preparation of professional reports.

Before commencing an assessment, we will explain:

- The purpose and scope of the assessment.
- The procedures and measures proposed.
- The anticipated time commitment and fees.
- The possible outcomes and limitations.
- Whether information from other people or organisations is required.
- How results will be interpreted and communicated.
- Whether a report will be prepared and who may receive it.

Where appropriate, separate written consent may be obtained for specialised assessments, the collection of collateral information and disclosure of results.

Participating in an assessment does not guarantee a particular diagnosis, outcome, recommendation or eligibility for services or funding.

Assessment findings will reflect the available evidence and your psychologist's independent professional judgement.

6. Confidentiality and Its Limitations

Information shared during psychological services is confidential and protected by applicable privacy laws and professional obligations.

Your personal information will not ordinarily be disclosed to others without your consent.

However, confidentiality is not absolute.

Information may be disclosed where permitted or required by law, including circumstances involving:

- A serious threat to the life, health or safety of an individual, or to public health or safety, where the relevant legal conditions are met.
- Mandatory reporting obligations.
- Valid court orders, subpoenas or other lawful disclosure requirements.
- Certain professional or regulatory obligations.
- Other disclosures authorised or required under applicable legislation.

Information may also be shared with other healthcare providers or nominated individuals where you have provided appropriate consent.

Where reasonably practicable and appropriate, your psychologist will discuss a proposed disclosure with you beforehand.

Further information is provided in our **Privacy Policy**.

7. Collection and Management of Clinical Information

We collect information reasonably necessary to provide appropriate psychological services and meet our professional obligations.

This may include personal details, health information, assessment results, treatment notes, reports and correspondence.

Clinical information is maintained using **coreplus**, our electronic practice management system, and other authorised systems described in our Privacy Policy.

We take reasonable steps to protect information against unauthorised access, disclosure, misuse or loss.

Clinical records are retained in accordance with applicable professional and legal requirements.

You may request access to, or correction of, your personal information, subject to applicable legal exceptions.

Our Privacy Policy provides further information about collection, storage, access, disclosure and retention of records.

8. AI-Assisted Clinical Documentation

Ocean & Oaktrees Clinical Psychology uses **NovoNote**, an AI-assisted clinical documentation platform, to support the preparation of session notes.

Where clients provide appropriate consent, consultation audio may be temporarily processed to generate a transcript and draft clinical summary.

All AI-generated clinical notes are reviewed and approved by your psychologist before incorporation into the clinical record.

AI-assisted recording and transcription are optional and require separate, informed consent.

You may decline AI-assisted documentation or withdraw consent for future recording without affecting your access to psychological treatment.

Where consent is not provided, alternative note-taking methods will be used.

Please refer to our **AI-Assisted Clinical Documentation and Recording Policy** for further information.

9. Children and Adolescents

We recognise that children and adolescents have important rights to privacy, participation and informed decision-making.

A young person's capacity to consent to psychological services is considered individually, taking into account their age, maturity, understanding, circumstances and the nature of the proposed service.

Where appropriate or legally required, consent will be obtained from a parent, guardian or other authorised decision-maker.

Children and adolescents will be involved in decisions about their care to the extent appropriate to their developmental capacity and circumstances.

Parents and guardians do not automatically have unrestricted access to all information disclosed by a child or adolescent during treatment.

Confidentiality arrangements, parental involvement and relevant limitations will be explained before or during treatment.

Where parents are separated or legal arrangements are complex, we may request relevant information about parental responsibility, court orders or decision-making authority.

Our priority is to support the child's wellbeing while meeting applicable legal and professional obligations.

10. Family Members, Partners and Other Participants

There may be circumstances where family members, partners, caregivers or support persons participate in psychological consultations.

Where this occurs, the psychologist will clarify:

- The purpose of their involvement.
- Who is receiving the psychological service.

- The psychologist's professional responsibilities.
- Relevant confidentiality arrangements.
- How information shared during the consultation will be managed.

Participation in another person's consultation does not automatically establish a separate therapeutic relationship with the psychologist.

Where multiple family members seek individual treatment, potential conflicts of interest and confidentiality concerns will be considered.

Please refer to our **Treating Multiple Family Members Policy**.

11. Telehealth and Telephone Consultations

Psychological consultations may be provided through secure video or telephone services where clinically appropriate.

Telehealth may improve accessibility and continuity of care, but it also has limitations.

These may include technical disruptions, reduced access to non-verbal information, privacy concerns and situations where remote treatment is not clinically suitable.

Clients participating in telehealth are encouraged to:

- Use a private and appropriate location.
- Maintain a reliable telephone or internet connection.
- Avoid participating while driving or undertaking activities that compromise safety or engagement.

- Inform the psychologist of their physical location when reasonably required for safety planning.
- Advise the psychologist if another person is present or able to hear the consultation.

Your psychologist may recommend face-to-face treatment or alternative services where telehealth is considered inappropriate.

Telehealth sessions are subject to the same professional standards, confidentiality obligations and agreed fees as other consultations.

12. Fees and Financial Consent

We are committed to providing clear and transparent information about the costs of psychological services.

Standard individual psychology consultations are currently $270 per session (as at Nov 2026 – and subject to periodic increases)

Fees for specialised assessments, reports, extended consultations, professional correspondence and other services may differ.

Where additional fees apply, these will be discussed and agreed upon before the relevant service is provided.

Eligible clients may receive Medicare or private health insurance rebates for qualifying services, subject to the relevant requirements.

Clients are responsible for confirming their eligibility and any applicable rebate arrangements.

Payment arrangements will be explained before treatment commences.

Any changes to fees will be communicated in advance.

13. Appointment Cancellation and Rescheduling

To support appointment availability and continuity of care, we require **a minimum of two full business days' notice** to cancel or reschedule appointments.

Business days are Monday to Friday, excluding Western Australian public holidays.

Appointments cancelled with insufficient notice or not attended may incur a cancellation fee of up to **100% of the scheduled consultation fee**.

For a standard $270 consultation, the maximum cancellation fee is $270.

Cancellation fees will be considered in accordance with Australian Consumer Law, including the circumstances of the cancellation and the reasonableness of the charge.

Exceptional circumstances may be considered individually.

Prepaid psychology packages are subject to their specific terms and conditions.

Medicare and private health insurance rebates are not available for cancellation fees or appointments that do not take place.

Please refer to our **Appointment Cancellation and Rescheduling Policy** for full details.

14. Reports, Letters and Third-Party Requests

Clients may request reports, letters or other professional documentation relating to their psychological assessment or treatment.

Requests will be considered according to their purpose, the available clinical evidence, professional obligations and the psychologist's scope of practice.

Preparing reports or correspondence may involve additional fees, which will be discussed before work commences.

Your psychologist is required to provide independent, accurate and professionally defensible opinions. A particular conclusion or recommendation cannot be guaranteed.

Separate consent may be required before information is disclosed to insurers, employers, legal representatives, government agencies or other third parties.

Treating psychologists do not automatically act as independent forensic experts, and some requests may be declined where they fall outside the treating role or create a conflict of interest.

15. Professional Boundaries and Therapeutic Relationships

Psychological care is provided within a professional therapeutic relationship.

Clear professional boundaries help protect client wellbeing, confidentiality, objectivity and treatment effectiveness.

We will explain relevant arrangements regarding:

- Appropriate communication between appointments.
- Contact outside scheduled consultations.
- Professional roles and responsibilities.
- Personal and social relationships.
- Potential conflicts of interest.
- The appropriate use of electronic communications.

Where requests or circumstances create potential professional boundary concerns, these will be addressed respectfully and in accordance with applicable ethical obligations.

16. Emergency and Crisis Support

Ocean & Oaktrees Clinical Psychology provides scheduled psychological services and is **not an emergency or 24-hour crisis response service**.

Messages, emails and other communications may not be monitored or answered immediately.

If you require urgent assistance or are experiencing an immediate threat to your safety, please contact emergency services on **000** or attend your nearest emergency department.

Other support options include:

- **Lifeline:** 13 11 14.
- **Suicide Call Back Service:** 1300 659 467.
- **The Mental Health Emergency Response Line (MHERL):** 1300 555 788
- Your general practitioner or appropriate local mental health crisis service.

Where clinically indicated, your psychologist may discuss crisis planning, safety arrangements and suitable support services with you.

17. Your Rights as a Client

You have the right to:

- Receive respectful, professional and non-discriminatory care.

- Understand the nature, purpose, risks and benefits of proposed services.
- Ask questions and seek clarification.
- Participate in treatment planning and decisions.
- Decline particular interventions or assessments.
- Withdraw consent, subject to applicable legal obligations and discussion of the implications.
- Have your privacy and confidentiality protected.
- Request access to or correction of your personal information, subject to law.
- Raise concerns or make a complaint without being subjected to retaliation.
- Request information about alternative services or referral options.

We encourage open discussion about your experiences, preferences and concerns throughout treatment.

18. Your Role in the Therapeutic Process

Psychological treatment is most effective when approached collaboratively.

We encourage clients to:

- Provide information that is accurate and relevant to their care.
- Communicate openly about concerns, difficulties and treatment preferences.
- Advise their psychologist of significant changes in circumstances or wellbeing.
- Participate in treatment planning and review.
- Attend scheduled appointments or provide appropriate cancellation notice.
- Discuss difficulties that may affect engagement in treatment.
- Treat staff, clinicians and other clients respectfully.

These are expectations that support collaborative care, rather than conditions that remove your rights or override our professional responsibilities.

19. Ongoing Consent and Changes to Treatment

Informed consent is an ongoing process.

Your psychologist will revisit consent when clinically appropriate, including where:

- The nature or purpose of treatment changes significantly.
- A new assessment or intervention is proposed.
- New risks or relevant information emerge.
- Additional people become involved in treatment.
- Information is proposed to be shared for a new purpose.
- A new technology or recording process is introduced.
- The original consent no longer adequately covers the proposed service.

You may ask to review your consent arrangements at any time.

Changes to consent will be discussed and documented appropriately.

20. Withdrawal of Consent and Ending Treatment

You may choose to discontinue psychological treatment at any time, subject to any applicable legal arrangements.

If you wish to stop treatment, we encourage you to discuss this with your psychologist so that any relevant clinical considerations, risks or referral options can be addressed.

Withdrawal of consent does not automatically require the deletion of clinical records already lawfully created.

Your psychologist may also recommend changing or discontinuing services where treatment is no longer clinically

appropriate, falls outside professional competence or cannot safely continue.

Where treatment is discontinued by the psychologist, appropriate steps will be taken to minimise foreseeable harm and support continuity of care, including referrals where suitable.

21. Feedback, Concerns and Complaints

We welcome feedback and encourage clients to raise concerns directly with their psychologist wherever they feel comfortable doing so.

Concerns may relate to treatment, communication, professional conduct, privacy, consent or financial arrangements.

We aim to respond respectfully, transparently and appropriately.

You may also contact an external regulatory or complaints body, including:

Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (Ahpra)
www.ahpra.gov.au
1300 419 495

Health and Disability Services Complaints Office (HaDSCO), Western Australia
www.hadsco.wa.gov.au

Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC)
www.oaic.gov.au
1300 363 992

Raising a concern or making a complaint will not result in retaliation or inappropriate withdrawal of care.

22. Professional and Legal Framework

Our approach to informed consent is guided by:

- The **Psychology Board of Australia's Code of Conduct for Psychologists**, effective 1 December 2025.
- The *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law*, as applied in Western Australia.
- The *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)* and Australian Privacy Principles.
- The Australian Consumer Law.
- Other relevant Western Australian and Commonwealth legislation.

This policy should be read alongside our:

- Privacy Policy.
- AI-Assisted Clinical Documentation and Recording Policy.
- Appointment Cancellation and Rescheduling Policy.
- Treating Multiple Family Members Policy.
- Relevant assessment and prepaid package terms.

23. Contact Information

For questions about informed consent, treatment arrangements or your rights, please contact:

Ocean & Oaktrees Clinical Psychology
Jennifer Fleming | Clinical Psychologist
Email: hello@oocp.com.au
Website: www.oocp.com.au

Our commitment

At Ocean & Oaktrees Clinical Psychology, we believe that meaningful psychological change begins with understanding, trust and the freedom to make informed choices.

We are committed to supporting your autonomy, respecting your individual experiences and working collaboratively towards your psychological wellbeing.

Nothing in this policy limits any rights or protections available under applicable Australian law or removes your psychologist's professional and ethical responsibilities.