

CLEARVIEW COUNSELING SERVICES

Teletherapy Services Informed Consent

Overview

- ❖ You will need access to the certain technological services and tools to engage in teletherapy services with your provider.
- ❖ Teletherapy has both benefits and risks, which you and your provider will be monitoring as you proceed with your work.
- ❖ It is possible that receiving services by teletherapy will turn out to be inappropriate for you, and that you and your provider may have to cease work by teletherapy.
- ❖ You can stop work by teletherapy at any time without prejudice.
- ❖ You will need to participate in creating an appropriate space for your teletherapy sessions.
- ❖ You will need to participate in making a plan for managing technology failures, mental health crises, and medical emergencies.
- ❖ 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.

What is Teletherapy?

“Teletherapy” 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.”

Services delivered via teletherapy 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. HIPAA compliant video conferencing systems used by ClearView providers include:

Doxy.me, VSee.com & Zoom

You will need access to Internet service and technological tools needed to use the above-listed tools in order to engage in teletherapy 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 Teletherapy

Receiving services via teletherapy 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.

Receive services when you are unable to travel to the service provider’s office.

The unique characteristics of teletherapy media may also help some people make improved progress on health goals that may not have been otherwise achievable without teletherapy.

Receiving services via teletherapy has the following risks:

-Teletherapy 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 teletherapy 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 teletherapy 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 Teletherapy’s Fit For You

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

Please talk to your provider if you find the teletherapy 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 teletherapy 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 teletherapy 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 teletherapy.

Your Teletherapy 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 and a plan for responding to emergencies and mental health crises. In addition to those plans, your provider has the following policies regarding communications:

Typically, the best way to contact your provider between sessions is to call the office (**513-860-1100**) and leave a voice mail message for your provider, who will usually respond to your messages within 24 business hours. Your provider may also respond sooner than stated in this policy. That does not mean they will always respond that quickly. When the office is closed, there is an option for reaching your provider more quickly through the answering service for clinical emergencies. Please note that your provider may not respond at all on weekends or holidays for non-emergency situations. Our work is done primarily during our scheduled sessions. **Contact between sessions should be limited to: Confirming or changing appointment times; billing questions or issues; or clinical emergencies.**

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 provider may coordinate care with one or more of your other providers. Your provider will use reasonable care to ensure that those communications are secure and that they safeguard your privacy.

