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Note Keeping

Points for Organisations to Consider

The purposes and implications of taking notes, or not taking notes, the information that the notes may contain, along with the possible issues arising from keeping notes are important considerations for counselling and counselling skills organisations.

'There is no legal requirement that all therapists keep records of all their client work' (Bond, T. & Mitchels, B. 2008). However the following guidance may be helpful when considering, and reviewing, an organisation's guidelines and procedures for note taking and keeping notes:

- In the context of a counselling and counselling skills organisation what are notes? They can include for example, client notes, notes for assessment and management of risk, supervision notes, report writing, a means to measure well-being as well as monitoring client care and protection. This may be information on a database and/or paper file
- If notes are kept, does your organisation have written guidance and/or training for those involved in the delivery of counselling/counselling skills and the keeping of notes?
- What happens when requests are received to access, or receive a copy of notes?
- How secure are the notes and records and who has access to them?
- How, and when, are the notes and records destroyed?

The following resources provide information and guidance on note taking and keeping records.

Bond. T. (2009) *Standards and Ethics for Counselling in Action*. Third edition. London: Sage

Bond. T., and Mitchels, B. (2008) *Confidentiality and Record Keeping in Counselling and Psychotherapy*. London: BACP and Sage.

COSCA guide to Record Keeping (www.cosca.org.uk)

COSCA *Statement of Ethics and Code of Practice*

Data Protection Act 1998

Jenkins. P. (2007) *Counselling, Psychotherapy And the Law*. Second edition. London: Sage