

[insert organisation name/logo]

Information Management Policy

Document Status: Draft or Final

Date Issued: [date]

Lead Author: [name and position]

Approved by: [insert organisation name] Board of Directors on [date]

Scheduled Review Date: [date]

Record of Policy Review

Review Date	Person Initiating/Leading Review	Other People Consulted

Triggers for Policy Review (tick all that apply)

- Standard review is timetabled.
- A gap has been identified
- Additional knowledge or information has become available to supplement the policy.
- External factors
 - Policy is no longer relevant/current due to changes in external operating environment.
 - There are changes to laws, regulations, terminology and/or government policy.
 - Changes to funding environment, including requirements of funding bod(y)ies
- Other (please specify).
- Internal / organisational factors
 - A stakeholder has identified a need, eg by email, telephone etc
 - A serious or critical incident has occurred, requiring an urgent review.
 - Need for consistency in service delivery across programs and organisations.
 - Separate, stand-alone policy is now warranted
 - A near miss has occurred, requiring a review to prevent a serious/critical incident in the future

Additional Comments

[for example, policy now covers details related to new legislation].

Information Management Policy

1. Purpose and Scope

Information management encompasses all the systems and processes within **[insert organisation name]** for the creation and use of corporate information.

This policy provides guidance in recordkeeping and information coordination for Board members, staff, consumers and external stakeholders at **[insert organisation name]**. References are made throughout this policy to more specific documents on consumer communication and external relationship guidelines.

2. Definitions

Information is codified knowledge which is transferred and stored by means of documents, records, publications, databases, tools, images, plans, sound/video recordings, etc.

Document refers to any of the forms in which information is carried.

Information management includes the creation, collection, storage, access, use and disposal of information assets.

Identifiable information refers to individual records containing age, sex and statistical components that could enable an individual's identity to be reasonably ascertained.

3. Principles

[insert organisation name] considers people, processes, technology, content and information life cycles to ensure information is effectively managed.

Consistent, accurate, coordinated information is essential for effective consumer support and to prevent duplication of employee efforts.

Information management contributes to timely and relevant decisions, and to compliance with laws, regulations, policies, standards and accreditation requirements.

The **[insert organisation name]** framework for information management covers the following areas: description; ownership; security; compliance; sharing; quality and records.

4. Outcomes

Information management systems enhance **[insert organisation name]**'s ability to meet its strategic goals and actively contribute to the organisation's ongoing sustainability.

Information management systems foster the organisation's ability to build and maintain external relationships, are understood and used by all staff, and allow for more effective communication with and about **[insert organisation name]** consumers.

Records generated by **[insert organisation name]** are authentic, reliable, have integrity, and are usable. The intellectual property on records generated by is owned by **[insert organisation name]** unless clearly stated otherwise by the **[insert position, eg CEO/Manager or delegate]**.

5. Functions and Delegations

Position	Delegation/Task
Board of Directors	Endorse Information Management Policy. Support new and existing information management systems and supporting policies and procedures.
Management	Lead information management processes including information sharing and systems review as part of core business processes. Comply with and support new and existing information management systems and supporting policies and procedures.
Staff	Orientate new staff members to information management systems. Contribute to information management processes including information sharing and systems review as part of core business processes. Comply with and support new and existing information management systems and supporting policies and procedures.

6. Risk Management

Mechanisms are in place to ensure that information management is effective and regularly monitored.

All staff, volunteers, student placements and Board members are made aware of this policy during orientation.

Staff are provided with ongoing support and to assist them to effectively manage information.

This policy must be read in conjunction with the Privacy and Confidentiality Policy.

7. Policy Implementation

This policy is to be part of all staff and Board member orientation processes and all staff and Board members should be familiar with their functions and delegations outlined in this policy. This policy should be referenced in relevant policies, procedures and other supporting documents to ensure that it is familiar to all staff and actively used.

This policy will be reviewed in line with the quality improvement system and the review of associated policies.

8. Policy Detail

Effective information management is crucial for **[insert organisation name]** to achieve its strategic goals. All staff members have a responsibility to utilise, develop and review existing information management systems as appropriate to their position.

[insert organisation name]'s information management system:

- satisfies statutory requirements about preservation and availability of business records
- protects against risk
- enables **[insert organisation name]** to demonstrate compliance with certification and accreditation requirements.

8.1 Ownership

Staff and managers know their responsibilities in relation to documents and records via mechanisms such as position descriptions, policies, meeting minutes and a register of delegations (authority to see and modify documents).

There is an up-to-date list of authorised custodians of key information assets and records.

[insert organisation name] requires employees to return all of the organisation's information assets when their employment is terminated. See Staff Resignation and Termination Procedure.

[insert organisation name]'s intellectual property rights are protected. Where appropriate, copyright will be asserted, monitored and enforced.

All employees adhere to copyright owned by others.

8.2 Classification

The **[insert position]** ensures there are consistent practices in naming, filing and describing documents; a standard classification system is used across the organisation.

When updated versions of documents are complete, the **[insert position]** archives old versions of documents and informs all staff. This ensures that documents consulted are the correct and up-to-date versions.

Employee productivity is supported through the use of templates, such as: Project Plan and Quality Improvement Plan.

8.3 Accuracy

[insert organisation name] aims to ensure information it collects, uses or discloses is accurate and complete at the time it is collected. In the event that consumers wish to correct errors in their information, corrections will be made where it is reasonable to do so. However, it may not be possible to correct information which has been de-identified, or has been published. In such instances, consumers will be informed of why the information cannot be corrected or changed.

8.4 Accessibility, Security and Storage

[insert organisation name] aims to store most corporate information electronically to increase information accessibility and minimise unnecessary use of paper.

Where paper files need to be kept (e.g. original documents with signatures) the same information management responsibilities apply.

Confidential documents and records are classified consistently and are protected, with access available to authorised staff only. See Privacy and Confidentiality Policy.

Preserving information with long term or historical value may be required for evidential or legal purposes

8.5 Information Coordination

[insert organisation name] shares and re-uses information and information systems subject to law and policy requirements.

Re-usable information is made widely available across the organisation to avoid redundancy and duplication of effort, and is organised and described in a way that makes it visible and easily re-used.

8.5.1 Information Coordination – external stakeholders

[insert organisation name] provides information to its external stakeholders through the following:

- Website
- Newsletters
- Emails
- Participation in relevant external forums, groups and meetings.

[A list of external stakeholder contacts is collated in the *Contacts* section of the *Public Folders* tab in Microsoft Outlook. All staff members are responsible for entering and removing relevant contacts into this distribution list].

[insert organisation name] attends numerous external meetings and committees that are relevant to the core business of the organisation and/ or current projects. A record of these meetings (e.g. agenda, minutes and accompanying documents) are to be kept by staff electronically in an appropriate folder in the *External Committees* folder in the **[insert location]** or filed in paper form if it is not possible to store the documents electronically.

Relevant information from external meetings, events and publications should be fed back to **[insert organisation name]** staff during staff and team meetings or via email.

Further information about policies and procedures related to information coordination with external stakeholders can be found in the [Integration Policy](#).

8.5.2 Information Coordination – internal

[insert organisation name]'s primary means for formal internal information coordination consists of a **[insert frequency]** staff meeting which is minuted.

Informally, information is also shared via **[insert frequency]** team meetings, hand overs, emails and conversation.

The CEO/Manager will report notable items from Board meetings to staff in staff meetings and decisions regarding program activities to be reported to the Board will be discussed in Board meetings also.

[insert organisation name] hosts a number of advisory/reference group meetings as part of individual projects. A record of these meetings (e.g. agenda, minutes and accompanying documents) is to be kept by staff electronically in an appropriate folder in the **[insert drive location]**.

8.6 Quality

High value reusable information and organisational records are easily distinguishable from lower value, more transient information.

Staff members are to refer to the CEO/Manager or **[insert position]** before transferring information externally if they are unsure if the information is confidential or commercially sensitive (this includes adding information to the **[insert organisation name]** website).

8.7 Records

Records generated by **[insert organisation name]** are authentic, reliable, have integrity, and are usable.

Managing information to meet **[insert organisation name]**'s operational and legal requirements includes:

- Managing records throughout their life cycle
- Documenting activities and decisions
- Filing, securing and storing information
- Documenting, protecting and preserving information critical to **[insert organisation name]** business systems.

8.8 Consumer Information

[insert organisation name] collects and provides information to and about consumers through communication mechanisms such as (but not limited to):

- telephone calls
- letters
- emails

- individual and group meetings
- supervision sessions
- consumer personal files
- team and management sessions
- inter-organisational meetings to support mutual consumers.

The above may occur:

- directly with the consumer and/or family and carers
- internally, within **[insert organisation name]** (e.g. team meetings, supervision sessions, consumer personal files)
- externally (e.g. external supervision sessions, and other organisations supporting mutual consumers).

Any communication about a consumer will be made in line with **[insert organisation name]**'s Privacy and Confidentiality Policy. Information collected and provided related to consumers is recorded in the relevant consumer file.

8.9 Consumer Data Collection and Management

Data collected by **[insert organisation name]** includes information relating to consumers' cultural background, age, gender, language, physical and mental health, drug use, legal involvement and quality of life.

Additional data may be collected with the consent of consumers.

De-identified consumer related data will be forwarded to government endorsed national and state agencies, as per funding requirements.

[insert organisation name] ensures that consumers are aware of the data being recorded, the purpose of recording, and which data will be transmitted to other bodies (including funders and national statistical agencies) and for what purpose.

[insert organisation name] attempts to align data items on its administrative forms as closely as possible to national and state data collection items to promote quality, consistency and continuity of state and national data.

Consumer data are used only for the purposes for which they are collected, unless data have been de-identified or consent has been obtained to use the data for other purposes.

Information about consumers, including data collected by **[insert organisation name]**, is maintained, reviewed, retained, secured and disposed of in accordance with the Personal File Policy.

8.10 Sector Data Management [if applicable]

[insert organisation name] participates in the sector data management strategy by [insert details]

9. References

9.1 Internal

Communications Policy
Integration Policy
Privacy and Confidentiality Policy

9.2 External

Legislation

Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth)
Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW)
Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Commonwealth)

Resources

National Archives of Australia: Record Management webpage
<http://www.naa.gov.au/records-management/index.aspx>

Keenan, M. and Lambe, P, (2006), *Guidelines for Developing an Information and Records Management Policy*. Viewed 6 September 2010,
<http://www.greenchameleon.com/uploads/KRIM_Policy_development_guidelines.pdf>.

This policy is adapted from the *NADA Information Management Policy*
http://www.nada.org.au/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=236&Itemid=44

9.3 Quality Improvement Standards

EQuIP 4

Provided by the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards (ACHS)

Standard 2.3: Information management systems enable the organisation's goals to be met.

Criterion 2.3.1: Records management systems support the collection of information and meet the organisation's needs.

Criterion 2.3.2: Information and data management and collection systems are used to assist in meeting the strategic and operational needs of the organisation.

Criterion 2.3.3: Data and information are used effectively to support and improve care and services.

Criterion 2.3.4: The organisation has an integrated approach to the planning, use and management of information and communication technology.

EQUIP 5

Provided by the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards (ACHS)

Standard 2.3: Information management systems enable the organisation's goals to be met.

Criterion 2.3.1: Health records management systems support the collection of information and meet the consumer / patient and organisation's needs.

Criterion 2.3.2: Corporate records management systems support the collection of information and meet the organisation's needs.

Criterion 2.3.3: Data and information are collected, stored and used for strategic, operational and service improvement purposes.

Criterion 2.3.4: The organisation has an integrated approach to the planning, use and management of information and communication technology (I&CT).

Health and Community Service Standards (6th edition)

Provided by the Quality Improvement Council (QIC)

Standard 1.6: Knowledge (including research and the collection, storage and sharing of information) is managed in a systematic, ethical and secure way, and the organisation uses it to inform service review and development.

Evidence Questions: What is the evidence that:

a) the organisation keeps up to date with current trends in its field and uses demographic and research data to improve outcomes for its consumers?

- b) cooperative work practices exist to share knowledge within the organisation?
- c) information is stored in an organised way that is easily accessible to approved staff and consumers and, when necessary, is secure and legally compliant?
- d) protocols on the sharing of information about consumers exist and are used?
- e) data on the use of services and advances in the field are collected and used in planning, evaluation and quality improvement?
- f) staff are involved in the collection, analysis and use of data to improve services and programs and time is allocated for these activities?
- g) the organisation maintains a comprehensive, confidential, secure and accurate record system for each consumer?

9.4 National Mental Health Standards

Criterion 8.9 The organisation manages and maintains an information system that facilitates the appropriate collection, use, storage, transmission and analysis of data to enable review of services and outcomes at an individual consumer and organisational level in accordance with Commonwealth, state / territory legislation and related Acts.

9.5 Recovery Oriented Service Self-Assessment Tool (ROSSAT)

Evidence items are:

Item 1.2: Policy and procedures are in place and provide understanding and responses to diversity, privacy, confidentiality and information/record sharing, professional boundaries and expectations, identify and address non-recovery oriented attitudes or behaviours, that safeguard all people against abuse and discrimination, and outline processes for reporting abuse of workers and/or consumers and are accessible and applied in practice.

Item 1.2j: Policy and procedures are in place that show how information should be disseminated to:

- Workers
- Consumers, carers and families
- External organisations.

Item 1.10: The organisation maintains an information system that facilitates the appropriate collection, use, storage, transmission and analysis of data to enable review of services and outcomes at an individual and service level. This is done in accordance with information management and related Commonwealth, State / Territory legislation and Acts.

Item 1.11: Any research being conducted by the organisation enables consumers to either, design and conduct the research, collaborate as partners and/or be consulted as participants. Ethical issues are considered and addressed and prior to consumers participating in any research, informed consent is obtained.

Item 2.6: Management:

- Is aware of Commonwealth and State policy directions around recovery orientation and integrates these into practice
- Identifies information relevant to the organisation to increase the knowledge base on recovery and recovery oriented practice, including information for consumers, carers and their families.

Item 2.8: Management provide information to workers about other services available in the community relevant to the organisation and consumers.

Item 3.8: Workers make information available in different formats to ensure that it is accessible to all people using the services.

Item 3.17: Workers support the person, their family and carers to make informed decisions by:

- Sharing information on services, therapies and supports
- Supporting them to find information from other sources.

Item 3.20: Workers seek to exchange information with other organisations and agencies to ensure continuity of care (with consent).

Item 4.2a: Policies and procedures are in place that relate to privacy and confidentiality, the obtaining of consumer consent to share their information and communication techniques available.

Item 4.3e: The organisation provides the opportunity for ongoing training on the obtaining and sharing of knowledge and information including:

- Protocols relating to privacy and confidentiality
- Relevant legislation changes
- Innovative recovery based practice
- New and existing relevant services
- Sharing accessible information and resources relevant to consumers, their families and carers.

Item 5.3: Consumers are provided with the regular opportunity to evaluate relationships, respectful practice, perceptions of stigma and discrimination experienced from workers within the organisation, the consumer self-directed focus, the belief in consumer's recovery, the obtaining and sharing of knowledge and information, the quality and relevance of information provided and participation and social inclusion.

9.6 NSW Disability Services Standards (DSS)

4.3: The service provider only collects service user information that is directly relevant to effective service delivery.

8.11: The service provider has available, upon request, annual reports that demonstrate service user, service and financial outcomes.