

Privacy and Digital policy

Purpose:

This policy outlines how WA Speech manages, uses, and protects the personal information of our clients to ensure privacy and confidentiality in compliance with applicable privacy laws and standards.

At WA Speech we ensure that:

- Adequate information is provided before clients are asked to give consent
- Clients give their consent voluntarily
- This consent is current and specifies all relevant information
- Clients are informed they have the right to withdraw consent at any time

1. Collection of Personal Information

WA Speech collects personal and health information necessary to provide effective speech pathology services with consent from clients and/or their guardians. The client and/or guardian will be asked to sign a Consent Form before the first service is provided. This information may include but is not limited to:

- Personal identification details (e.g., name, date of birth, address)
- Contact information (e.g., phone number, email address)
- Referral information
- Health and medical information (e.g., medical history, current health conditions)
- NDIS details (if applicable)
- Information from other health care providers
- Video and audio footage used exclusively for therapeutic purposes
- Contact information of other allied health providers in your team

Information is collected by staff through completion of personal interview, telephone calls or emails, referral/applications or other forms related to service delivery.

2. Withdrawal of Consent

Clients have the right to withdraw part or all of their consent for the use of their personal information at any time. To withdraw consent, clients should contact WA Speech directly.

If consent is withdrawn, WA Speech may need to re-evaluate the services provided to the client, as the lack of consent may result in ineffective service delivery.

3. Use of Information

The information collected by WA Speech is used solely for the purpose of providing tailored therapy services, billing, and for improving service delivery. Specific uses include:

- Developing personalized therapy plans
- Communicating with clients about appointments and services
- Processing payments and managing accounts
- Conducting client satisfaction surveys to improve our services

Only WA Speech staff members have access to client files and their relevant information. No information can be shared with other facilities or professional without written permission from the client's legal guardian.

Personal client information may be shared with their clinician's supervisor/mentor to ensure proper service provision to clients or when word/health and safety issues arise.

4. Security Measures

WA Speech commits to safeguarding the personal information of our clients, taking all the necessary steps to protect personal information against misuse, unauthorised access, modification or disclosure. WA Speech protects client information through the following measures:

- Personal information held on a secure database
- Secure storage of physical records in locked facilities
- Use of secure, encrypted digital systems for storing electronic data
- Regular updates to security software and systems to protect against unauthorized access
- Training staff on privacy and data protection principles

The Practice Management Software used by WA Speech, Pracsuite, has two-factor authentication, is password protected and is a system based within Australia.

5. Record Keeping

Client records are kept secure and confidential within WA Speech's systems. Records are retained for a period that complies with legal requirements and professional standards for record retention. WA Speech retains information and records necessary to maintain accurate case note keeping and to monitor service outcomes

6. Disclosure of Information to those outside our Organisation

Personal information will not be disclosed to third parties without the explicit consent of the client, except in the following circumstances:

- A court subpoena or other circumstance authorised by law; or

- When failure to disclose the information may place the client or another person at serious risk to wellbeing or safety; or
- The child's legal guardian has given prior written approval to:
 - Provide written report to another professional or agency
 - Discuss the material with another person
- When satisfying NDIS reporting requirements
- To comply with legal obligations, such as court orders or mandatory reporting to government agencies.

7. Access to Information

Clients may request access to their personal information held by WA Speech. Requests for access should be directed to the WA Speech administration team, who will facilitate the process in line with our access policy and relevant privacy legislation.

8. Questions

Please contact your therapist directly for any non-urgent questions. Alternatively, you can also contact our reception staff on:

- Phone: (08) 9274 1482
- Email: mail@waspeech.com.au
- Office hours: Mon-Fri 7:00am – 7:00pm, Sat 8:00am – 2:00pm