

POLICY

Ethical Billing Policy



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Ethical Billing Policy

Our Commitment to Ethical Billing

As a therapeutic private practice, we are committed to ethical, transparent, and fair billing practices. Our approach to fees reflects the core values of the social work and psychology professions, including integrity, respect, accountability, and client-centred care. Ethical billing is not only a professional obligation but also part of creating a safe, trustworthy therapeutic relationship.

This practice adheres with relevant legislation and funding body requirements, including **Medicare, NDIS, and DVA**.

Transparency and Informed Consent

We believe clients have the right to fully understand the financial aspects of their care. To support this:

- Fees are discussed clearly before services commence.
- Written information is provided outlining session fees, payment methods, and cancellation policies.
- Informed consent is obtained, ensuring clients understand and agree to any costs, including potential out-of-pocket expenses.
- Invoices are clear and itemised, detailing the service provided, duration, and cost.

Where appropriate, and within the limits of the practice model, consideration may be given to financial hardship, including referrals to alternative supports.

Fees and Payment

- Fees are set to be reasonable, justifiable, and consistent with professional standards and funding body guidelines.
- Clients are only charged for services that are delivered.
- Billing reflects actual time spent in sessions or approved non-direct services (such as report writing), in line with ethical and funding requirements.

Cancellations and Non-Attendance

Your appointment time is reserved specifically for you. To support the sustainability of the practice and fairness to all clients:

- **Cancellations with less than 24 hours' notice, or non-attendance, will incur a fee.**
- This fee may be charged privately and may not be claimable through Medicare, NDIS, or DVA.
- The cancellation policy is explained prior to commencing services and forms part of informed consent.

We understand that unexpected circumstances arise and encourage open communication wherever possible.

Documentation and Accountability

Accurate documentation underpins ethical billing. We maintain:

- Detailed records of appointments, cancellations, and non-attendances.
- Accurate notes of services delivered and time spent on both direct and approved non-direct work.
- Secure, traceable financial records that support accountability and audit requirements.

Third-Party Funded Services

When services are funded through **Medicare, NDIS, or DVA**, additional ethical and compliance requirements apply.

Across all funding schemes, we commit to:

- Billing only for services that are delivered and approved under the relevant funding agreement.
- Ensuring services are necessary, appropriate, and aligned with client goals.
- Avoiding over-servicing, conflicts of interest, or misrepresentation of time or services.
- Respecting client choice and control in how services are accessed and funded.

Medicare Billing

This practice aligns with the **Health Provider Compliance Strategy 2025–2030** and Medicare billing requirements. We utilise current guidance, including the Medicare Billing Assurance Toolkit and AASW sample invoice templates, to minimise the risk of incorrect billing.

NDIS Billing

For NDIS participants:

- Claims are complete, truthful, and accurate.
- Records are maintained to demonstrate supports delivered, including invoices, service agreements, and supporting documentation.
- Claims may be reviewed by the NDIS to ensure compliance.

DVA Billing

For DVA-funded services:

- Fees and services comply with the current Schedule of Fees and Notes.
- Claims are submitted according to DVA requirements.
- Compliance guidance is followed to minimise errors and ensure accountability.

Avoiding Unethical Billing Practices

We actively avoid practices that may cause financial harm or undermine trust, including:

- Charging for sessions that did not occur without prior consent to a cancellation policy.

- Billing more than one funding source for the same service.
- Inflating time or charging for unapproved activities.
- Pressuring clients to engage in services beyond their needs or funding capacity.

If ethical uncertainty arises, consultation with professional supervisors, peers, or funding bodies is sought, and decision-making is documented.

Balancing Ethics and Sustainability

While private practice is a business, ethical billing remains central. Fees and billing practices are reviewed regularly to ensure they remain fair, transparent, and aligned with current professional and funding standards.

Ethical billing is fundamental to respectful, high-quality therapeutic practice. By maintaining transparency, accountability, and integrity in all financial interactions, we aim to honour the trust placed in us by our clients and uphold the highest standards of the profession.

Billing Concerns or Complaints

If you have a concern or complaint about billing, we encourage you to raise it with us first. We are committed to resolving concerns respectfully, transparently, and in a timely manner.

Step 1: Speak with Us

- Please contact the practice directly to discuss any billing questions or concerns.
- Many issues can be resolved quickly through open conversation and clarification.

Step 2: External Complaint Options

If you feel your concern has not been resolved, you may choose to contact the relevant external body:

- **Medicare (Services Australia)**
For concerns related to Medicare billing or claiming practices.
- **NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission**
For concerns about NDIS-funded supports, billing, or provider conduct.
- **Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA)**
For concerns relating to DVA-funded services and claims.
- **State or Territory Health Complaints Commissioner / Ombudsman**
For unresolved complaints about health services provided in your state or territory.

Our Commitment

We take all billing concerns seriously and view feedback as an opportunity to ensure our practices remain ethical, transparent, and aligned with professional standards.

Contact details

Our contact details are as follows:

The Lifestory Practice

c/- The Rowley Road Clinic

63 Rowley Road, Aldinga Beach, SA, 5173

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Phone 0413 607 672

Date of Ethical Billing Policy: 10.11.2026

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Thank you!