

Patient/client confidentiality for students and their supervisors

Purpose

All health professionals are required by law to ensure the confidentiality and privacy of patient/client information. Students attending placement at Canberra Health Services (CHS), Calvary Public Hospital Bruce (CPHB) and ACT Health Directorate (ACTHD) have the same responsibilities as staff to maintain patient/client confidentiality. It is expected that all personal and health information that you have access to, is kept confidential and not shared outside the patients'/clients' treating team. The purpose of this factsheet is to provide you and your supervisor with information and examples to assist you to understand and meet these expectations when using patient/client and service information for education purposes.

Considerations for education and learning

On occasion you may need to share patient/client information. This can include logbooks, work samples, or for education purposes (including workshop/conference presentations). In these instances, you and your supervisor are responsible for ensuring patient/client confidentiality and privacy is maintained and relevant organisational procedures are followed. The Acknowledgement Form you signed prior to your placement provides greater detail about your obligations.

Examples

To ensure confidentiality and privacy, patient/client identity must be protected in any information shared external to the patients'/clients' treating team. The following examples will assist you:

- Case studies must be de-identified to the point where there is no possibility that a patient's/client's privacy could be breached. Fictional case studies or combining the cases of two or more patients/clients without personally identifiable data (i.e. no specific individual can be identified) is recommended. Removing a patient's name or date of birth is not sufficient, as other aspects of their condition/identity (such as age, gender, location, employment position/organisation, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status) may disclose identity.
- If you are unable to combine patient cases, use a non-identifiable code (e.g. Patient A) and minimise personal identifiable details. For example: use an umbrella term for diagnosis (such as neurological condition) or minimise social details (such as the patient being from a rural area).
- Clinical supervision agreements should stipulate that any information shared will remain confidential within the supervision partnership.

- Written consent forms are required to be completed prior to filming or uploading videos or photos of patients/clients. You must obtain written, informed consent from the patient/client using approved organisational forms (listed below). Personal devices must not be used to take photos or videos of patients/clients.
- Capturing screen dumps of clinical information systems or using mobile phones/other portable devices to take digital photos of clinical record documents is not permitted.
- Approval must be sought from supervisors/managers in line with area specific processes before using or uploading any patient related information for educational requirements (e.g. logbooks, portfolios, presenting at a forum).
- Copies of patient information (e.g. handover sheets, draft assessment forms/notes) must be disposed of following organisational procedures.
- Only organisational information which is publicly available on the internet can be shared. Sharing of any other organisational information must be approved in writing by your supervisor.

Student responsibilities

You should ensure you understand the information provided in this factsheet and seek clarification, assistance, consent, and approval from your supervisor as required.

This information is supported and endorsed by the Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer and Chief Allied Health Officer.

Further information

For more information, seek advice from your supervisor or the Clinical Placement Office on 5124 5887 or CPO@act.gov.au.

CHS policies/procedures outlined below can be accessed at:

<https://actgovernment.sharepoint.com/sites/intranet-health/PPR/default.aspx>.

For access to other policies/procedures (e.g. CPHB) please seek advice from your supervisor.

ACTPS - Use of Social Media Policy

Canberra Health Services Policy: Informed Consent (Clinical)

Canberra Health Services Procedure: Clinical Records Management

Canberra Health Services Procedure: Photo, Video and Audio: Capture, Storage, Disposal and Use

Clinical and Non-clinical Placement Procedure – ACT Health Directorate

Partnering with Consumers Framework (currently in draft)

Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth)

Privacy and Confidentiality (eLearning-2018)

Version Control

Date	Version	Staff Member Responsible	Changes made
08/07/2020	V0.1	Rebecca Cesnik	Original working group developed draft document
25/08/2020	V0.2	Rebecca Cesnik	Allied Health comments added.

26/11/2020	V0.3	Emilia Roberts	Further feedback and review by working group added.
3/12/2020	V0.4	Emilia Roberts	Final feedback added, support and endorsement received from NMO and CAHO.

Accessibility

If you have difficulty reading a standard printed document and would like an alternative format, please phone 13 22 81.



If English is not your first language and you need the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS), please call 13 14 50.

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