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Information for Young Adults about Privacy Rights and Consent to Share Treatment Information

CIRCLE OF CARE

Circle of Care is the name for the group of people who are normally involved in a person's health care. This team can be comprised of the individual, their doctors, nurses and social workers in the mental health team, our office staff, sometimes school guidance counselors, etc. In many cases family members such as parents are considered to be part of the Circle of Care. Health information is legally allowed to be freely shared between any members of a Circle of Care.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

You need to understand what the Circle of Care usually means, and decide for yourself who is inside the Circle and who is outside.

BENEFITS OF THE CIRCLE OF CARE

It is easier to understand the Circle of care if a person has a physical illness like a bad appendix. Making the decision to have surgery is something most people want help with, and if your doctor can talk freely to your parents about that, it makes sense.

When someone has depression, anxiety or other serious mental health problems, the people we live with can see the effects of this problem. They have valuable information to help your recovery. This might also apply to other people like friends or teachers. Recovering from an episode of mental illness is easier when the other people in our lives understand what we are going through and what our treatment is about. The ability of the Circle of Care people to talk freely can make things better for you.

RISKS OF THE CIRCLE OF CARE

When a person is recovering from a mental health problem, a lot of what is said to doctors, nurses and social workers is very personal. That can be worrying to a young person who wants privacy from their family. In general, counselors and doctors do not share details with parents or other supporters. Because some young people live in homes where the adults are the problem. This is one important reason we make sure young people have the right to refuse to share health information.

WHAT CHOICES DO YOU HAVE?

You have the right to tell us that you want your information kept Confidential from:

- Anyone except your mental health team
- Certain people on the team (with a reason)
- Parents specifically

OR you can allow us to share certain kinds of information like appointment schedules or the names of your medications but keep everything else private.

Please fill out your consent form and give it to one of our staff. We are committed to honoring your wishes within legal limits. You own your information. Learn how to manage it.

LEGAL LIMITS TO CONFIDENTIALITY YOU SHOULD KNOW

- We must report child abuse to a Children's Aid Society and sometimes to the police. If this is one of your concerns, talk to someone on your health team about how this will affect you.
- If you are feeling like you may hurt yourself or someone else, we will contact anyone we need to talk to in order to keep you or the other person safe.
- If a lawyer or a Court feels that your treatment information would help them make a decision about a legal matter you are involved in, they can get a special permission called a subpoena. In this situation, we have to give them the information they request.
- If you have certain contagious diseases, the Health Unit must be contacted. For a list of these, ask your health team.

AGE OF CONSENT

Young people have a right to keep their treatment confidential if:

- they understand what they are being treated for
- they know what the treatment is intended to do for them,
- they know what the risks and benefits of the treatment might be
- They know what the risks and benefits of sharing health information might be.

There is no special age of consent.

Your son or daughter will be asked to fill out a consent form regarding their wishes regarding information sharing.