

**SRI Psychological Services, P.C.**  
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(215) 885-3337

### **Consent to Telehealth Treatment**

This Informed Consent for Telehealth contains important information about doing psychotherapy using the phone or the internet. Please read this carefully, and let us know if you have any questions. Acceptance of this document will represent an agreement between you and your therapist.

#### **Benefits and Risks of Telehealth**

Telehealth refers to providing health services, in this case psychotherapy, remotely using telecommunications technologies, such as video conferencing or telephone. One of the benefits of telepsychology is that the client and clinician can engage in services without being in the same physical location. There are also some differences between in-person psychotherapy and telepsychology, as well as some risks. For example:

*Risks to confidentiality.* Because telehealth sessions take place outside of the therapist's private office, there is potential for other people to overhear sessions if you are not in a private place during the session. We will take reasonable steps to ensure your privacy. It is also important for you to make sure you find a private place for our session where you will not be interrupted. You should participate in telehealth only while in a room or area where other people are not present and cannot overhear the conversation.

*Issues related to technology.* There are many ways that technology issues might impact telehealth. For example, technology may stop working during a session, other people might be able to get access to our private conversation, or stored data could be accessed by unauthorized people or companies.

*Efficacy.* Most research shows that telehealth is about as effective as in-person psychotherapy. However, some therapists believe that something is lost by not being in the same room. For example, there is debate about a therapist's ability to fully understand non-verbal information when working remotely.

#### **Electronic Communications**

SRI requires the use of HIPAA compliant technology to conduct telehealth. The exception is during times of crisis when Federal and State government loosen their restrictions and allow telehealth over the phone or via non HIPAA compliant video platforms. You may never use a social media platform like Facebook or Instagram for telehealth. You are solely responsible for any cost to you to obtain any necessary equipment, accessories, or software to take part in telehealth.

#### **Emergencies and Technology**

Assessing and evaluating emergencies can be more difficult during telehealth than in traditional

in-person therapy. To address some of these difficulties, if deemed necessary by your therapist, we will create an emergency plan before engaging in telehealth services. I will ask you to identify an emergency contact person who is near your location whom I will contact in the event of a crisis or emergency to assist in addressing the situation.

If the session is interrupted for any reason, such as the technological connection fails, and you are having an emergency, do not call me back; instead, call 911 or go to your nearest emergency room. Call me back after you have called or obtained emergency services.

If the session is interrupted and you are not having an emergency, we will attempt to reconnect via the telehealth platform on which we agreed to conduct therapy, or continue via phone.

### **Fees and Payment**

SRI requires a credit card to be kept on file in order to schedule telehealth sessions, because we are unable to collect payment in person during remote therapy.

The same fees will apply for telehealth as for in-person psychotherapy. Be aware, insurance or other managed care providers may not cover sessions that are conducted via telecommunication. If your insurance, HMO, third-party payor, or other managed care provider does not cover electronic psychotherapy sessions, you will be solely responsible for the entire fee of the session. Please contact your insurance company prior to our engaging in telehealth sessions in order to determine whether these sessions will be covered.

Many insurance companies are waiving copays and deductibles during the Coronavirus crisis. If using an in-network insurance at SRI, you will be charged the amount determined by your insurance company. You will not be charged for any amounts waived by your insurance company. If your insurance does indicate that you are financially responsible, we will charge you their specified amount.

### **Records**

The telehealth sessions shall not be recorded in any way unless agreed to in writing by mutual consent. Your therapist will maintain a record of your session in the same way records of in-person sessions would be kept.

This agreement is intended as a supplement to the general Consent to Treatment form that you received at the outset of your treatment and does not amend any of the terms of that agreement. Your signature below indicates agreement.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Client

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Therapist

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date