

Confidentiality in Practice – Lisa

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When doing contact tracing, a balance should be kept between maintaining the confidentiality of a client and letting the contact know they may be at risk of infection.

Sometimes people who are told they are the contact of a person diagnosed with an infection may become angry or upset and want to know who has mentioned their name.

Ensure you have adequate time to talk to Lisa when you call her and also ensure you're in a private area with no background noise or loud communication in the background.



Lisa

A health care provider (HCP) calls Lisa (a 20-year-old, 6-month pregnant woman who has been named as a contact of someone with gonorrhoea.

Listen to the Call



Transcript

Lisa: "Hello?"

HCP: "Hello, can I speak with Lisa, please?"

Lisa: "This is Lisa."

HCP: "Hi Lisa, I'm Joy, a health worker. I need to talk to you about something personal. Is now a good time to talk?"

Lisa: "Yeah, ok? What about?"

Joy: "Now, it's part of my job to follow sexually transmitted infections and your name was given to me as a possible contact for someone with gonorrhoea. Have you heard of this?"

Lisa: "No. Is this a joke?"

Joy: "No, Lisa, it's not. Gonorrhoea is an infection that you get through unprotected sex. It's easily treated, but it is important to be tested and treated as soon as possible. If you're concerned about whether this call is genuine, you can call me back at the clinic. Look us up online, and then ask for me."

Lisa: "No, that's ok."

Joy: "Ok, Lisa. Would you be able to come today to have a test and get the medication? ...I understand that you're also pregnant... so it's really important that you come in as soon as possible to prevent the infection from passing to your baby and causing serious health problems."

Lisa: "How did you even find out about me?"

Joy: "It's important I keep that confidential. Sometimes I don't even have that information."

Lisa: "Well...When did they tell you?"

Joy: "I know it's difficult to get a call like this, Lisa. The person who gave me your details cared enough about you to have us get in touch with you, so you could look after your health. So, Lisa, do you think you could come to the clinic today?"

Lisa: "Yeah, I guess."

Joy: "Great. I'll see you here."

Case Studies courtesy of WA Partner Notification eLearning module.

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