Handout 10 - The Importance of Good Record Keeping

Good record keeping will assist in the monitoring and evaluation of the support plan. There are a number of issues that a worker must be aware of in order to effectively manage records.

1. Confidentiality; the support plan and other case notes tell the story of a person’s life and therefore they are private and must be stored in a secure place.

2. Accessibility; Under the new National Privacy Principles, which came into force on 31 December 2001 clients are entitled to:
   - know why their personal information is being collected and how it will be used
   - ask for access to their records
   - correct inaccurate information about themselves
   - know which organisations will be given their personal information
   - ensure organisations only use their information for purposes they have told you about
   - find out what information an organisation holds on them and how they manage it.

3. Language: should be non-judgemental and positive. The client is entitled to read the plan and must not feel insulted or betrayed by the content. Therefore the language must be honest yet respectful of the client and their needs and wishes.

4. Legible: The records should be set out in a clear and readable manner so that other people who need the information can access it easily.

5. Individual Focus: information must be succinct and relevant to the client.

6. Structure: the records should be organised in a systematic and logical way.

7. Accuracy: ensure that anything written down is factual. If it is your perspective or what you believe to be true you must state this.

8. Reflect the client’s views and the views of the significant people in their lives.