



Nottinghamshire Independent
Domestic Abuse Services

Confidentiality & Information Sharing Agreement

July 2019

Confidentiality and Information Sharing Agreement 2019

Consent Form

Our aim

- To support you in whatever choices you make
- Inform you of choices that are available to you
- To create a safe environment for you to disclose sensitive and personal information
- To respect your decisions

The information below outlines how we will treat the information that you give us about yourself, your family and others, and your circumstances.

It is important for you to read this information sheet and for it to be explained to you by your support worker. When you have read and understood the agreement, please sign and date it on the next page.

The basic principles of confidentiality and information sharing are:

1. The information you provide is confidential unless:
 - a. You consent to information being shared **OR**
 - b. You or any children are likely to be seriously injured – this will usually be called ‘at high risk of serious harm’
2. We will always try and tell you when information is being shared unless it is not safe for you or your children or if we can’t contact you.
3. If we have to share information in this situation, we will only share relevant information that will improve you and / or your child[ren’s] safety.
4. If we do not have your consent to share information, we will talk this situation through with a senior member of the team and will write on your case file what we have shared, why and who with.
5. Your information is stored electronically and is held securely. You have a right to access your file. Details of how to do this can be obtained by asking your worker or via email through privacy@nidas.org.uk

Further details about how we share your information can be found in our Privacy Notice at <https://www.nidas.org.uk/privacy>

How will we treat any information that you give us?

We will use the information you give us to support you, your child(ren) and your family to stay safe. We will also use this information to improve the service we offer you and others.

- Any information you share with us will be treated as confidential by NIDAS.
- **However**, in order to offer you the best support possible, **we can with your consent**, speak to other agencies which may include sharing information about you and your families' situation. These agencies may include, but are not limited to, your **GP, hospital, school, college, social worker, housing officer, welfare rights advisor and any other support agencies**.
- Information will always be shared if there is a **'high risk of serious harm' or a safeguarding concern**.
- You can withdraw consent at any time by telling your NIDAS support worker.

Improving the service, we offer you

- We collate and analyse information to help us monitor performance, demonstrate the impact of NIDAS, increase our understanding of domestic abuse and identify new ways of delivering support to families.
- We take part in national research with Women's Aid Federation of England, Safe Lives and grant funders of NIDAS to inform and influence the way services are designed and delivered for families.

Consent for information sharing

So that we know you have read and understood this confidentiality and information sharing agreement please answer YES or NO to each statement by placing a cross in the box below.

	Yes	No
The confidentiality and information sharing agreement has been explained to me and I give my permission for NIDAS to speak to other agencies on my/my child(rens) behalf.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I give permission for information to be shared between NIDAS and its partners including grant funders, Women's Aid Federation England, Safe Lives, Local Authority, Police and Crime Commissioner, Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), Ministry of Justice (MOJ) and independent evaluators for the purpose of monitoring and research.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that photographs may be taken of myself or my child(ren) to showcase the types of support NIDAS offer as part of marketing and promotional activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Is there any information we cannot share? (we will always share concerns about the safety of children or serious criminal activity) *Please write below...*

Client Signature _____ Print Name _____ Date _____

NIDAS Signature _____ Print Name _____ Date _____

If this agreement has been explained over the telephone, verbal consent has been obtained: _____

NIDAS Signature _____ Print Name _____ Date _____

Guidance Notes: Confidentiality and Information Sharing Agreement

What is this form for?

Sharing information safely is essential when working with victims of domestic abuse, especially when working with clients at high risk of serious harm and homicide. It is important you have a clear confidentiality and information sharing policy to help you establish a legal framework for handling and sharing information both internally and externally to the service.

In the course of your work, it is important to demonstrate safe and defensible decision-making. This means that information shared and actions taken need to be lawful, necessary and proportionate in protecting the clients they work with.

Children and Young People and Competence

You will need consent from both adult and children from the age of 16 years old. Children can however be deemed competent from the age of 14 to sign their own consent and confidentiality form, and a clear discussion about circumstances when we may have to involve their parent/carer and third parties, such as safeguarding. Otherwise, we will always seek permission to speak to family members. **A child's confidentiality should be respected** when information is shared on the understanding that the information will not be disclosed to parents or guardians, or indeed to any third party.

Therefore, even where the support worker considers a child to be too immature to consent to accessing support without their parent's consent, confidentiality should still be respected concerning the consultation, although parental involvement should be encouraged, unless there are very convincing reasons to the contrary.

Children and promises

Children and young people may try and **elicit a promise of confidentiality** from support workers to whom they disclose abuse. It is important that we must avoid making promises of confidentiality that they cannot keep. Where it is believed that, in the interests of the child or others, it is important that action is taken, they need to discuss disclosure with the child, and, if possible, the child or young person should be given sufficient time to come to a considered decision. If the child cannot be persuaded to agree to voluntary disclosure, and there is an immediate need to disclose information to an outside agency, he or she should be told what action is to be taken, unless to do so would expose the child or others to increased risk of serious harm.

Important points to explain to clients

It is important that clients understand the agreement they are entering into and that you revisit the agreement, particularly when there is a change in circumstance or lapse in time supported in service. You need to explain the reasons why their information might be shared and how the service will treat the sensitive and personal data it is given. Explain that every case is individual but, in general, the service does not need consent to share information where the client or their children are at high risk of serious harm.

The basic principles on the Confidentiality and Information Sharing Agreement (Page 2) highlights the important points of the agreement to enable you to brief your client on the parameters of information sharing when you have limited time. You must revisit the agreement when you are face-to-face with your client so that you can be sure your client has understood and signed the agreement. The signed agreement must be uploaded into the client's personal file and paper copy destroyed.

Verbal Consent

At the first point of contact with any client, you must complete this agreement and sign the verbal consent box. Clients must be given the full information in order to consent to gathering, storing and sharing information. At the first opportunity you get to see your client face to face, revisit this agreement and ask the client to sign.

Insights service and external evaluation

It should be explained to the client that we collect data for any research and monitoring. It is important to make the distinction for clients between consent for sharing information for research and monitoring purposes and your standard consent clause which covers sharing information with multi-agency partners. Your client should be aware that they do not have to give consent to this part of the agreement and that the service can't override this decision.

Supporting Policies:

- Data protection and information retention 2019
- Confidentiality
- Safeguarding Children/Adults