

Informed Consent for Teletherapy Lancaster Psychotherapy

This informed consent for teletherapy contains important information on psychotherapy that is by phone or the internet. Please read this carefully and let me know if you have any questions. When you sign this document, it will represent an agreement between us.

Benefits and Risks of Teletherapy

Teletherapy refers to providing psychotherapy services remotely using telecommunications technologies, such as video conferencing or telephone. One of the benefits of teletherapy is that the client and clinician can engage in services without being in the same physical location. This can be helpful in ensuring continuity of care if the client or clinician moves to a different location, takes an extended vacation, or is otherwise unable to continue to meet in person. Teletherapy, however, requires technical competence on both our parts. Although there are benefits of teletherapy, there are some differences between in-person psychotherapy and teletherapy as well as some risks. For example:

- Risks to confidentiality. Because teletherapy sessions take place outside of the therapist's private office, there is potential for other people to overhear sessions if you are not in a private place during the session. On my end, I will take reasonable steps to ensure your privacy. It is important for you to make sure you find a private place for our session where you will not be interrupted. It is also important for you to protect the privacy of our session on your cell phone or other device. You should participate in therapy only while in a room or area where other people are not present and cannot overhear the conversation.
- Issues related to technology. There are many ways that technology issues might impact teletherapy. For example, technology may stop working during a session, other people might be able to get access to our private conversation, or stored data could be accessed by unauthorized people or companies.
- Crisis management and intervention. Usually, I will not engage in teletherapy with clients who are currently in a crisis situation requiring high levels of support and intervention. When needed, we will develop an emergency response plan to address potential crisis situations that may arise during the course of our teletherapy work.
- Efficacy. Most research shows that teletherapy is about as effective as in-person psychotherapy. However, some therapists believe that something is lost by not being in the same room. For example, there is debate about a therapist's ability to fully understand non-verbal information when working remotely.

Confidentiality

I have a legal and ethical responsibility to make my best efforts to protect the confidentiality of all communications that are part of our teletherapy. However, the nature of electronic communications technologies is such that I cannot guarantee our communications will be kept confidential or other people may not gain access to our communications. I will use a HIPAA compliant video platform to help keep your information private, but there is a risk that our

electronic communications may be compromised, unsecured, or accessed by others. You should also take reasonable steps to ensure the security of our communications (for example, only using secure networks for teletherapy sessions and having passwords to protect the device you use for teletherapy).

Emergencies and Technology

Assessing and evaluating threats and other emergencies can be more difficult when conducting teletherapy than in traditional in-person therapy. When needed, we will create an emergency plan to address some of these difficulties before engaging in teletherapy services. This will include you identifying an emergency contact person who is near your location and who I can contact in the event of a crisis or emergency to assist in the situation. I will ask you to sign an authorization form allowing me to contact this person in an emergency.

If the session is interrupted for any reason, such as a technological connection fails, and you are having an emergency, do not call me back. Instead, call the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline at 988, crisis intervention at 717-394-2631, or go to your nearest emergency room. Call me back after you have called or obtained emergency services.

If the session is interrupted and you are not having an emergency, disconnect from the session. I will call you and at the same time, I will attempt to reconnect with you online. If you do not receive a call from me, please call my office at 717-475-7263.

Fees

The same fee rates apply for teletherapy as for in-person psychotherapy. If there is a technological failure and we are unable to resume connection, you will only be charged the pro-rated amount of actual session time. If our time of contact was less than half hour, you will not be charged for the session.

Records

Teletherapy sessions shall not be recorded in any way unless agreed to in writing by mutual consent. I will maintain records of our sessions the same as with in-person sessions.

Informed Consent

This agreement is intended as a supplement to the general informed consent you signed at the beginning of our work together. This consent does not amend any of the terms of the original consent agreement. Your signature below indicates agreement with its terms and conditions.

Client Name

Client Signature

Date

Susan Cabouli, Ph.D.,

Licensed Clinical Psychologist

Date