



Confidentiality Policy

1 Policy Statement

After Matters respects the right of the client to the principles of confidentiality. All After Matters trustees and volunteers have a duty to keep confidential any information they learn about their clients, either directly or indirectly, and not to disclose it without permission, other than in exceptional circumstances to those outside After Matters.

After Matters may discuss individual cases within team meetings and volunteer debrief sessions. This information is on a 'need to know basis'. Information discussed within these closed meetings may include information relating to the client's cognitive impairments, changes in mood or behaviour.

After Matters have a duty of care to protect trustees, volunteers and clients and to act in his/ her best interest at all times.

After Matters believes that there might be occasions when it could be reasonable to breach confidentiality:

- with the client's consent
- when the client is not 'competent' to give consent and to disclose information is deemed to be in their best interest
- statutory duty – e.g. drug misuse, or disclosure is required by law or by order of a court
- if the psychological, social or physical well being of a 'minor' might be at risk
- if the person divulges that they are at risk of harming themselves and/or others

Confidentiality should only be broken in exceptional circumstances and should only occur after careful consideration that the action can be justified.

After Matters board of trustees should consider the safety of all trustees; volunteers and clients when handling potentially harmful confidential information.

2 Related After Matters Policies:

- Privacy Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

Confidentiality Policy	Revision 1	Approved: January 2022	Reviewed:
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3 Trustee Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the board of trustees are:

- to ensure that all trustees and clients have access to and are aware of this policy
- to ensure that safeguards are in place to protect the interests of the client, trustees and volunteers

The responsibility of the of all trustees and volunteers is:

- to adhere to this policy and seek the guidance/advice from the board of trustees

4 Scope

This policy applies to all trustees and volunteers of After Matters.

5 Procedure/ Guidance

5.1 Trustees should:

- ensure that all files or written information of a confidential nature are stored in a secure manner in a locked filing cabinet and are only accessed by trustees who have a need and a right to access them
- ensure that electronic files of a confidential nature are stored in a secure manner i.e. protected entry to authorised users only
- wherever practical or reasonable, fill in all records in the presence of and with the co-operation of the client concerned

Rare situations may arise which give rise to exceptions to the duty of confidentiality where confidential information may relate to harm to other clients or harm to the person sharing the confidence. In such circumstances After Matters reserves the right for trustees to break their duty of confidentiality and to take the information to the board of trustees. In such rare circumstances:

- the relevant client will be informed of the position, and full details will be discussed with the client
- appropriate notes will be made and these notes will be open to inspection by the client
- the information will only be given to those who absolutely need to know and wider issues of confidentiality of that information will still apply
- the client will be free to make a complaint by referring the matter to the After Matters board of trustees

New and prospective clients are made aware of the confidentiality policy.

5.2 Requests for Information

After Matters will not provide confidential information to relatives, spouses, friends or advocates without the consent of the individual client concerned. All enquiries for information, even if they are from close relatives, should be referred back to the client or their permission sought before disclosure. Relatives, spouses, friends or advocates need to be made aware of this policy.

In certain circumstances trustees may be asked for reports by insurance companies, solicitors, or employers for example. Before providing any such information, written consent from the client is required and trustees must never divulge information without consent unless obliged to by law.

All trustees and volunteers of After Matters shall not use or disclose to any person either during or at any time after their involvement with After Matters any confidential information about the business or affairs of the organisation or any of its business contacts, funder's, client details or any other matters which may come to their knowledge in the course of their involvement with the charity.