

Telehealth (Online Video Counseling) Guidelines & Consent

PURPOSE

To assure the needs of the patient and participating provider are met by providing the necessary patient information and a secure environment for the patient.

SUPPORTING DATA

Each specialist's practice pattern is unique to their specialty and office practice. In order to achieve positive outcomes during telehealth evaluations and treatment, the practice pattern is incorporated into the telehealth experience as much as possible.

Telehealth includes the provision of mental health and substance abuse services from a distance. Sheryl Adams Counseling uses the Doxy.me online platform; an advanced Internet-based and HIPAA-compliant video conferencing technology.

LICENSING REQUIREMENTS

It is commonly accepted that when a provider uses telehealth to conduct treatment they are "traveling through cyberspace" to the residence of their patient. This means that the provider is bound to the laws and regulations of the state in which the client resides. Mental health providers are only legally allowed to deliver treatment to clients who live in a state in which they hold a current license. Sheryl Adams is only licensed to practice in the state of Washington.

APPROPRIATE PATIENT

Any provider-referred patient, new or established, for whom a psychiatric and or behavioral health consultation is indicated and agreed to by the provider.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CONDUCTING ONLINE SESSIONS

Once you and your provider have decided on video counseling and you've scheduled an appointment time, you will be provided a "room URL" (a web address) in an email. At the start of your appointment time, you will click the URL and be taken to Sheryl's virtual waiting room. When prompted by your browser, allow your browser to use your webcam and microphone. Then you will be prompted to enter your name to let your provider know you are there. Sheryl will receive a notification and start your visit. For future sessions, you will use the same URL.

EQUIPMENT REQUIRED

A computer with a built-in camera and an adequate internet connection. If your computer does not have an internal camera, an external one can be purchased at any office supply retailer like Amazon.com for as little as \$10. An audio headset improves audio quality for both you and your therapist.

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Doxy.me is completely browser-based, so all you need is a desktop or laptop computer or the Doxy.me iOS app (Apple devices only), a strong internet connection, and webcam (external or built-in) are required. Doxy.me recommends upload and download connection speeds of at least 3Mbps. You can test your speed here: <http://www.speedtest.net/>

Compatible Browsers: Google Chrome; Mozilla Firefox; iOS app

PRIOR TO SESSION

An appointment must be made in advance with your provider. Please schedule during a time that you have complete privacy, access to required equipment (see below), and no distractions. Do not schedule telehealth appointments if you are responsible for childcare, during work hours (unless you can leave work), or to take place in public places. Provider must also obtain completed and signed intake and consent forms, billing and insurance data, payment information.

DURING SESSION

Prepare your room for telehealth session by turning on your device (computer, tablet, or phone). Place microphone in the appropriate place and test audio level. Use a headset for better audio quality for you and your therapist. Assure relevant paperwork/homework is present. Assure your privacy is protected at all times. Close the door to the room before the session begins.

WHAT HAPPENS IF A SESSION IS TERMINATED DUE TO TECHNICAL PROBLEMS?

If the video session cannot quickly be restored, please consult with your therapist. All or a portion of the session may need to be rescheduled. If the connection fails in the first 15 minutes of the session and is caused by Provider technical problems, you will not be charged for the session.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION AND TELEMEDICINE POLICES & CONSENT

I cannot ensure the confidentiality of any form of communication through electronic media, including text messages. If you prefer to communicate via email or text messaging for issues regarding scheduling or cancellations, I will do so. While I may try to return messages in a timely manner, I cannot guarantee immediate response and request that you do not use these methods of communication to discuss therapeutic content and/or request assistance for emergencies.

Services by electronic means, including but not limited to telephone communication, the Internet, facsimile machines, and e-mail is considered telemedicine by the State of Washington. Telemedicine is broadly defined as the use of information technology to deliver medical services and information from one location to another. If we use information technology for some or all of your treatment, you need to understand that:

(1) You retain the option to withhold or withdraw consent at any time without affecting the right to future care or treatment or risking the loss or withdrawal of any program benefits to which you would otherwise be entitled. (2) All existing confidentiality protections are equally applicable. (3) Your access to all

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medical information transmitted during a telemedicine consultation is guaranteed, and copies of this information are available for a reasonable fee. (4) Dissemination of any of your identifiable images or information from the telemedicine interaction to researchers or other entities shall not occur without your consent. (5) There are potential risks, consequences, and benefits of telemedicine. Potential benefits include, but are not limited to improved communication capabilities, providing convenient access to up-to-date information, consultations, support, reduced costs, improved quality, change in the conditions of practice, improved access to therapy, better continuity of care, and reduction of lost work time and travel costs. Effective therapy is often facilitated when the therapist gathers within a session or a series of sessions, a multitude of observations, information, and experiences about the client. Therapists may make clinical assessments, diagnosis, and interventions based not only on direct verbal or auditory communications, written reports, and third person consultations, but also from direct visual and olfactory observations, information, and experiences. When using information technology in therapy services, potential risks include, but are not limited to the therapist's inability to make visual and olfactory observations of clinically or therapeutically potentially relevant issues such as: your physical condition including deformities, apparent height and weight, body type, attractiveness relative to social and cultural norms or standards, gait and motor coordination, posture, work speed, any noteworthy mannerism or gestures, physical or medical conditions including bruises or injuries, basic grooming and hygiene including appropriateness of dress, eye contact (including any changes in the previously listed issues), sex, chronological and apparent age, ethnicity, facial and body language, and congruence of language and facial or bodily expression. Potential consequences thus include the therapist not being aware of what he or she would consider important information, that you may not recognize as significant to present verbally the therapist.

Signature and Date