



Consent For Teletherapy Services and Electronic Communication

This Informed Consent for Teletherapy Services contains important information focusing on synchronous video and audio appointments. Please read this carefully, and let us know if you have any questions. When you sign this document, it will represent an agreement between you and Insight Treatment Services.

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. Teletherapy, however, requires technical competence on both our parts to be helpful. Although there are benefits of teletherapy, there are some differences between in-person psychotherapy and telepsychology, as well as some risks.

- **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 our end, we will take reasonable steps to ensure your privacy. But 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 devices. 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 conversations, or stored data could be accessed by unauthorized people or companies. All technologies being used by Insight Treatment Services are HIPPA, Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, compliant.
- **Crisis Management and Intervention.** We may engage in teletherapy with clients who are currently in a crisis situation requiring high levels of support and intervention. Before engaging in teletherapy, we will develop a crisis response plan to address potential crisis situations that may arise during the course of our teletherapy work. This means that you will identify an emergency contact person who we are able to contact if at any time during our teletherapy session we have concerns for your safety or the safety of others.
- **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

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the same room. For example, there is debate about a therapist's ability to fully understand non-verbal information when working remotely.

Electronic Communications

InSight Treatment Services uses approved HIPPA compliant third party platforms for conducting its teletherapy appointments. You are solely responsible for any cost to you to obtain any necessary equipment, accessories, or software to take part in teletherapy.

For communication between sessions, we only use email communication, phone calls, and text messaging with your permission and only for administrative purposes unless we have made another agreement. This means that email exchanges and text messages with our office should be limited to administrative matters. This includes things like setting and changing appointments, billing matters, and other related issues. You should be aware that we cannot guarantee the confidentiality of any information communicated by email or text. Therefore, we will not discuss any clinical information by email or text and prefer that you do not either. Please note that these methods should not be used if there is an emergency.

Treatment is most effective when clinical discussions occur at your regularly scheduled sessions. But if an urgent issue arises, you should feel free to attempt to reach us by phone. We will try to return your call within 24 hours except on weekends and holidays. If you are unable to reach us and feel that you cannot wait for me to return your call, contact your family physician, local crisis services or the nearest emergency room.

Confidentiality

InSight Treatment Services has a legal and ethical responsibility to make the effort to protect all communications that are a part of our teletherapy appointments. However, the nature of electronic communications technologies is such that we cannot guarantee that our communications will be kept confidential or that other people may not gain access to our communications. We are using updated encryption methods, firewalls, and backup systems 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).

The extent of confidentiality and the exceptions to confidentiality that are outlined in the *Consent for Services* document still apply in teletherapy. Please let us know if you have any questions about exceptions to confidentiality or if you want to review the *Consent for Services* document.

Appropriateness of Teletherapy

From time to time, we may schedule in-person sessions to "check-in" with one another. You will be informed if we decide that teletherapy is no longer the most appropriate form of treatment for you.



We will discuss options of engaging in in-person counseling or referrals to another professional in your location who can provide appropriate services.

Emergencies and Technology

Assessing and evaluating threats and other emergencies can be more difficult when conducting teletherapy than in traditional in-person therapy. When appropriate, to address some of these difficulties, we will create an emergency plan before engaging in teletherapy services. We will ask you to identify an emergency contact person who is near your location and who we will contact in the event of a crisis or emergency to assist in addressing the situation. We will ask that you sign a separate authorization form (Authorization of Release of Confidential Information) allowing us to contact your emergency contact person as needed during such a crisis or emergency.

If the session is interrupted and you are not having an emergency, disconnect from the session and we will re-initiate contact with you via a backup teletherapy platform on which we agreed to conduct these appointments.

If there is a technological failure and we are unable to resume the connection, you will only be charged the prorated amount of actual session time.

Fees

The same fee rates will apply for teletherapy as applied for in-person psychotherapy. However, insurance or other managed care providers may not cover sessions that are conducted via telecommunication. If your insurance, HMO, third-party payor, or other managed care provider does not cover electronic therapy sessions, you will be solely responsible for the entire fee of the session. Please contact your insurance company prior to our engaging in teletherapy sessions in order to determine whether these sessions will be covered.

Records

Your teletherapy sessions will not be recorded in any way. We will maintain a record of our session in the same way we maintain records of in-person sessions in accordance with regulations.

Your signature indicates agreement with its terms and conditions.