



PRIVACY POLICY

This privacy policy outlines how your data is collected, stored and processed in order to provide counselling services by Laura Duester (Director/Psychotherapist for LD Therapy).

All data is handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), and I am registered with the [Information Commissioners Office \(ICO\)](#) (ref. ZB079320).

What information do I collect and why?

I collect personal data when you enquire about counselling in order to assess your counselling needs, arrange counselling sessions and ensure safe therapeutic practice. This information includes your name, date of birth, address, contact details, preferred pronoun, availability for sessions, and any relevant mental health details. Brief notes are also made in relation to each counselling session attended. All information is collected directly from clients; no third-party information sources are used.

All data relating to enquiries which do not result in any counselling sessions is deleted within one year. For clients who attend one or more counselling sessions, personal data, session notes and any other relevant information (such as questionnaire scores and signed agreements) are kept for at least seven years following termination of therapy, as required for insurance and ethical purposes. Email, text and voicemail correspondence is deleted on a regular basis, and always within two years.

How is information stored and used?

I take all reasonable precautions to prevent the loss or misuse of your information, including password-protecting files and keeping my computer systems secure and virus-free. However, for ease of use, general telephone and email communications are not encrypted.

All client data is kept in password-protected computer files. Email enquiries and communications are stored in a password-protected email account. Voicemails and text messages are stored in a password-protected business mobile phone. Zoom sessions are encrypted (and are not recorded or stored). Paper documents, where used, are transferred to digital files and then immediately shredded.

Therapy information is shared with my counselling supervisors, in order to ensure the highest possible quality of therapy practice. I never share personal or therapy data with any other person or organisation, except if:

- you or others are in danger of serious harm
- there are safeguarding concerns about a child or vulnerable adult
- information relates to serious crimes, such as terrorism, drugs trafficking or money laundering
- I am required to share information via a court order
- you explicitly agree to be referred onto another mental health professional

In one of these cases, it may be necessary for me to disclose information to a third-party, such as your GP, social services or another psychotherapist. Where any disclosure is made, the information provided will be kept to a minimum and I will discuss with you in advance where possible.

In the event of my death or sudden illness, your personal details and session notes will be shared with the executor of my clinical will. This is so that they can contact you and arrange further mental health support if needed, and also to ensure session notes are stored securely for the timeframe required for insurance purposes.

Your rights

You can ask to see your data or amend your personal details at any time by making a request in writing. I will always respond within one month.

Where any data breaches occur, these will be assessed in terms of the likelihood and severity of risk to people's rights and freedoms, as described on the [ICO website](#). All breaches will be documented and affected individuals notified; the ICO will also be informed where necessary.

If you have any concerns about my use of your data, please contact me and I will do my very best to resolve these. If necessary, you can also contact the ICO directly.

Further information

For any further information, queries or complaints, please contact me on info@ldtherapy.co.uk or 07874 627313.

Last reviewed/updated 20/03/2024