

Information Leaflet

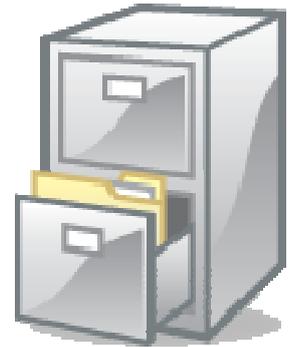


"On the Record"

**How Do We Manage People's
Information?**



PROVIDING SUPPORTS FOR
CHILDREN AND ADULTS
WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES



What is a Record?

- A record is any form of data which is held or stored manually, mechanically or electronically.
- According to the Freedom of Information Act a record can include;- Files, memoranda, hand written notes, book, diaries, plans, maps, drawings, diagrams, photographs, films, tapes, videos, CD's, discs, databases, emails.

Why Keep Records?

- To ensure the information needed to provide the best possible service is accurately recorded, regularly updated and easily retrieved
- To provide documentation evidence of care and service given to people
- To meet our legal requirements
- To form a basis for planning future services and supports

Who Can See My Records?

- Only staff working directly with you can access any of your records.
- If for any reason, a staff member outside the main services you receive wants to access your information, for example a student, you will be asked to give your specific consent for this additional access.
- Any use of your information, such as use of photos or recordings also requires staff to contact you and get specific consent before using or sharing that information.

What Records does Western Care Keep?

- **Paper Records:** These usually include an Individual Planning folder held in the Main Service provided, a Main file held either in Head Office in Castlebar or in Ridgepool, Ballina, depending on the person's home address and the services they avail of. Occasionally, there are also working files which are held in the service the person uses or by the Therapist.
- **Electronic Records:** Each person receiving support has an electronic file for all typed information. Information is also held on a Database of all people who receive services.
- **Archived Records:** Records are held indefinitely while people receive services. They are held for 20 years after people transfer from the service and they are held for 8 years following death. The organization has to keep records indefinitely where children have been in the care under the provision of the Child Care Act 1991, or either on a voluntary basis or under a Court Order. We also are obliged to keep records indefinitely where a case /file is under investigation or if there is a court case pending or has taken place.



How are Records released to others outside Western Care?

- Consent must always be sought in writing from the person and/or family prior to releasing records.
- When transferring to another service provider, all relevant information will be provided with the permission of the person and/or family and authors of the reports.
- There are legal obligations which may in exceptional circumstances require the Association to maintain or share records where the consent of the person/family is not forthcoming.
- These situations are:
 - When ordered by a judge in a Court of Law or by a Tribunal established by an Act of the Oireachtas,
 - Where it is required by other legislation,
 - Where it is necessary to protect a person's welfare or vital interests,
 - Where it is urgently required to prevent injury or damage to a person's health.



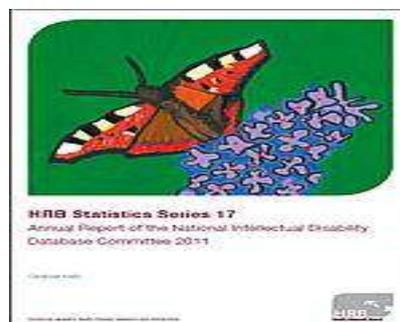
What is the National Intellectual Disability Database (NIDD)?

The NIDD collects information about the particular health services that people with an intellectual disability currently use or need. The information is used to:

- Look at current services
- Identify services needed in the future
- See what services individuals needs the most
- Support the planning and services
- Help research in the area

NIDD Consent

- Written Consent is required from people and families in relation to releasing their information to this database. The NIDD have booklets available which can give you more information on their work.
- However, on a yearly basis, the organisation is obliged to provide the NIDD with certain information relating to those receiving services. If you have not consented, your information will be provided in such a way that is unidentifiable i.e. without any names, addresses, telephone numbers or next of kin.





Is our Information Held Securely?

- Under the Data Protection Acts, we have a legal responsibility to keep personal data safe and secure. Only staff with consent to do so can access your information.
- All files are kept in a secure manner.
- All electronic information is held on centrally controlled computer server and password protected.
- A central archive holds all older information in a secure manner.

How Can I view my Records?

- You can contact either the staff you see regularly or contact the Records Management Office about coming in to view your records.
- Once the file has been examined under the Data Protection Act, the Freedom of Information Officer will contact you to arrange a suitable date and time for you to come and view your file.
- If it emerges that sensitive information or exempted information is contained in the files, you will be advised and supported to apply through the Freedom of Information route.
- We try to respond to people's requests within two working weeks.

Data Protection

Data Protection is the safeguarding of the privacy rights of individuals in relation to the processing of their personal data, and sets out obligations in relation to the obtaining, collecting, recording, keeping data, organising, storing, retrieving, disclosing, transmitting and retention of personal information.

Western Care Association has a responsibility to ensure that this personal data is;-

- Obtained and processed fairly
- Kept only for one or more specified, explicit and lawful purpose
- Processed in ways compatible with the purpose for which it was given to you initially
- Kept safe and secure
- Kept accurate, complete and up to date
- Ensure that the processing is adequate, relevant and not excessive
- Retained no longer than is necessary for the specified purpose or purposes
- Provide a copy of his /her personal data to an individual, on request (Data Subject Request). These requests are processed through the Data Protection Officer.

Freedom of Information

The Freedom of Information Act 2014 requires organisations such as Western Care Association to have an open and transparent attitude to the availability of information in relation to its services. It is intended to facilitate public access to information held by Western Care Association which is not routinely available by other means i.e. annual reports, information leaflets and administrative access.

Please visit our website on www.westerncare.com for more information on Data Protection & Freedom of Information

