

UOttawa Counselling Services

Teletherapy Consent for Treatment

My signature below signifies my consent to engaging in teletherapy with a Wellness and Mental Health Counselor at the University of Ottawa Counselling Services in accordance with the following expectations and guidelines.

What is teletherapy?

1. “Teletherapy” includes the practice of education, goal setting, accountability, referral to resources, problem solving, skills training, and help with decision making. Teletherapy counseling may include mental health care delivery, assessment, consultation, and psychotherapeutic treatment.
2. Teletherapy will occur primarily through interactive audio, video or telephone and/or other data communications. If one form of technology fails in the course of a teletherapy session, an alternate form of communication may be utilized by the student (ex. cell phone).
3. Services delivered by my counsellor are regulated by the professional college in which my counsellor is a member of, and may not be in line with, other provincial norms where the client accessing services may reside.

What are my rights in regards to teletherapy?

4. I have the right to withhold or withdraw consent at any time. If consent is withheld or withdrawn, I may have the option to meet with the counseling provider on the University of Ottawa campus or to request a referral to a local mental health provider.
5. The laws that protect the confidentiality of my personal information in a face-to-face counseling setting also apply to teletherapy. See Counselling Services Consent Form.
6. I have a right to access my personal information and copies of case records in accordance with Federal and Ontario law.
7. I agree not to record teletherapy sessions.
8. I agree to be dressed as if I were attending an in-person face-to-face session.

When is teletherapy not appropriate?

9. I agree that certain situations, including emergencies and mental health crises, are inappropriate for audio/video/computer based counselling services. These include:
 - thoughts of hurting or killing myself or another person;
 - hallucinations;
 - being in a life threatening or emergency of any kind;
 - having uncontrollable emotional reactions; and/or
 - being under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

10. I understand that my teletherapy counsellor may not be available for contact between scheduled sessions. If I am in an emergency or crisis situation (such as those listed above), I should immediately call 911 or seek help from a hospital or crisis-oriented health care facility in my immediate area. If I am experiencing thoughts of suicide without a clear commitment to safety, I am to contact one of the following resources:

911 (off campus) 5411 (on campus) or Nearest Emergency Room

- Hôpital Montfort: 713 Montreal Rd. Ottawa, ON
- The General: 501 Smyth Rd. Ottawa, ON
- The Civic: 1053 Carling Ave. Ottawa, ON
- Queensway Carleton Hospital: 3045 Baseline Rd. Nepean, ON

Are there risks involved?

11. There are risks and consequences from teletherapy, including, but not limited to, the possibility, despite reasonable efforts on the part of the counselor, that:
- the transmission of my personal information could be disrupted or distorted by technical failures;
 - the transmission of my personal information could be interrupted by unauthorized persons; and/or
 - the electronic storage of my personal information could be accessed by unauthorized persons.
12. Teletherapy may not be as complete as face-to-face services – additional research is needed on the long-term effects of counselling via teletherapy versus face-to-face treatment in order to better understand the benefits and limitations of teletherapy treatment. If my counselor believes I would be better served by another form of intervention (e.g. face-to-face services) I will be referred to a mental health professional who can provide such services in my area.
13. While I may benefit from teletherapy psychological counseling, results cannot be guaranteed or assured. There are potential risks and benefits associated with any form of counselling, and despite my efforts and the efforts of my counsellor, my condition may not improve, and in some cases may even get worse.

What is the role of emergency contacts?

14. My consent to teletherapy services includes the identification of two local (or on-site) people that can be reached by the teletherapy provider if there is any concern for my physical or emotional wellbeing. Such emergency contacts may be called upon to contact me or to alert local authorities in an emergency situation.

The emergency contacts that I identify for this purpose, with accompanying consent for the teletherapy counsellors to contact one or both of these contacts if indicated for my safety and wellbeing, are as follows:

- Name:
Relationship:

Cell number:
Email address:

- Name:
Relationship:
Cell number:
Email address:

If I choose to change one or both emergency contacts listed above, or if applicable contact information changes, I will inform my teletherapy counselor and request to sign a new informed consent form.

If I show signs of deterioration that indicate I may be in danger, I grant University of Ottawa Counselling Services staff permission to contact me by an alternate form of technology (such as phone) and/or to contact my emergency contact(s) listed above to verify my well-being. If I show indicators that I may be at serious risk for harm to self or others, I understand that the University of Ottawa Counselling Services is required to contact campus staff and/or emergency response personnel to ensure my safety.

I have read and understand the information provided above. By electronically signing this document I agree to follow these guidelines and expectations for teletherapy services through Counselling Services at the University of Ottawa.

Printed name of client _____

Signature of client _____ Date _____

Name and Signature of Mental Health and Wellness Counsellor

_____ Date _____