



# NEW ROMNEY COUNSELLING SERVICES

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## General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

On 25<sup>th</sup> May 2018 significant changes came into effect concerning the way Organisations must handle data. It is called the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). These regulations will be incorporated into the Data Protection Act 2018 and builds on the Data Protection Act 1998, strengthening Legislation, giving consumers/clients more rights and greater protection.

Under the GDPR, Organisations are required to outline what information is kept, why and whom it may be shared with.

New Romney Counselling Services therefore is required to inform you that in order to undertake an assessment and provide counselling, we will ask you for the following information.

1. Your name, address and a contact telephone number. We may need to contact you if a counsellor is unable to attend your counselling session due to sickness. As part of our client confidentiality procedure, we will check with you at the time of providing your contact details that it is OK to leave a message on the telephone number provided. We are aware that some Client's may choose not to tell family, partners etc. that they are having Counselling. We fully respect your choices.
2. We will ask you for the name of your Doctor, surgery address and telephone number. If a Counsellor feels a client is significantly at risk of serious self-harm or harm to others – a decision may be taken after discussion with you and separately with a qualified Supervisor, to contact the Doctor.
3. You will be asked for your consent for New Romney Counselling Service, to notify your Doctor, that you are attending Counselling. The Doctor is NOT informed of what the Counselling is for. This is done for two reasons – firstly it is considered best practice to advise your Doctor from a health perspective and secondly, to make Doctors aware that New Romney Counselling Services are providing a service (unpaid) for them. You do not have to give your consent and we fully respect your decision. In the event of non-consent, the Doctor will not be advised and it has no impact regarding us providing counselling to you.
4. Usually during your first Counselling session you will be asked by the Counsellor if you are taking any medication or have any medical conditions. By this we mean anything relevant to your Counselling sessions. For example Epilepsy – something that could occur during a session. We ask this to enable us to help keep you safe while you are having Counselling. Another example of a relevant condition may be depression and any associated medication.
5. Notes. A Counsellor may make notes following your Counselling session. It is only your Counsellor who will see these notes. They serve as a reminder for the Counsellor of issues discussed and are usually very brief. Notes will not have your name anywhere on them, but instead will have a client code. Notes are kept in a locked filing cabinet.

At New Romney Counselling Services, Client confidentiality is absolutely critical. With the exception of paragraph 3 none of your information is shared with a third party or indeed within New Romney Counselling Service.

Directly related to paragraph 3 – if you give your consent for us to notify your Doctor that you are attending Counselling, we will send a standard letter to your Doctor with your name entered onto the letter. Your Doctor, will of course already have all of the information contained in the above.

If you have any concerns regarding your information or relating to confidentiality, you can speak to your Counsellor or, a meeting with a Manager can be arranged.