

Documentation Matters: Tip #4

What things should I consider in the documentation of informed consent?

The process of informed consent is integral to the social worker-client relationship. It goes beyond the client's signature on a form and involves collaborative dialogue with the client. Social workers consider the following elements in the documentation of informed consent:

- Client capacity to provide informed consent
- Nature of the service, including risks/benefits of the proposed intervention, and questions from the client
- How long the proposed intervention will take and termination of social work services
- Limitations to confidentiality
- Recording, sharing and storage of client information
- Therapeutic approach used by the social worker
- Boundary challenges and steps taken to address them
- Payment and fee structures where appropriate
- Technology use where appropriate (risks/benefits, emergency planning etc.)
- Social media policy of social worker and/or organization



For more information related to documentation and informed consent, review the NLASW (2018) Standards of Practice, NLASW (2017) Self-Assessment Tools for Informed Consent and Documentation, and relevant practice guidelines and documents on the NLASW website at www.nlasw.ca.