

## CLIENT INFORMATION: ACCESS TO RECORDS

Under the Data Protection Act you have the right to know what records Wellspring keeps on you, and why they are kept.

Wellspring holds securely both paper and computer records in order to maintain, monitor and evaluate our services and to offer you as high a quality of service as possible. In addition, therapists may make personal notes, which they safeguard themselves, about the process of your counselling or therapy.

You are entitled to see your records, and the attached *Procedure for Subject Access Requests* tells you how to request them.

The Co-ordinator of Clinical Services must fulfil a legal duty of care to:

- Ensure the person making the request for access is entitled to access.
- Review the record itself to ensure no one else's rights to confidentiality will be compromised by such access. (In the case of any personal notes made by therapists, these will be reviewed by the therapists themselves).
- Ensure that access is granted in a professional manner, ie
  - (a) By ensuring that to see information in the files is not likely to be traumatising or to cause serious harm to your physical or mental health.
  - (b) By ensuring that your therapist or if necessary another member of Wellspring's clinical team is present when the records are available for you to see. This person will be able to talk with you about what your file contains and why.

You may view the record, but not alter it. However, you may request alterations to correct any factual inaccuracy on Wellspring's part.

You may not remove the file from the room in which access is provided. Your therapist or the member of the clinical team present while you view your records is responsible for ensuring that they are not altered or removed. If you request photocopying of any notes or records this will incur a charge.

It is recommended that, if possible, clients discuss in advance their wish to access their records, and the reason for doing so, with their therapist.