

Sandra R. Champe, Ph.D.

Confidentiality Agreement

We place a high value on the confidentiality of the information that our clients share with us. This sheet was prepared to clarify our legal and the ethical responsibilities regarding this important issue.

Personal information that you share with us may be entered into your records in written form. However, an effort is generally made to avoid entry of information which may be especially sensitive or embarrassing. The only individuals with access to our files are staff members who are either directly involved in providing services to you and those performing related clerical tasks. All of these persons are aware of the strict confidential nature of the information in the records. Persons from outside our office are not allowed access to our files.

If you are being seen in couple or family therapy with myself or other therapists in our practice or when different family members are seen individually confidentiality and privilege do not apply unless specifically requested in writing. The therapist will use clinical judgment when revealing such information.

Release of information

If for some reason there is a need to share information in your record with someone not employed here (for example, your physician or another therapist), you will first be consulted and asked to sign a form authorizing transfer of the information. Because of the sensitive nature of the information contained in some records, you may wish to discuss the release of this material and related implications carefully before you sign. You can revoke your permission at any time by simply giving us written notice. This will not apply to information previously released with consent.

Litigation

If you are involved in litigation of any kind and inform the court of services that you received from us (making your mental health an issue before the court, you may be waiving your right to keep your records confidential. You may wish to consult your attorney regarding such matters before you disclose you have received treatment.

Required Disclosure

There are several important instances when confidential information may be released to others:

If you have been referred to this agency by the Court ("Court Ordered"), you can assume that the Court wishes to receive some type of report or evaluation. You should discuss with us exactly what information may be included in a report to the Court BEFORE you disclose any confidential material. In such instances, you have the right to tell us only what you want us to know.

If you threaten to harm either yourself or someone else and we believe your threat to be serious, we are obligated under law to take whatever actions seem necessary to protect people from harm. This may include divulging confidential information to others and would only be done under unusual circumstances where someone's life appeared to be in danger. We may also contact the emergency contact person named on your personal information sheet if it's felt it is necessary to protect you from harm.

**West Maple Family Counseling
5600 West Maple Road, Ste. D-410
West Bloomfield, MI 48322
(248) 339 6618**

If we have reason to believe that you are abusing or neglecting your children, other dependents or elders we are obligated by law to report this to the appropriate state agency. The law is designed to protect children, dependents and elders from harm and obligations to report suspected abuse or neglect are very clear in this regard and mandated by law.

If you are insured by Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Michigan, and some other insurance companies and they pay us directly for services provided to you, they require that they be allowed to audit your records to make sure appropriate services were provided. Using your insurance coverage is considered to be a release of information for billing and auditing purposes.

Limited Disclosure

Limited release of information is used to bill insurance on your behalf and may also be used to collect unpaid balances as outlined in Office Policies.

HIPAA

A copy of HIPAA regulations can be made available upon request

In summary, we make every reasonable effort to safeguard the personal information which you may share with us. There are, however, certain instances when we may be obligated under the law to release such information to others. If you have any questions about confidentiality, please discuss them with us.

Please note: email is NOT a secure form of communication and should not be used for confidential information. It is only to be used for “messaging” purposes only and not as a substitute for therapy.