

## **The Rights of Clients of Australian Psychologists**

The welfare of clients, the public, and the standing of the profession take precedence over the interests of psychologists. An outline of your psychologist's responsibilities and your rights when you see a psychologist in Australia are provided below.

### **Psychologist Responsibilities**

- Your psychologist must be registered with the Psychology Board of Australia (PsyBA) and abide by their regulations. Psychologists adhere to a professional Code of Ethics.
- Psychologists commit to ongoing professional development to maintain, improve and broaden their knowledge, expertise and competence in providing psychological services.
- Psychologists commit to evidence-based practice in the provision of psychological services.
- Psychologists are capable of assessment, diagnosis and treatment of mental health disorders, from mild to severe and complex, within their scope of practice and the limits of their competence.
- Your psychologist is required to clearly communicate how they intend to provide treatment and how much treatment they think is required. They also need to clearly communicate to you about the costs associated with treatment.
- Your psychologist has a requirement to explain to you your legal rights regarding confidentiality and when this might need to be breached. They will also be required to get your consent for treatment.

### **Your Rights**

- Psychologists are equivalently trained, capable, competent and qualified to deliver psychological services within their self-defined scope of practice. Clients have the right to know the range of education, experience and training undertaken by their treating psychologist.
- Clients have the right to choose the psychologist who is best suited to their needs.
- Clients from culturally and linguistically diverse communities, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, have the right to see psychologists who are culturally competent and/or bilingual and multilingual.
- Clients in regional, rural and remote areas have the same rights to psychological treatment as clients in urban areas.

- Clients should not be coerced into seeing one psychologist over another.
- It is your right to terminate treatment at any time or to ask for the psychologist to change their treatment approach if it is not to your satisfaction.
- You have a right to always be treated with respect, dignity and courtesy, and without discrimination of any kind including culture, gender, race, colour, religion, nationality, age or ability.
- The right to access the information about you kept on file by prior application.
- The right to have prompt and fair investigation of complaints, without retribution, if you are dissatisfied with any aspect of the service provided. If you feel you have been treated inappropriately by your psychologist you have a right to complain. You can make a complaint directly to your psychologist or through the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) website: <https://www.ahpra.gov.au/Notifications.aspx> or you may call the Psychology Board of Australia on 1300 419 495.