

Privacy and confidentiality summary

- **Respecting** privacy and confidentiality is *very important*
 - students often express concerns about ‘gossiped communication’
- **Privacy can be promised:**
 - oral information is gathered in a private location
 - written records are kept in a secure place
 - there are clear protocols about who can access this information
 - any information that is passed on focuses on *how to offer learning and pastoral support* for the student – details are kept private
 - the student is informed of the above

Privacy and confidentiality summary (cont)

- **Confidentiality cannot be promised.**
 - In most situations, health professionals must keep information given to them by students confidential
 - Exception - a person of any age whose well-being or safety is of serious concern
 - This is called "mandatory reporting"
 - Health professional is breaking the law if he/she doesn't report it
 - If a student is 17 or 18 years old, the health professional can also choose to report the situation, but it is not mandatory
 - If a health professional does have to report a situation they should talk to the student about it first
 - Circumstances that do not require mandatory reporting, disclosure of any confidential information must have informed consent of the student
 - Student must be informed about the *limitations* of confidentiality

Adapted from: Cahill, H. & Murphy, B. (in press). *Preventing drug-related harm: A manual for the student welfare coordinator*. Melbourne: The Victorian Department of Education and Training, and **Reach Out! Confidentiality** available at:

<http://www.reachout.com.au/default.asp?ti=824>