

Confidentiality Agreement Details & How to Make a Complaint

- 1) The information you share with us is confidential. That means we do not share your personal information with others unless you give us your express written or verbal consent to release your information. Legal limitations apply:
 - If a court issues a subpoena for the release of your information.
 - If the police issue a warrant for the release of your information.
 - If a treatment provider, working in your program, becomes audited by their regulatory college your information may be required to be released to the regulatory college.
 - i. This may occur by the College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario or Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers.
 - To fulfill other purposes permitted or required by law.
 - If something you say or do makes us suspect a child is being hurt(abused) or not taken care of properly (neglected)
 - i. If something you say or do makes us suspect a risk of harm to you or someone else
 - ii. As an agency, Ray of Hope is a member of the Integrated Threat-Risk Assessment Protocol, with all the school boards in Waterloo Region. This protocol enhances school safety by creating a formal structure for prevention or early intervention regarding violence.
 - iii. Ray of Hope will inform the appropriate school officials about students who we believe to be at high risk to act violently toward self or others, regardless of where this possible act of violence may occur.
 - iv. Ray of Hope may inform the appropriate school officials about students who appear to be demonstrating escalations of action or attitude toward violence against self or others.
 - v. We will contact emergency services and or emergency contacts if we suspect there is a risk of harm to yourself or others.
- 2) If you are under 18 years old, we may discuss some information with your parents if we think it will be helpful for you. In most cases, you will know about this beforehand and have a say in what we discuss with them.
 - Your consent to treatment includes consent to this information sharing with your parent(s)/guardian(s) until you inform us you wish to withdraw or limit your consent to share information with them.
- 3) We will talk to and send relevant paperwork to medical professionals in the Circle of Care¹ if it helps you meet your goals.
 - Circle of Care is a term used to describe the ability of certain health information professionals to assume an individual's implied consent to collect, use or disclose personal health information for providing health care, in circumstances defined in Personal Health Information Privacy Act (PHIPA). Health care providers include doctors, psychiatrists, nurses, pharmacists and mental health and addiction treatment providers. Within the circle of care, health care providers are allowed, by law, to talk to each other concerning your treatment in order to coordinate care and ensure you are getting the best care possible.

¹ Circle of Care refers to the legal ability of certain health information professionals to assume an individual's implied consent to collect, use or disclose personal health information for the purpose of providing health care.

- Your consent to treatment includes consent to this information sharing with other healthcare providers in your Circle of Care until you inform us you wish to withdraw your consent to share information.
- Ray of Hope Youth Support Services is part of the Circle of Care. This means we are able to:
 - i. Discuss our assessments, treatment plans and actual treatment provided with your other care providers, where this information is relevant to the care we or they provide.
 - ii. Provide written reports to each other about our assessments, treatment plans and actual treatment.
- Provide copies of your clinical file to each other.

4) We write case notes about your treatment progress and keep them in a case file.

- All screening, assessment, coaching and psychotherapy provided to you is part of treatment and will be documented in the case file. This applies for up to two years after your last discharge and includes interactions in the community.
- Your case file is a health record.
- To review or make corrections to your health record you must contact the Program Director.

5) Youth Support Services staff members have access to your case file *as needed* for the purposes of supervision, administrative tasks, managing crises, auditing procedures or internal case conferencing. If you have concerns about who may access your health records, please talk with your treatment provider.

- Possible reasons staff other than your direct treatment provider(s) may access your client file:
 - i. Supervision,
 - ii. Administrative tasks,
 - iii. Managing crises,
 - iv. Auditing procedures,
 - v. Internal case conferencing,
 - vi. Administer and manage our internal operations,
 - vii. Conduct quality improvement activities (such as sending client satisfaction surveys)
 - viii. Teaching/training
 - ix. Conduct research (only under strict rules overseen by a research ethics board)
 - x. Compile statistics
 - xi. Comply with legal and regulatory requirements.

6) If you are in a group treatment setting, Ray of Hope Youth Support Services cannot control how other participants might use the information you disclose outside of the program.

- If you know a specific treatment provider within Ray of Hope Youth Support Services who you do **not** want to have access to your case file, this can be arranged by talking to administrative staff or managers. (519)743-2311 ex 510.

7) Digital communications (phone calls, video calls, emails, texting, etc.) may have transmission errors. We encrypt emails, but no electronic communication is immune to errors. Providers avoid social media apps. By agreeing to digital communication, you accept any risks to your privacy.

- Ray of Hope Youth Support Services email provider is encrypted.

- No means of electronic communication (including email) is immune to errors in transmission, delivery or reception, technological malfunction, human error, and cyber attacks.
- Our treatment providers never communicate through social media apps (e.g., Instagram or Facebook)
- By consenting to the use of any means of digital communications with Ray of Hope Youth Support Services treatment providers you accept the potential risk involved.

- 8) Treatment services offered through YSS are typically not recorded, exceptions include:
- i. Staff may request a session be recorded for professional development/training. In this case, participant may refuse recording and still be granted service.
 - ii. If the Program Director or designate deems it necessary, that sessions must be recorded for safety reasons. In this case, if participant refuses recording the session may be terminated.

- 9) We reserve the right to search your personal belongings *when you are in our vehicles and buildings*.
- Treatment providers may conduct random searches of personal property participants bring into our buildings or vehicles used for YAS business. Contraband found during a search may be confiscated and either put in storage, destroyed, or turned over to police depending on what it is.
 - Treatment Providers who transport participants will ask participants to put their bags/backpacks into the trunk/rear compartment as a safety precaution.

- 10) After you have been discharged from our services, we may reach out to you for follow up conversations within the year post discharge.
- Follow up conversations generally consist of:
 - i. Asking how you are doing.
 - ii. Inquiring if you need more support.
 - iii. Possible completing of surveys.
 - iv. Gathering statistical information
 - We use information about how our participants are doing to track the effectiveness of our program. We want to make sure we are meeting the needs of those we serve to the best of our ability. We gather statistical information through follow up with all our participants that may be shared publicly. No information about you specifically may be shared publicly without your express written consent.
 - By consenting to treatment, you consent to allow us to contact you for follow up.
 - i. If your contact information changes, we may also reach out to your parent/guardian, emergency contact, or other person/organization whom you have given consent for us to speak to, for the purpose of obtaining your updated contact information.
 - ii. You can inform us you wish to end your participation in follow up at anytime.

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How to Make a Complaint

You, or anyone representing you, have the right to make complaints or raise concerns about your treatment. There is a proper procedure for doing so. You are responsible to learn the procedure and act according to it. Please feel free to ask questions to ensure you have a clear understanding.

- 1) In most cases, you can voice your complaints to the treatment provider working with you and have a mutual discussion to resolve the issue in private.
- 2) If the issue is not resolved, you may request a meeting with the Program Manager and give him/her a letter detailing your complaint. Within 7 days you will meet with the program manager about the complaint.
- 3) If the complaint is still not resolved, the Program Manager will write their comments on the complaint letter, and you may choose to take your concern to the Program Director.
- 4) The Program Director will attempt to resolve the situation, which may include a meeting with you. S/he will add their comments to your complaint.
- 5) If you are still not satisfied, you may take your concerns to the Ray of Hope Inc. Chief Executive Officer of Ray of Hope Inc.
- 6) If after all of this you are still not satisfied, you may also contact the Home and Community Care Support Services – Waterloo Wellington. Phone: 1-888-883-3313 or 519 883 5589

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