

Privacy of Information

Road Trauma Support WA (RTSWA) is committed to upholding the privacy of our clients at all times, providing the highest level of confidentiality and service in all our dealings.

All information, support and counselling services are conducted within an environment of complete privacy, absolute confidentiality and without interruption.

Type of information collected

RTSWA collects information about people the service has dealings with such as clients receiving a service from us, potential and existing staff and volunteers.

The type of information collected will vary according to the type of engagement we have with them but generally we collect personally identifiable demographic information such as name, contact details (email address, home and/or work address, and contact numbers) and other non-identifying demographic information such as gender, age and cultural origin.

Clients, and potential volunteers also provide “case” information such as basic health status and details relevant to the road trauma they have experienced.

Potential employees and volunteers may also need to provide additional details such as past work and volunteer experiences, past injuries, worker’s compensation and criminal convictions.

How information is used

Demographic information such as contact details are used to communicate with our clients. For example, dealing with administrative and appointment matters, and sending materials such as newsletters and announcements.

RTSWA does not sell, rent or lease its client data to third parties although we may, from time to time, make contact on behalf of external partners about a particular service that may be of benefit. In those cases, unique personally identifiable information (e-mail,

name, address, telephone number) is not transferred to the third party.

The choice to ‘opt out’ of receiving communications from RTSWA is available at any time.

Details relating to the road trauma and health status of clients are used by our counsellors and peer supporters to better meet our individual clients’ needs, and/or to appropriately match our peer supporters.

Statistical data may be used for reporting to statutory and funding bodies. It may also be used for planning and quality improvement purposes through surveys and other feedback mechanisms. However, it is important to note that the information is de-identified so anyone with access to the raw data cannot identify any individuals.

In the case of an emergency, RTSWA may need to provide basic demographic and/or health status details to emergency service workers in order to assist them in responding to the incident.

When clients contact our offices to make or discuss an appointment, request information or receive telephone counselling, our staff will ask them to identify themselves using basic demographic data. We will record the contact made and provide non-confidential information such as confirming or rescheduling an appointment time. Unless the person can verify they are the client through provision of demographic data as above, or that they are an alternative contact nominated by the client, our staff will not confirm a client’s identity to outside sources, nor provide any other information about them.

With regard to the collection and maintenance of client records (notes taken either during or immediately after a session), each counsellor has their own approach. However, all records are kept securely and only accessible to relevant staff –ie: administrative staff do not have access to these details.

Whilst information will only be viewed by the counsellor, there are exceptional circumstances where this does not apply, namely where:

- RTSWA is directed by a court order or subpoena to release documents.
- A counsellor notes serious harm may occur to a client or other people concerned, or if the counsellor observes the client is no longer willing or able to take responsibility for their actions. A decision in this regard would be discussed with the client and the senior counsellor.

Clients are encouraged to discuss the collection of information directly with their counsellor should they have any concerns or questions regarding this.

In the case of a health professional referring a client to RTSWA, it would be usual practice for the counsellor to provide follow up information. The client's written permission is sought in this circumstance.

Similarly, where a request for information is received by RTSWA from another agency, the client will be notified and written permission sought. Depending on the circumstance and type of information requested, a reasonable fee may be levied in order to cover the administrative costs of preparation and transmission.

RTSWA will disclose personal information, without notice, only if required to do so by law or in good faith that such action is necessary, such as:

- a) conforming to legal requirements and/or complying with legal process served on RTSWA
- b) protecting and defending the rights or property of RTSWA
- c) acting under urgent circumstances to protect the personal safety of users of RTSWA, or the public.

Digital media

RTSWA is committed to protecting privacy and uses technology that provides a safe online experience. By accessing the RTSWA website, users consent to the data practices described in this statement.

RTSWA collects and uses personal information to operate the Road Trauma Support WA website and deliver services requested.

Information about computer hardware and software is automatically collected and can include IP address, browser type, domain names, access times and referring websites. This is used for operation of the service, to maintain quality, and provide general statistical data regarding use of the website.

We ask users to note that if they directly disclose personally identifiable information or personally sensitive data through RTSWA public message boards, this information may be collected and used by others. RTSWA does not assume responsibility for, nor reads any private online communications.

RTSWA is not responsible for privacy or content on websites outside of the main RTSWA site and family of sites. It is recommended to review the privacy statements of any sites from where users navigate away from RTSWA so there is understanding of how those sites collect, use and share information.

Use of cookies

The Road Trauma Support WA website uses 'cookies' to help personalise the online experience. A cookie is a text file placed on the hard disk by a web server. Cookies cannot be used to run programs or deliver viruses to a computer. They are uniquely assigned to the user, and can only be read by a web server in the domain that issued the cookie.

Cookies are a time-saving feature, notifying the server when the user has returned to a specific page, simplifying the process of recording personal information, such as an address. For example, if you personalise an RTSWA page, or register with a RTSWA site or service, a cookie will help RTSWA to retrieve specific information on subsequent visits.

While most browsers automatically accept cookies, users can usually modify their browser settings to decline cookies if preferred. However, the interactive features of the RTSWA website may not be fully experienced if they are disabled.

Security of personal information

RTSWA secures electronic personal information from unauthorised access, use or disclosure by holding personally identifiable information on computer servers in a controlled, secure environment.

When personal information (such as a credit card number) is transmitted to other websites, it is protected through the use of encryption, such as the Secure Socket Layer (SSL) protocol.

Hard (paper) copies of personal information are secured via lockable cabinets in rooms which are monitored during business hours and secured after hours.

Access to own information

The Privacy Act (1988) allows clients access to information held about themselves. RTSWA will generally grant this access after taking reasonable time to respond, and ensuring that access would not violate the privacy of another individual, in which case access may be restricted or limited.

In granting access, clients will be permitted to view the information at RTSWA premises, in the presence of an RTSWA staff member. A request to obtain a copy of the information must be indicated in writing and may incur administrative charges (eg: reimbursement for photocopying). It is important to note that these requests are not automatically granted.

Requesting changes to information

Changes to general demographic and contact information are granted as a matter of course, as long as the individual identifies themselves through our usual process, or that they are the nominated alternate contact person permitted to do this on the client's behalf.

If the information contained within a client record, such as a counselling note, is considered erroneous, or the client has an opinion contrary to the one expressed, RTSWA may, at its discretion, remove the

item. The client has a minimum right to add their own note to the record.

Changes to this statement

RTSWA will occasionally review privacy and confidentiality practices in relation to regulatory changes and client and stakeholder feedback. In this case, the privacy statement will be updated to reflect these changes.

Further information

RTSWA welcomes your comments regarding this privacy statement. If you believe we have not adhered to our policy, or you have any queries, please contact us:

e: admin@rtswa.org.au

t: 1300 004 814

We will take all reasonable efforts to promptly determine and remedy any issues.

If you are not satisfied with our response, you can lodge a formal written complaint with the **Office of the Australian Information Commissioner:**

W: <http://www.oaic.gov.au/privacy/making-a-privacy-complaint>

a: Director of Compliance (Investigations)

GPO Box 5218

Sydney NSW 2001

e: enquiries@oaic.gov.au

t: 1300 363 992