



Telemental Health Services Informed Consent

for Karen Dunn Pritchard, LPC & Unfold Counseling LLC

Overview

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You will need access to the certain technological services and tools to engage in telemental health-based services with your provider |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Telemental health has both benefits and risks, which you and your provider will be monitoring as you proceed with your work |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is possible that receiving services by telemental health will turn out to be inappropriate for you, and that you and your provider may have to cease work by telemental health |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You can stop work by telemental health at any time without prejudice |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You will need to participate in creating an appropriate space for your telemental health sessions |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You will need to participate in making a plan for managing technology failures, mental health crises, and medical emergencies |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your provider follows security best practices and legal standards in order to protect your health care information, but you will also need to participate in maintaining your own security and privacy |

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What is Telemental Health?

“Telemental health” means, in short, “provision of mental health services with the provider and recipient of services being in separate locations, and the services being delivered over electronic media.” We may also use the terms “telehealth” or “televideo” interchangeably.

Per Colorado Statutes and Regulations, it is defined as:

““TELETHERAPY” means a mode of delivery of mental health services through telecommunications systems, including information, electronic, and communication technologies, to facilitate the assessment, diagnosis, treatment, education, care management, or self-management of a person's mental health care while the person is located at an originating site and the provider is located at a distant site. The term includes synchronous interactions and store-and-forward transfers.”

Services delivered via telemental health rely on a number of electronic, often Internet-based, technology tools. These tools can include videoconferencing software, email, text messaging, virtual environments, specialized mobile health (“mHealth”) apps, and others.

Your provider typically provides telemental health services using the following tools:

doxy.me secure telehealth platform

myTherapist app by Therasoft Inc and client portal

- You will need access to Internet service and technological tools needed to use the above-listed tools in order to engage in telemental health work with your provider.
- If you have any questions or concerns about the above tools, please address them directly to your provider so you can discuss their risks, benefits, and specific application to your treatment.

Benefits and Risks of Telemental Health

Receiving services via telemental health allows you to:

Receive services at times or in places where the service may not otherwise be available.

Receive services in a fashion that may be more convenient and less prone to delays than in-person meetings.

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Receive services when you are unable to travel to the service provider's office. The unique characteristics of telemental health media may also help some people make improved progress on health goals that may not have been otherwise achievable without telemental health.

Receiving services via telemental health has the following risks:

Telemental health services can be impacted by technical failures, may introduce risks to your privacy, and may reduce your service provider's ability to directly intervene in crises or emergencies. Here is a non-exhaustive list of examples:

Internet connections and cloud services could cease working or become too unstable to use

Cloud-based service personnel, IT assistants, and malicious actors ("hackers") may have the ability to access your private information that is transmitted or stored in the process of telemental health-based service delivery.

Computer or smartphone hardware can have sudden failures or run out of power, or local power services can go out.

Interruptions may disrupt services at important moments, and your provider may be unable to reach you quickly or using the most effective tools. Your provider may also be unable to help you in-person.

There may be additional benefits and risks to telemental health services that arise from the lack of in-person contact or presence, the distance between you and your provider at the time of service, and the technological tools used to deliver services. Your provider will assess these potential benefits and risks, sometimes in collaboration with you, as your relationship progresses.

Assessing Telemental Health's Fit For You

Although it is well validated by research, service delivery via telemental health is not a good fit for every person. Your provider will continuously assess if working via telemental health is appropriate for your case. If it is not appropriate, your provider will help you find in-person providers with whom to continue services.

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Please talk to your provider if you find the telemental health media so difficult to use that it distracts from the services being provided, if the medium causes trouble focusing on your services, or if there are any other reasons why the telemental health medium seems to be causing problems in receiving services. **Raising your questions or concerns will not, by itself, result in termination of services.** Bringing your concerns to your provider is often a part of the process.

You also have a right to stop receiving services by telemental health at any time without prejudice. If your provider also provides services in-person and you are reasonably able to access the provider's in-person services, you will not be prevented from accessing those services if you choose to stop using telemental health.

Your Telemental Health Environment

You will be responsible for creating a safe and confidential space during sessions. You should use a space that is free of other people. It should also be difficult or impossible for people outside the space to see or hear your interactions with your provider during the session. If you are unsure of how to do this, please ask your provider for assistance.

Our Communication Plan

At our first session, we will develop a plan for backup communications in case of technology failures, a plan for responding to emergencies and mental health crises, and a plan to ensure your space is safe.

Technological Emergencies:

If we experience a technical failure during a session or other interaction, **I will always attempt to reconnect with you**, even if it seemed we were about to finish our interaction.

Our backup communication method is:

Method:	telephone
Provider's number:	970-316-2424
Client's number:	Fill in your number here

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Plan:	Provider will attempt to call client at the above number. If unable to connect, provider will send client a secure email or message (as client has designated) to inform that contact was attempted but unsuccessful.
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Our Safety and Emergency Plan

As a recipient of telemental health-based services, you will need to participate in ensuring your safety during mental health crises, medical emergencies, and sessions that you have with your provider.

Emergency Contact

Your Emergency Contact Name:	
Emergency Contact Number:	
Your relationship to them:	
Your Initials: _____	You give your provider permission to contact your emergency contact regarding your health care in an emergency:

Health and Safety Emergencies

If you are in a mental health crisis, you will call this number for help:	Local Emergency Services: 970-252-6220 State-wide Crisis Line: 1-844-493-8255
If you have a medical or safety emergency, you will call this number for help:	911

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Scene Safety Plan

Sometimes there may be other people who attempt to intrude on our session, or there may be other reasons why the space you are in is not psychologically safe for our work. **Do not inform any other people of our plans.**

To help your provider know when your space is unsafe, we will do the following scene safety check at the beginning of each session:

Scene safety check method:	I will have you pick up your device and pan around the space you are in.
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In cases when you need it, we will use the following secret call and response code to indicate that your space is not currently safe:

Scene unsafe call and response:	<e.g. The therapist always asks, "Is now a good time to proceed?" and if the scene is <u>unsafe</u> , the client responds, "I am a bit sleepy, but yes.">
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It is important that you engage with your provider in the creation of these plans and that you follow them when you need to.

In addition to those plans, your provider has the following policies regarding communications:

<p>The best way to contact your provider between sessions is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Through the Client Portal at https://www.therasoftonline.com/tms/ClientPortal.aspx ● You may also access this through the myTherapist app from Therasoft Inc. ● Calling 970-316-2424 ● You may also sign consent to use your conventional email or text through the Consent for Unsecure Communication form, in which case you may: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Email: karen.unfold@tsecuremail.com (secure on my end) ○ Text: 970-316-2424 (secure on my end) 	
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Your provider will respond to your messages within 24 hours during business hours. Please note that your provider may not respond at all on weekends or holidays. Your provider may also respond sooner than stated in this policy. That does not mean they will always respond that quickly.

Your provider is located in the Mountain time zone. Please note the time difference from your own time zone.

Please note that all textual messages you exchange with your provider, e.g. emails and text messages, will become a part of your health record.

Your Security and Privacy

Except where otherwise noted, your provider employs software and hardware tools that adhere to security best practices and applicable legal standards for the purposes of protecting your privacy and ensuring that records of your health care services are not lost or damaged (as outlined in Informed Consent form and Communications Policy)

As with all things in telemental health, however, you also have a role to play in maintaining your security. Please use reasonable security protocols to protect the privacy of your own health care information. For example: when communicating with your provider, use devices and service accounts that are protected by unique passwords that only you know. Also, use the secure tools that your provider has supplied for communications.

Recordings

Please do not record video or audio sessions without your provider's consent. Making recordings can quickly and easily compromise your privacy, and should be done so with great care. Your provider **will not** record video or audio sessions.

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Signature Page

I have read the preceding information, and I understand my rights as a client or as the client’s responsible party. Furthermore, by signing below, I agree to the therapeutic agreements as outlined for telemental health, and agree that I voluntarily have applied for, and consent to treatment, in order to participate in counseling through telemental health and the therapeutic process.

**** To sign and submit your forms electronically, type /s/Your Name in the signature field. Example: /s/Jane Doe or use the pdf reader fxn of drawing in your signature.**

Client Name(s): _____

Client Signature: _____ Date: _____

Client Signature: _____ Date: _____

Other Responsible Party’s Signature: _____ Date: _____

Other Responsible Party’s Relationship to Client: _____

Therapist/Witness: _____ Date: _____

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