

# Mental Health and Addiction Services: Information Collection

## Why is information collected about me?

Te Whatu Ora – Health New Zealand collects information about you to help improve the provision of health services in New Zealand. In particular, the information is used for planning, funding and monitoring purposes. The information collected helps to determine:

- what health care services are being provided around the country
- whether these services are being provided to the people who need them
- whether these services are being provided at the right time and in the right places
- what effects or outcomes the services are having
- whether these services meet the required standards
- whether the policy and strategy for these services remains relevant.

**When you use mental health and addiction services, your health care providers will collect information about you to help look after you. Information is also collected and sent to Te Whatu Ora – Health New Zealand to help manage the national mental health system.**

This pamphlet explains what information is collected for Te Whatu Ora – Health New Zealand and why. It also explains how your privacy is protected.

## Who collects the information?

Most publicly funded health services that provide services are required to collect information for Te Whatu Ora – Health New Zealand. These include:

- publicly funded hospitals
- non-governmental organisations
- residential and supported accommodation services
- primary care services
- community mental health and addiction services.

In most instances this will be collected directly from you by the health practitioner during your interaction.

## What information is collected about me?

The following information may be collected about anyone who receives mental health or addiction services:

- National Health Index (NHI) number (every New Zealander who uses a public health service has an NHI number)
- date of birth, ethnicity and gender
- diagnoses
- legal status (if applicable)
- type of treatment provided, including where, when and how often
- statistics relating to the outcome of treatment
- date of referral to, and discharge from, the service
- Details of accommodation, education and employment status

## How do I know my information is held securely?

There are strict controls around who can access the information collected from you. Te Whatu Ora – Health New Zealand also monitors the accuracy of the information and maintains its quality and integrity.

## How is my privacy protected?

Access to information is governed by Te Whatu Ora – Health New Zealand to ensure use is appropriate and permitted by law. The Health Information Privacy Code 1994 and the Privacy Act 1993 protect your privacy. You can find copies of both of these documents at your local library or the Privacy Commissioner website [www.privacy.org.nz](http://www.privacy.org.nz)

## Are my details disclosed?

Your unique National Health Index (NHI) number is used throughout the health sector to identify you. This allows the health professionals involved in your care to share health information, with certainty that it is about you and not somebody else. While your name and contact details are held in the NHI database, they can only be associated with your collected information and disclosed where this is permitted by law. This means while access to information collected is tightly controlled, some people can apply to see data about you, such as yourself, a doctor who is treating you, your district health board and approved health researchers. In the latter, all information provided is anonymised and your identifying information is not provided.

## Who will use the information?

The information collected is most likely to be used by:

- Te Whatu Ora – Health New Zealand
- Te Aka Whai Ora – Māori Health Authority
- Manatū Hauora – The Ministry of Health
- Health care providers
- Researchers

## Can I see the information held about me?

Yes, you or a person who legally represents you can see your own personal information. To access your information, please email or write to Te Whatu Ora – Health New Zealand:

- **information@health.govt.nz**
- **Privacy Request.** National Contact Centre, Te Whatu Ora – Health New Zealand, PO Box 3015. Whanganui 4501

## Can I correct information collected?

If you disagree with any information held about you, you have a right to request a correction. Te Whatu Ora – Health New Zealand has to make the correction or take any reasonable steps to attach a statement saying why you disagree with the information recorded about you

## How can I make a complaint?

You can make a complaint to the Privacy Commissioner if you think your personal health information:

- has been shared with someone who should not
- have seen it
- has been used inappropriately
- has not been stored safely

or if you believe that:

- a request for access to or correction of your
- information has not been properly dealt with.

### Privacy Commissioner

- 0800 803 909
- [enquiries@privacy.org.nz](mailto:enquiries@privacy.org.nz)

### How do I find out more?

You can talk with your healthcare worker about the collection of your information. Or, you can contact Te Whatu Ora – Health New Zealand:

- (04) 496 2000 or 0800 505 125
- [information@health.govt.nz](mailto:information@health.govt.nz)
- PO Box 5013, Wellington 6140
- [www.health.govt.nz](http://www.health.govt.nz)