

CLINICAL ASSOCIATES

of TIDEWATER

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INFORMED CONSENT FOR TELEHEALTH

BENEFITS AND RISKS OF THERAPY

Psychotherapy can have benefits and risks. Sincere therapy often involves discussing unpleasant aspects of your life, you may experience uncomfortable feelings like sadness, guilt, anger, frustration, loneliness, and helplessness. On the other hand, psychotherapy has also been shown to have many benefits. Therapy often leads to better relationships, solutions to specific problems, and significant reductions in feelings of distress. But there are no guarantees of what you will experience. As with any treatment, there are some risks as well as many benefits with therapy. You should think about both the benefits and risks when making any treatment decisions. Many of these risks are to be expected when people are making important changes in their lives.

BENEFITS AND LIMITATIONS OF DISTANCE COUNSELING

Benefits include savings in time and costs associated with a commute, being in the comfort of your own home and having sessions from anywhere in the state. Please note that distance counseling is only available within the state where your therapist is licensed. Distance counseling should not be viewed as a substitute for face-to-face counseling or medication by a physician. It is an alternative form of counseling with certain limitations. By signing this document you agree that you understand that distance counseling:

- ▶ may lack of visual and/or audio cues, which may cause misunderstanding.
- ▶ may have disruptions in the service and quality of the technology used.
- ▶ may not be appropriate if you are having a crisis, acute psychosis, or suicidal or homicidal thoughts.
- ▶ may not be available if I travel outside of the state where my therapist is licensed.

DISTANCE COUNSELING FORUM

All distance counseling will be via video conferencing correspondences through **Doxy.me**, which is HIPAA-compliant.

- ▶ It is recommended that you sign on to your account at least 5 minutes prior to your session start time.

BACKUP PLAN IN CASE OF TECHNOLOGY FAILURE

If you get disconnected from a video conferencing session, end and restart the session. If you are unable to reconnect within five minutes you agree (unless you request otherwise) that I can call you on the phone number provided on the client information form. The most reliable backup is a phone. Therefore, it is recommended that you always have a phone available. If we are not able to reconnect, we may need to reschedule the appointment and applicable fees for services will be determined by the provider.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT FOR DISTANCE COUNSELING

In the case of an emergency and for your safety, the following are important and necessary. In addition, by signing this agreement form you are acknowledging that you understand and agree to the following:

- ▶ You, the client, will inform me, your therapist, of the location in which you will consistently be during our sessions, and will inform me if this location changes.

Depending on assessment of risk, it may be necessary to call 911 and/or transfer care to a hospital. In addition, it may be necessary to create a safety plan to ensure a safe environment at your location, which may mean disposing of all firearms and excess medication from your location.

PRIVACY MEASURES

With the use of technology, it is important to be aware that family, friends, co-workers, employers, and hackers may have access to any technology, devices, or applications that you use. When receiving distance counseling it is recommended to follow privacy measures:

- ▶ Conduct the sessions in a private location where others cannot hear you.
- ▶ Do not keep your therapists contact information on your phone if it is synced with other accounts/applications.
- ▶ Do not record any sessions.
- ▶ Password protect your computer, tablet, phone, and any other device with a password that is unique.
- ▶ Use full disk encryption on any computer and/or device you use.
- ▶ Always log out of your sessions.
- ▶ Do not have any software remember your password. Sign in every time.
- ▶ Do not share your passwords with anyone.
- ▶ Do not share your computer when you are logged on to any counseling software.
- ▶ If you wish to avoid others knowing that you are receiving counseling services, clear your browser’s cache (browsing history), and on your phone, list your therapist by a name rather than as “counselor or therapist”.
- ▶ Do not download or store information from your distance counseling session.
- ▶ Have all of your devices set to time out requiring you to sign back in after a set idle time.
- ▶ Keep your computer updated.
- ▶ Use a firewall and antivirus program.
- ▶ Router / Access Point
 - Only use a secure network for internet access using a WAP2 security key.
 - Use your own administrator ID and password (not the default) for your router or access point.
 - Choose a custom SSID name, not the default name.
 - Limit the range of you Wi-Fi by positioning it near the center of your home.
- ▶ Notify your counselor if you suspect any breach in your security.
- ▶ For more information on securing your mobile device visit: <http://www.healthit.gov/providers-professionals/how-can-you-protect-and-secure-health-information-when-using-mobile-device>

Your signature below indicates that you have read the information in this document and agree to abide by its terms during our professional relationship. Please sign and date this form; make a copy for your own records. I will retain the original in my confidential records.

Patient or Patient Representative Signature

Date

Patient or Patient Representative Printed Name

Date

E-MAIL _____ **CELL PHONE** _____

Provider/Witness to Signature

Date