



Stephanie A. DePalmer, M.Ed., LPC, NCC
3461 Market Street, Suite 104, Camp Hill, PA 17011
Cell: 814-279-8274 Office: 717-730-8555 Fax: 717-730-4566
E-mail: stephdepalmer@gmail.com
Website: <https://stephdepalmer.wixsite.com/wellness>

Informed Consent for Teletherapy

This Informed Consent for Teletherapy contains important information concerning engaging in electronic psychotherapy or Teletherapy. Please read this carefully and let your counselor know if you have any questions. This consent shall only apply to clients physically within the State of Pennsylvania seeking counseling treatment within the State of Pennsylvania. This Informed Consent shall be signed in conjunction with Stephanie A. DePalmer, M.Ed., LPC, NCC.

Benefits and Risks to Teletherapy

Teletherapy refers to the remote provision of counseling services using telecommunications technologies such as video conferencing. One of the benefits of Teletherapy is that the client and counselor can engage in services without being in the same physical location. This can be helpful in ensuring continuity of care if the client or counselor are unable to make it to the practice location for various reasons. It can also increase the convenience and time efficiency of both parties.

Although there are benefits of Teletherapy, there are fundamental differences between in person counseling and Teletherapy, as well as some inherent risks. For example:

- Risks to Confidentiality: Because Teletherapy sessions take place outside of the typical office setting, there is potential for third parties to overhear sessions if they are not conducted in a secure environment. Your counselor will take reasonable steps to ensure the privacy and security of your information, and it is important for you to review your own security measures and ensure that they are adequate to protect information on your end. You should participate in counseling only while in a room or area where other people are not present and cannot overhear you.
- Issues related to technology: There are risks inherent in the use of technology for therapy and are important to understand, such as: potential for technology to fail during a session, potential that transmission of confidential information could be interrupted by unauthorized parties, or potential for electronically stored information to be accessed by unauthorized parties.
- Crisis management and interventions: As a general rule, your counselor will not engage in Teletherapy with clients who are in a crisis situation. Before engaging in Teletherapy, your counselor will develop an emergency response plan to address potential crisis situations that may arise during the course of the Teletherapy work.
- Efficacy: Most research shows that Teletherapy is about as effective as in-person psychotherapy. However, some counselors believe that something is lost by not being in the same room. For example, there is debate about a counselor's ability to fully understand non-verbal information when working

remotely. If you ever have concerns about misunderstandings between us related to our use of technology, please bring up such concerns immediately, and we will address the potential misunderstanding together.

Electronic Communication

Please review our Ethics guidance on Distance Counseling (tele-therapy) as well as the Pennsylvania Teletherapy guidance regulations. <https://www.counseling.org/knowledge-center/ethics#2014code>

You may be required to have certain system requirements to access electronic Teletherapy via the method I choose (Zoom). Your insurance may mandate another method through your specific policy.

Communication between sessions remains the same as it would for face-to-face sessions; we only use email or phone calls to discuss scheduling or billing concerns. We believe sensitive information is best shared during scheduled appointment times. For additional information, please refer to Notice of Privacy and Security Practices on my website under 'Forms > Intake Forms' (<https://stephdepalmer.wixsite.com/wellness>).

***Appropriateness of Teletherapy and Crisis Situations**

Teletherapy is solely for established clients. Safety management is an on-going process in counseling. Assessing and evaluating potential safety threats is more difficult when conducting Teletherapy than in traditional in-person therapy. To address some of these difficulties, we will create an emergency plan before engaging in Teletherapy. We ask you to identify your location and we will determine the appropriate crisis intervention services for that area. We also ask that you provide your counselor with the name and phone number of a family member or friend who knows your location and is willing and able to help in a crisis situation. Please indicate the name and phone number of that person here:

Location: _____

Address: _____

Closest Crisis and Phone Number: _____

Emergency Contact Name: _____

Emergency Contact Relationship: _____

Emergency Contact Phone Number: _____

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, contact Holy Spirit Hospital by going to the emergency room at 503 N 21st Street, Camp Hill, PA, 17011, or calling crisis intervention at (717) 763-2222. Call me back after you have called or obtained emergency services.

If the session is interrupted and you are not having an emergency, disconnect from the session and wait two (2) minutes before reconnecting to the session via the Teletherapy platform on which we agreed to conduct therapy. If we are unable to reconnect with two (2) minutes, then call me at the phone number provided. (Stephanie: 814-279-8274)

If there is a technological failure and we are unable to resume the connection, you will only be charged the prorated amount of actual session time.

Confidentiality

Your Teletherapy sessions are as private as sessions held face to face in our offices. Your counselor will be the only person in the room, and we will not be recording our session. You will have our undivided attention-we will not be answering emails or browsing the web during our sessions. We ask you to agree to the same.

Fees

Fees for Teletherapy sessions are the same as those for face to face sessions. Your insurance plan may or may not cover this service. Please contact your insurance company prior to our engaging in Teletherapy sessions in order to determine whether these sessions will be covered. **If your insurance plan does not cover Teletherapy sessions, you are solely responsible for the entire fee of the session.**

Records

The Teletherapy sessions shall not be recorded in any way unless agreed upon in writing by mutual consent. We will maintain the records of our sessions in the same way we maintain records for in-person in accordance with our policies.

You are responsible for securing proper information regarding coverage of Telehealth services and the necessary requirements needed for the approved platform. By signing below, you accept responsibility for any unpaid sessions by your insurance and/or you agree to pay our self-pay rate for services. By signing you agree you have been fully informed of the risks and benefits; the fees associated with Teletherapy; the security measures in place, which include procedures for emergency situations; the technological requirements needed to engage in Teletherapy; and all the other information provided in this informed consent, agree to and understand the procedures and policies set forth in this consent.

Signature of Client

Date

Signature of parent or guardian (if legally required)

Date

Signature of parent or guardian (if legally required)

Date

Counselor

Date