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## **Information for Clients on Privacy and Confidentiality**

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### **1. INFORMATION STATEMENT AND PURPOSE**

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As the peak representative body for people with acquired brain injury (ABI), their families and carers throughout Queensland and New South Wales, Synapse Australia Limited communicates daily with a broad range of individuals in order to provide quality advocacy, information, rehabilitation, lifestyle support and community education.

Consequently, we collect, store and use personal information in order to better meet the needs of our clients.

Synapse is committed to protecting the privacy of all those with whom we have contact in conjunction with the National Privacy Principles of the Privacy Act of 1988, Human Services Quality Standards (QLD) Standard 4 - Safety, wellbeing and rights Disability Services Standards (NSW) Standard 1 - Rights and Synapse Privacy and Confidentiality Policy.

This document describes how Synapse manage the personal information we hold.

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### **2. ACCOUNTABILITY AND CONTEXT**

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Synapse Client

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### **3. DEFINITIONS**

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A **Client** of the Association is classified below:

<b>Class of persons</b>	<b>Class of Act</b>
Client	Ultimate user of a product or service.

Reviewed	October 2016	Next Review Date	October 2017
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## **4. GENERAL INFORMATION**

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### **THE INFORMATION WE HOLD**

Synapse may hold the following personal information about you:

- Name and contact details
- Date of birth
- Name and contact details for next of kin
- Name and contact details for legal guardian and trustees
- Name and contact details of health professionals
- Medical diagnosis of ABI and other relevant health information
- Details of other services provided to you; and
- Any additional information provided to us by you or any referring agencies.

Synapse will destroy or de-identify personal information when no longer needed for the purpose for which it was collected and all statutory obligations for maintenance have been discharged.

### **HOW WE USE THE INFORMATION WE HOLD**

Synapse may use personal information to:

- Maintain a contact record between you and Synapse
- Manage and arrange advocacy, educational and rehabilitative support
- Communicate with allied agencies and service providers
- Develop and manage services provided to you
- Provide both identified and un-identified information to Government agencies in compliance with numerous legislative requirements
- Provide benchmark reports in a de-identified form.

With your prior consent, personal information may be used for:

- Communicating events, and
- Direct Mailing.

Synapse will not disclose personal information about you to any person unless:

- You have consented to the disclosure, or
- The disclosure is for a purpose related to the primary purpose for which the information was collected and for which you would reasonably expect such use or disclosure, or
- The use is for direct mailing in specified circumstances; or
- Disclosure is required by Commonwealth or State legislation or in circumstances related to public interest or public or individual health or safety.

At any time, you may opt out of receiving any communication from Synapse other than that required for the operation of our services.

Reviewed	October 2016	Next Review Date	October 2017
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## **5. SECURE INFORMATION STORAGE**

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Synapse maintains paper based and electronic files. Security measures in place to keep personal information from misuse, loss or unauthorised use or disclosure include:

- restriction of physical access to its offices
- restriction of access to databases
- development of information management policies, and
- training for staff in relation to privacy and confidentiality.

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## **6. OPENNESS AND ACCESS**

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You are entitled to access and view, request a copy or amendment of any personal information that Synapse has collected about you.

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## **7. GENERAL**

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This information statement will be reviewed on an annual basis.

If you have any queries in relation to this information, please contact the Association as follows:

Synapse  
PO Box 3356  
SOUTH BRISBANE QLD 4101  
PH: (07) 3137 7400  
FAX: (07) 3137 7452  
WEB: [www.synapse.org.au](http://www.synapse.org.au)

Reviewed	October 2016	Next Review Date	October 2017
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## **8. COMPLAINTS**

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If you believe your privacy has been breached, you can complain to the Commonwealth Government's Privacy Commissioner or directly to Synapse following the Complaints Resolution Policy and Procedure.

Complaints made to the Privacy Commissioner are usually referred to Synapse in the first instance to allow the Association to resolve the matter directly.

If Synapse receives a complaint, either directly from you or via the Privacy Commissioner, we will comply with all policy and procedural requirements of Synapse and of the Office of the Privacy Commissioner.

If resolution is achieved:

- The terms of the resolution will be recorded in writing and the terms or a copy if required, provided to the Privacy Commissioner,
- Resolution is achieved and the terms of the resolution require that action be taken, then Synapse will take the action and advise you that the action has been taken as soon as it is possible to do so.
- You decline to meet to discuss the matter, then we may invite you to a mediation process with an agreed mediator or if one cannot be agreed, with a mediator appointed by the Privacy Commissioner.
- You decline to meet and decline to participate in mediation then Synapse will prepare a report to the Privacy Commissioner outlining the steps taken to resolve the complaint and we will ask the Privacy Commissioner to assist in resolving the matter.

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## **9. REFERENCE DOCUMENTATION & LEGISLATION**

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Complaints Resolution Policy  
Complaints Resolutions Procedure  
Privacy and Confidentiality Policy  
National Privacy Principles of the Privacy Act of 1988  
Human Services Quality Framework Standards (Queensland Government)  
Disability Services Standards (New South Wales Government)

Reviewed	October 2016	Next Review Date	October 2017
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