

Yarrow Place keeps separate medical and counselling case notes to record information from each contact (face to face or telephone) that you have had with the doctor and/or counsellor.

Why Keep Case Notes?

The benefits of keeping case notes for you include:

- a better quality service
- less repetition of information, especially if you change worker
- an accurate record of information for future use.

What Information Goes In Case Notes?

The medical notes contain:

- information about the medical examination that was done as a health check and/or to collect evidence about the assault (the forensic medical examination)
- information about medical problems you have had since the assault, medical tests, and treatment that you have been given. This would happen only if you have had follow-up medical care at Yarrow Place.

The counselling notes contain:

- agreements that you have made with your counsellor
- a brief summary of issues you discuss with your counsellor
- any advice, information or encouragement your counsellor gives you to do particular things
- any items (letters, poems, drawings) that you've given to your counsellor - you can keep these yourself if you prefer
- any correspondence between Yarrow Place and any other service that you've agreed we can talk to.

Who Can See The Case Notes?

Case notes are confidential and are kept in a locked file room at Yarrow Place. It is not normal practice for the doctor to read the counselling notes or the counsellor to read the medical notes.

Information about you is confidential subject to legal constraints. The situations when we *cannot* guarantee confidentiality are:

- If your worker believes that you are a danger to yourself or others
- If you are under 18 years of age or have told your worker about a child (under 18) being abused or at risk of abuse, we are required by law to notify Family and Youth Services
- Notification of some sexually transmitted infections
- If you take legal action against this service
- If you are involved in legal action against the alleged offender.

You may want information to be given to your family doctor, health worker or other persons. If you would like this to happen, you will be asked to give us permission in writing and the information will then be passed on.

Case Notes And Court Cases

If your case is going through court, the court may need access to your *medical* case notes. Those notes are provided to them after you have signed a consent form for this to happen.

If the lawyers for the defence (that is, for the accused) want to see your *counselling* case notes, they ask the court to send us a legal document called a "subpoena". If that happens, we will contact you to find out what you would like to have happen. Sometimes it is a good idea to make your notes available. In other cases, we can argue that part or all of your notes should be protected (this means that no

one other than the judge should see them). In the end it is up to the judge to decide who can see your notes. The judge can only look at your notes or let anyone else look at your notes in very specific circumstances.

Please ask us if you would like more information about this. Remember, your notes will only be used in this way if the case is going through court.

Can I See My Case Notes?

You can view your notes during business hours. The law makes some restrictions about what you can see, so you need to make an appointment to see your notes. Please ask us if you have any questions.

If you disagree with anything that is written, you can record this in your notes.

Any Questions?

Yarrow Place has a written policy about case notes. If you would like to see this or have your worker explain it to you, please contact Yarrow Place.

Yarrow Place Services

A range of counselling and medical services which may be accessed according to individual need:

- 24 hour crisis response for recent assault which can include counselling and/or medical
- Counselling support for recent victims of rape
- Long term counselling if requested or required
- Support for those close to the survivor of rape and sexual assault is very important for healing. Support persons such as family members, partners and friends are offered a limited number of counselling sessions at Yarrow Place. This provides an opportunity for support people to express their reactions to what happened, to explore coping strategies and to discuss how to support the survivor.
- Specialised medical care and follow-up
- Collection of forensic evidence as requested by those people who have made, or may wish to make, a complaint to police
- Group programs offered throughout the year
- Education, training and consultation for workers
- Community Education to increase knowledge and awareness

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Case Notes at Yarrow Place

