

Berkeley–Alameda County Continuum of Care Tips for Informed Consent

Understanding is key to the informed consent process

- Being “informed” means having an understanding of the facts. If the client doesn’t understand the information provided, they can’t give informed consent.
- Clients have the right to object to sharing personally identifiable information and still receive some services.

Tips to make sure clients understand the privacy notice or ROI

The privacy notice and ROI summarize your organization’s privacy policy in plain language. Follow these tips to help clients make an informed choice about information sharing.

1 Assess the client’s decision-making capacity.

If the client is not able to make a decision, present the information to their representative.

2 Introduce the Notice when the client is in a good place to take in information and make a decision.

Do not introduce it during moments of crisis.

3 Ask each client if they would like assistance reading the Notice.

Not all adults can read. If the client prefers to read it on their own, make sure to give them enough time to get through it. Use an interpreter if the client prefers a different language.

4 Use plain language with everyone.

Avoid using acronyms or jargon.

5 Check for understanding.

Ask “Was there any information that did not make sense or was confusing?”

6 Ask “What questions do you have?”

Avoid asking “Do you have any questions?” as people usually answer “no.”