

# Privacy and Confidentiality



Depending on your maturity, you may be able to see your doctor or health professional confidentially and make decisions about your health from the age of 14 years.

So, if there are topics that you don't want to discuss with your parents/caregivers, such as sex and sexuality, or your emotions, it's important that you find a doctor or healthcare professional that you trust that you can discuss these topics with. Then, let them know that you don't want your parents/caregivers to have access to your health record.

But .... There are a few situations where doctors or healthcare professionals might need to talk to other people. For example:

- If they're concerned that you might harm yourself or someone else
- If they feel you are being harmed or at risk of being harmed by someone else or they have concerns about your safety, welfare or well-being.

In this situation the doctor or healthcare professional will tell you that they are legally bound to inform someone to make sure you are safe.

## QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS



- When can I start meeting with you on my own for part of the visit?
- What information about privacy and consent do I need to know?
- Who can help me make health decisions?
- When can I sign documents related to my care myself?

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### YOUR RIGHTS

As a young person you have the same health rights adults do. These include the right to:

- See a doctor/health professional that you trust and who respects your opinion
- Ask for someone else's opinion
- Have your information kept private (except in the situations discussed above)
- Ask any questions you like
- Get information in words you understand
- Ask for an interpreter
- Get important information written down for you to take home
- Change your mind and stop any treatment (unless the treatment is required by law, eg. Some infectious diseases or mental health conditions)
- Have a friend or family member with you when seeing the doctor/health worker
- Ask about costs, side effects and different choices for treatment
- Make a formal complaint about the treatment you received

Find more information about privacy, confidentiality and your rights here:

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/kidsfamilies/youth/Pages/confidentiality-resources.aspx>

(Adapted from the NSW Centre for Advancement of Adolescent Health 'We keep it zipped' resources)

