

## PRIVACY POLICY

### Privacy Commitment

Therapy Heals Psychotherapy and Counselling Services is in compliance with both Federal and Provincial privacy legislation (including PIPEDA, Personal Protection of Information and Electronic Documents Act and PHIPA, Personal Health Information Protection Act). Privacy of personal information is an important principle to Therapy Heals and its counsellors. We are committed to collecting, using, and disclosing personal information responsibly and only to the extent necessary for the services we provide. We also try to be open and transparent as to how we handle personal information and respect the privacy of our clients.

We will not release or share a client's personal information (e.g. name, address, telephone number, reason for seeking services, etc.) to anyone without the client's written permission or knowledge. (For limits to confidentiality, where this may not apply, see below). Those that have access to client information and client files, for the purposes of delivering professional, responsible, and ethical service, are the client's counsellor, this counsellor's supervisor, the office manager, and the owner of Therapy Heals. Therapy Heals may from time to time, with clients' permission, send information to clients, that may be of use to clients, for example, stress management tips, information about new services, etc. If clients prefer not to receive this type of information, they may inform their counsellor or the Clinic Manager, or they may electronically unsubscribe. Therapy Heals staff is committed to maintaining the privacy of client personal information.

### Information Collected and Secured

The information collected at Therapy Heals is for the purposes of providing professional and responsible service to our clients. Information collected includes personal information, such as name, address, date of birth, phone number, etc., as well as psycho-social and health information related to the reasons for seeking service and obtaining counselling treatment. This information is collected verbally and through various forms at Therapy Heals, such as, assessment forms, client questionnaires, notes during counselling, and progress notes. All of this information makes up the client file which is electronically and securely stored in a privacy compliant software system.

Clients (and potential clients) are encouraged *not* to share personal information via e-mail because e-mail over the internet may not be secure. Clients choosing to exchange information via e-mail are reminded that their information may not be secure and are asked to use this mode of communication cautiously and infrequently. Therapy Heals staff make every effort to limit health, and other personal information, transmitted by email and mobile text. If clients consent to e-mail or text communication, then some information will be exchanged via e-mail and text. As part of their consent, clients accept that there is some risk involved, in that, information exchanged by email or text may not be entirely secure.

### Sharing or Disclosing Client Information to Others

Client information is not shared with third parties unless there is written permission and consent provided by clients to share this information. There are some limits to confidentiality and in these circumstances, client information can be shared with the appropriate parties, without consent from a client. These circumstances are as follows:

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- Your counsellor is legally obliged to share information with a third party when he/she has concerns that you are at risk of seriously harming yourself or someone else.
- Your counsellor is legally obliged to report actual or suspected cases of child abuse for anyone under the age of 18 to Children's Aid. Your counsellor may also choose to report such cases for children that are 16 or 17 years of age.
- Your counsellor is legally obliged to report sexual abuse by a regulated health care professional (to the regulating body of that professional).
- Your counsellor is obliged to comply with provincial and federal legal requests/subpoenas for client information.

There may be times when it is beneficial to share client information with others, for example, with doctors, or video/audio taping client sessions for supervision. Counsellors will obtain written permission and consent from clients to share such information and clients will receive a thorough explanation of the purposes for sharing such information. Clients have the right to refuse to give consent to share such information at any time.

### Clients' Right to Access Personal Information

Clients have the right to access and view their personal information/client file held at Therapy Heals. Therapy Heals reserve the right to ask for a written request and charge a nominal fee as warranted. Therapy Heals staff will help clients to understand any information that is not clear to them, e.g. short forms, technical language, etc. If a client believes that there is an error in the information, he/she has the right to ask for it to be corrected. If there is disagreement about what is considered "correct", the client may add a brief statement to the file so that both perspectives are maintained in the file.

### Destruction of Client Files

Client files are securely maintained for a period of 10 years after the last counselling session (and for 10 years after the age of majority for a client 18 and under at the time of service). At time of destruction, files are shredded on site.

**For more information, questions, concerns, or complaints** about Therapy Heals Privacy Policy or practices, you may contact the Privacy and Information Officer:

**Amelia Perri, Clinic Director and Psychotherapist**  
**Therapy Heals Psychotherapy and Counselling Services**  
**6672 3rd Line, Unit C2, Tottenham, ON, L0G 1W0**  
**905-936-4747 or toll free 1-888-340-4325 (HEAL)**  
**info@therapyheals.ca**

If clients are not satisfied with Therapy Heals response to their privacy concerns they may contact:

The Information and Privacy Commissioner of Canada, who can be reached at:

**112 Kent Street**  
**Ottawa, Ontario**  
**K1A 1H3**

**Phone: (613) 995-8210/Toll Free: 1-800-282-1376/Fax: (613) 947-6850/TTY: (613) 992-9190**