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Policy for Email Communication

This document describes the policy of Dr Leonie White for the management of her clients' email information.

Dr Leonie White's practice offers clients/guardians the opportunity to communicate by email for some limited purposes. This form provides information about the risks of email, how your information will be protected and your responsibilities regarding email communication.

Please note, email is not appropriate for urgent or emergency situations, nor is it a substitute for face-to-face or telephone/telehealth consultations.

Any email communication between you and the practice will be added to your client file

Risks

Communication by email has several risks, including, but not limited to, the following:

- This practice cannot guarantee that an email will be read or responded to. For example, security software can filter emails before it reaches us and the intended recipient may go on personal leave unexpectedly.
- Email can be circulated, forwarded, and stored in paper and electronic files.
- Backup copies of the email may exist even after the sender or recipient has deleted their copy.
- Email senders can easily misaddress an email, or unintended recipients can receive an email.
- Email can be intercepted, altered, forwarded, or used without authorisation or detection.
- Employers and online services have a right to archive and inspect emails transmitted through their systems.
- Administration staff may also receive your emails before forwarding them to your healthcare provider.

How the practice will protect your information

- The practice will use reasonable means to protect the security and confidentiality of email information sent and received. However, because of the risks outlined above, we cannot guarantee the security and privacy of email communication, and we will not be liable for the inadvertent disclosure of confidential information.
- We will encrypt any documents we need to send you and forward the password to access this file by another communication method (phone or text message).
- We will verify your email prior to sending any confidential information.
- When emailing you, we will:
 - Put any identifying information in the body of the email, not in the subject line.
 - Include the general topic of the message in the email's subject line, for example, 'advice' or 'appointment'.

Client responsibilities regarding the use of email.

Clients will:

- Inform the healthcare professional of email address changes.
- When emailing a healthcare professional:
 - Not put identifying information in the email's subject line but will put this in the body of the email.
 - Include the general topic of the message in the email's subject line, for example, 'advice' or 'appointment'.
- Contact the health care professional's office via alternative communication methods, such as a phone call, if a reply is not received within a reasonable period of time.

Clients cannot:

- Use email to communicate urgent or emergency information.
- Use email for communication regarding sensitive medical information.

Clients' responsibility:

- The client is responsible for informing the healthcare professional of any information that I do not want to be sent by email.
- The client is responsible for protecting their password or other means of access to email. The health care professional is not liable for breaches of confidentiality caused by the client or any third party.