

Document Status: Official Practice Policy | **Effective Date:** July 2026 | **Jurisdiction:** Commonwealth of Australia (Privacy Act 1988 / APPs)

At **Balanced Self Clinic** (“we”, “our”, “us”), we are committed to protecting the privacy and confidentiality of our clients’ personal and health information. We strictly adhere to the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth), the *Australian Privacy Principles* (APPs), relevant state health records legislation, and the ethical standards established by the Australian Psychological Society (APS) and the Psychology Board of Australia (AHPRA).

This Privacy Policy outlines how we collect, hold, use, and disclose personal and health information. It applies to all clients, website visitors, and individuals interacting with our clinical services.

MANDATORY CONTRACTOR & PRACTITIONER COMPLIANCE NOTICE

This policy forms a binding operational rule for all independent contractors, sub-contractors, sole traders, clinical associates, and administrative personnel operating under or within **Balanced Self Clinic**. Adherence to this policy is a strict condition of engagement.

1. Collection of Personal and Health Information

We collect information that is strictly necessary to deliver high-quality psychological assessment, evidence-based therapy, and practice administrative support.

Types of Information Collected:

- **Personal Identification Details:** Full name, date of birth, gender, residential address, email address, phone numbers, emergency contacts, and Medicare / private health insurer details.
- **Health & Sensitive Clinical Information:** Detailed clinical notes, medical and psychological history, referral letters (e.g., GP Mental Health Treatment Plans), psychometric assessment results, risk assessments, billing/payment records, and relevant social/family history.

Methods of Collection:

We collect information directly from you via online intake forms, telephone inquiries, website contact forms, and during individual consultation sessions. We may also collect health information from third parties (e.g., GPs, psychiatrists, insurance bodies, or legal representatives) where explicit client consent has been provided or where authorized by law.

2. Purpose of Collecting, Holding, and Using Information

Your personal and health information is collected, held, and used primarily for:

- Assessing, diagnosing, and providing psychological therapy, interventions, and care plans.
- Administrative management of appointments, billing, invoicing, and processing Medicare or health fund rebates.

- Practice quality assurance, professional peer review, and clinical supervision requirements.
- Complying with statutory and legal obligations (such as mandatory reporting or response to court orders).

3. Confidentiality & Exceptions to Disclosure

Information shared within consultation sessions and recorded in your clinical file remains strictly confidential. Personal and health information will not be disclosed to any third party without your written consent, **except** under the following legally defined circumstances:

- **Serious Risk of Harm:** Where there are reasonable grounds to believe that disclosure is necessary to lessen or prevent a serious and imminent threat to the life, health, or safety of yourself or another individual.
- **Subpoena or Court Order:** Where clinical records are formally subpoenaed or ordered by a court of competent jurisdiction.
- **Mandatory Statutory Reporting:** Where state or federal legislation mandates reporting (such as child protection obligations).
- **Referral & Medicare Requirements:** Providing required clinical progress reports back to referring medical practitioners (e.g., GPs) as mandated under Medicare rebate schemes.

4. Operational Requirements for Independent Contractors

All clinicians and administrative personnel operating at **Balanced Self Clinic** as independent contractors must rigorously comply with the following standards:

- **Duty of Confidentiality:** Contractors must maintain absolute confidentiality regarding all client data accessed or processed during their engagement with Balanced Self Clinic.
- **Mandatory Systems Usage:** All client records, session notes, appointment schedules, and client communications must be recorded exclusively within Balanced Self Clinic's designated, secure Practice Management Software (PMS).
- **Data Storage Security:** Contractors are strictly prohibited from saving, storing, or exporting client-identifiable health data onto personal laptops, unencrypted USBs, personal mobile devices, or non-approved cloud storage platforms.
- **Access Controls & Security:** System access is restricted on a need-to-know basis. Contractors must utilize strong, unique passwords and Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) on all access points.
- **Incident & Breach Notification:** Contractors must immediately report any actual, suspected, or potential data breach, loss of hardware, or unauthorized access to the Practice Director upon discovery.
- **Post-Engagement Obligations:** The duty of confidentiality and non-disclosure regarding client records survives the termination or conclusion of the contractor's contract with Balanced Self Clinic.

5. Storage and Security of Data

We implement comprehensive security measures to protect personal and health information from misuse, loss, interference, unauthorized access, modification, or disclosure:

- **Digital Security:** Client records are stored in ISO-certified, end-to-end encrypted cloud practice management software compliant with Australian privacy and health security regulations.

- **Physical Security:** Any hard-copy documents are kept in locked, secure clinical facilities accessible only by authorized team members.
- **Record Retention:** Adult clinical records are retained for a minimum of 7 years from the date of last service. Records for minors are retained until the client reaches 25 years of age, in accordance with health record legislation.

6. Accessing and Correcting Your Information

You have the right to request access to the personal and health information held about you, subject to specific legal exceptions (e.g., where provision of access would pose a serious threat to life or physical safety). Requests for access or correction should be submitted in writing. We will respond within a reasonable timeframe and assist in ensuring data accuracy.

7. Website Privacy & Digital Communications

Our website uses standard cookies to enhance navigation and measure traffic performance; these do not capture identifiable health data. While we utilize secure transmission methods, clients are advised that unencrypted electronic communication (standard email or SMS) carries inherent network risks, and sensitive clinical details should not be sent via standard email.

8. Contact & Complaints

If you have questions regarding this policy, wish to update your records, or have concerns regarding how your privacy has been handled at Balanced Self Clinic, please contact us:

Practice:	Balanced Self Clinic
Attention:	Privacy Officer / Practice Director
Location:	Erina, Central Coast NSW
Email:	hello@thebalanceself.com.au

If you remain unsatisfied with our response, you may lodge a formal complaint with the **Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC)**:

- **Website:** www.oaic.gov.au
- **Phone:** 1300 363 992