

# GBWCT POLICY



**Document Number:** 01.12.01  
**Effective Date:** 22/02/2021  
**Last Review Date:** 23/03/2023  
**Next Review Date:** 01/01/2025  
**Status:** APPROVED

## INFORMED CONSENT

Participation in all GBWCT programmes is voluntary. Informed consent ensures that all those enrolled in our programmes are fully aware of the services they are being offered and their obligations and rights while receiving these services.

Consent is informed when the GBWCT discloses to the client sufficient relevant information to enable the client to make an informed decision.

### 1.0 Purpose

In accordance with the GBWCT Code of Ethics, our professional relationships with others in the provision of our services, are based on respect for the other's autonomy, should not cause harm or disadvantage, and should be guided by principles of justice and fairness.

It is fundamental to the respectful relationship with the client (whether individual, group, or organisation) that the client is informed, understands the purpose and intended outcomes of engagement with the GBWCT, and consents to participation.

The central purpose of "Informed Consent" is to promote practice consistent with these ethical principles. These principles apply to all of our programmes and services.

The generic term "client" is used throughout to refer to any recipient of service, whether individual, whānau, family, group, or organisation.

### 2.0 Objectives

Gaining informed consent means that the client has the right to choose whether to receive our services based on the best information available, and to withdraw that consent should their opinion change.

Informed consent should occur at the beginning of the engagement, and should be documented so that there is a written record retained.

Informed consent is a dynamic process, and will require ongoing revision based on mutual understanding and agreement.

Any changes to consent or withdrawal of what has been previously agreed should also be recorded in writing.

### 3.0 Process

At the time of registration or enrollment, we will ensure that clients freely agree to be in receipt of GBWCT services.

The client should be given sufficient relevant information to enable them to make an informed decision about the available options for engagement (including non-engagement).

This informed consent process is then documented thoroughly via the enrollment and other applicable forms, and held in the client records.

Any changes, or later withdrawal of consent, should also be fully documented.

A third-party agency may have obtained consent from the client who is the intended recipient of our service. However, the GBWCT will always undertake their own informed consent process.

Gaining consent is part of a process of ongoing evaluation and re-visiting of decisions.

Respecting the client's autonomy is met by an honest effort to:

- Check that the client has the capacity to make decisions.
- Disclose enough information for the client to make an informed decision.
- Ensure that the client demonstrates an adequate understanding of the disclosed information.
- Confirm that the client is freely agreeing to their engagement with the GBWCT.

Decision-making principles:

1. Everyone has the right to make decisions about the things that affect them.
2. The capacity to make decisions must be assumed.
3. Every effort should be made to support people to make their own decisions.
4. Capacity to decide is decision-specific.
5. People have the right to learn from experience.
6. People have the right to change their minds.
7. People have the right to make decisions that others might not agree with.

If competence to give informed consent is being questioned, there are four levels of understanding to be assessed:

8. The ability to make a clear and stable choice between alternatives.
9. An ability to understand the nature of the programme or service being offered.
10. The ability to make a reasoned judgement.
11. The ability to understand the context and consequences of the decision being made.

## 4.0 Confidentiality

The Golden Bay Workcentre Trust recognises that confidentiality is essential to effective client relationships. We also have a legal obligation to protect the privacy of individuals.

We do keep information about our clients on file, this information is stored securely and is only viewed by those staff who require this information to provide services. Client files are routinely and securely destroyed 10 years after a client leaves our service.

Clients may request the information held about them at any time. They may also ask for the information held to be amended if they think it needs to be corrected.

Some information may need to be shared with MSD as per our contracted agreement with them. GBWCT staff must make clear to clients what information will be shared and when. The information shared with MSD may have an impact on the relationship between MSD and the client.

GBWCT will always ask permission before sharing information with any other third party agencies or individuals.

There are circumstances in which the GBWCT may need to disclose private information without consent in order to protect the client or the public from serious harm — if, for example, a client discusses plans to attempt suicide or harm another person.

## 5.0 Children & Young Persons

The GBWCT may at times work with minor individuals (under the age of 18). Young people must also give informed consent to receive our services, or their parent/guardian may do so on their behalf.

When working with children and youth, we recognise that our primary relationship is with that child or young person, and while we may work with the family as well, our obligation is to the child or young person in receipt of our services. Unless there is a

good reason not to, we will always check with the child or young person before discussing information about them with a parent/guardian.

Sometimes we work with young people who are under the age of 18, but are living independently of their families. In these cases we treat the young person as if they were an adult.

## 6.0 Policy Scope

All staff are responsible for the implementation of the Informed Consent Policy.

The General Manager is responsible for the regular review of the policy.