

## The Rosewood Centre's Guide for Separated Parents Referring Children for Psychological Treatment

The Rosewood Centre has a clear and consistent approach for managing referrals from separated parents seeking psychological treatment for their children, to ensure compliance with our legal and ethical requirements whilst promoting the best interests of the children we support.

Please note, we do not accept referrals where the purpose of the assessment is to provide evidence or opinion for legal decision making around care arrangements for children.

For younger children, we request an initial appointment with parents prior to meeting the child, to establish whether direct work with the child or indirect work through parenting support, is the best approach.

### Consent Requirements:

- Both parents are generally asked to provide written consent for the child to receive psychological treatment unless a court order states otherwise.
- We ask the referring parent to engage the other parent to ensure both parents have consented to the process.
- In cases where one parent has sole parental responsibility or sole parental responsibility for medical decisions a copy of the court order must be provided.

### Documentation:

- Copies of any relevant family law orders, parenting plans, or apprehended violence orders must be provided for review by the Rosewood Centre before commencing treatment.
- All consents and legal documents will be stored securely in the child's records.

### Communication:

- The clinic will communicate with both parents regarding treatment plans, progress, and any significant issues, unless a court order or other circumstances indicate that such communication may not be appropriate or in the child's best interests. This will be discussed in the initial session.
- With the child's best interest as the paramount consideration, efforts will be made to keep both parents informed and involved in the treatment process, considering practical circumstances, and each parent's level of engagement. The parent attending the clinic is responsible for sharing communication and appointment schedules/attendances with the other parent, unless the nature of the parents' relationship limits such communication. The mode and frequency of direct communication from the clinic will be discussed with the clinician during the initial parent session.
- Reports will be provided to the referring parent. In the absence of Court direction under court order that provides for the separate provision of reports to the other parent to obtain their own copies of reports, the Rosewood Centre

considers that it is the responsibility of the referring parent to provide a copy to the other parent.

**Disputes:**

- In the event of a dispute between parents regarding the child's treatment, the clinic may pause treatment until the issue is resolved through legal channels to ensure that the child's best interests are prioritised and to avoid potential harm from conflicting messages or decision.
- The clinic will not take sides or provide opinions on care arrangements for children where there are parenting disputes.

**Confidentiality:**

- The child's confidentiality will be maintained in accordance with ethical guidelines and legal requirements (explained in the informed consent during intake and at the initial session)
- Information will be shared with parents as necessary for the treatment and well-being of the child.

**Emergency Situations:**

- In cases where immediate treatment is necessary for the child's safety or well-being, the clinic may proceed with referral for treatment based on the consent of one parent, provided all reasonable efforts are made to contact the other parent as soon as possible.

**Procedures:**

1. Administration staff will verify the consent forms and any legal documents during the initial referral process.
2. A checklist will be used to ensure all necessary documentation and consents are obtained and recorded.
3. Regular training will be provided to staff on handling cases involving separated parents and understanding relevant legal requirements.