

Privacy Policy: Data Security and Privacy Statement

I, Laura Varnes, take the collection and storage of your information very seriously and comply with both the Data Protection Act 1998, and also the European General Data Protection Regulations 2018.

I act as the Data Controller and I am registered with the Information Commissioner's Office.

What information do I collect?

As part of the assessment and therapy process, I will collect and store personal data (name, address, email address, phone number, GP, and school, where applicable) for the purposes of identifying you, reviewing our services, your payment details and to contact you with any changes to the service you receive (e.g. change in appointment time). I will also collect information relating to your/your child's physical and mental health. I will take notes during the therapy sessions to help me think about and plan our work.

Some of the information I may collect is classified as sensitive and personal data (e.g. data related to your racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, data concerning health or data concerning your sex life, private opinions). The reasons for collecting this information are 'legitimate interest' and 'provision of health treatment'. Please see the ICO website for further explanation of these. The provision of this information forms part of your contract with us and will allow me to provide an assessment/therapy service to you, and to help me ensure the quality of my service.

What information will I share?

This data may be shared with a third party who you have informed us is already involved, where applicable (solicitor, insurance company, rehabilitation broker) to carry out the service which you or they have contracted with us. I may share information with your/your child's GP via a copy of reports that I write to you. I may also discuss with you sharing information with other bodies e.g. school, or other professionals if this feels appropriate. This is to ensure you/your child receive the best possible care. This sharing forms part of our contract as a psychological service provider and if we are legally obliged to do so e.g. if instruction to by the Court.

I will not use your information for marketing purposes and will not sell it to any third party.

The British Association for Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapies guidelines for clinical practice recommend that each CBT Therapist uses a Supervisor to ensure the quality and standards of their work. We will use supervision for this purpose with a BABCP registered practitioner who is bound by the same rules of confidentiality and who is compliant with the GDPR. We will share sensitive data with this person to benefit the quality of the service you receive, but not personal data (names etc.).

Additionally, the British Association for Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapies standards of ethics and the General Data Protection Regulations state that data processing may be vital in the legitimate interests of the data subject and in order for the service provider to complete their business. Therefore, if I feel that you/your child or someone you have informed me about is at risk then I may need to contact your GP, another healthcare provider or a statutory body, e.g., Social Services or parents if the child is under 18 of age. If this is necessary, as far as possible I will discuss this with you/your child first and I will act in accordance with British Association for Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapies standards of ethics to ensure your welfare, or that of someone else.

The Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapies guidelines for clinical practice recommend private therapists have a clinical will. A clinical will is a formal written document that provides instructions as to how an appointed executor should act in the event that I am no longer able to operate my clinical practice. Therefore, should I no longer be able to practice clinically my executor will have access to your information and act accordingly.

How is information stored?

I will keep information securely in accordance with ICO guidelines. Storage may be electronically or hard copy. Hard copies will be stored in a locked filing cabinet. The files may be transferred to clinics by car. Electronic information will be stored on a password protected computer. Emails will be stored in a password protected account in a GDPR compliant email account. I will not store your identifiable name on my mobile phone although I will keep text messages whilst you are receiving a service. Text messages will be used primarily to confirm appointments. Please do not send any sensitive information via text message.

I may communicate with you by post, mobile phone or email. If I send reports electronically, they will be password protected.

How long will information be kept for & what rights do you have?

A basic health record will be stored in a secure location for 7 years (or 7 years after your 18th birthday if you are under 18 years currently). Sensitive information relating to the work completed will be destroyed 7 years after the end of our work together. By law, this is the length of time we are required to store this information.

You have the right to request access to information we hold about you. You will receive scanned or electronic information in a portable format.

You have the right to request changes to factually inaccurate information we hold about you and the right to request the deletion information. If it is no longer necessary for us to hold this data, in order to protect your or our current or future legitimate interests, and if we have no legal obligation to hold the data then we will comply with

your request. We will discuss this with you at the time and explain if it is not possible to delete the data.

If you have any further questions or concerns please contact me or the ICO, www.ico.org.uk

Laura Varnes
CBT Therapist