



## **TELEMEDICINE POLICIES**

### **TELEMEDICINE**

These policies apply to the provision of psychiatric services using real-time videoconferencing through personal computers equipped with webcams to connect a client and a psychiatrist over the Internet (“telemedicine”).

### **AVAILABILITY**

Telemedicine may be available for follow-up appointments, at the discretion of the treating psychiatrist. Some situations are appropriate for telemedicine rather than an in-person appointment, and other situations are not. The psychiatrist is responsible for making this determination. If, during the course of treatment by telemedicine, the psychiatrist determines that telemedicine is no longer appropriate, then in-person appointments will be required.

### **INITIAL CONSULTATION**

Telemedicine is not available for an initial consultation, which must be an in-person appointment.

### **CLIENT LOCATION**

Due to state medical licensing laws, telemedicine is available only for clients who are physically located in Virginia. A client must be physically located in Virginia during each telemedicine session. Prior to the appointment, a client will be asked to identify the location where he or she will be. At the beginning of the telemedicine session, the client will be asked to confirm the location.

### **OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL**

Due to state medical licensing laws, telemedicine is not available to Virginia clients when they are travelling outside of Virginia.

## **ONLINE PORTAL**

Telemedicine sessions will be conducted through an online portal managed by CloudVisit™ Telemedicine, a HIPAA-compliant telemedicine hosting service that uses data encryption, audio/video encryption, and other measures to protect the privacy and security of client information. Telemedicine sessions will be conducted only through the CloudVisit™ online portal. A client's computer and webcam equipment must be compatible with system requirements of the online portal and have sufficient audio and video clarity for meaningful videoconferencing. Although CloudVisit™ offers a mobile application for smart phones and tablets, for privacy reasons we ask that clients not conduct telemedicine sessions outside their home, personal office, or other private setting.

## **SECURITY RISKS**

Notwithstanding security measures, there still are potential risks to the privacy and security of client information by the use of telemedicine technology, including unauthorized access, corruption due to computer virus or malware, and technical failures.

## **TECHNICAL FAILURE**

In the event of a technical failure prior to or during a telemedicine session, a new telemedicine appointment or in-person appointment may need to be scheduled for a later time or later day.

## **EMERGENCY CONTACT**

Prior to a telemedicine appointment, a client will be asked to identify an emergency contact whom the psychiatrist may contact in the event of a physical or mental health emergency.

## **PARTICIPANTS**

At the beginning of a telemedicine session, if there are any people in the vicinity of the telemedicine equipment other than the client and the psychiatrist, their presence shall be made known and agreed to.

## **PAYMENT**

Payment in full is due prior to beginning the telemedicine session with the psychiatrist. Payment may be made online by credit card or bank transfer through a secure, encrypted link embedded in an electronic invoice emailed to the client. Payment also may be made verbally over the telephone with credit card information or by other acceptable payment arrangement made prior to the appointment.

## **PRESCRIPTIONS**

At the conclusion of a telemedicine session, any prescriptions for medications shall be transmitted electronically, or called in, to the client's pharmacy. A medication that constitutes a controlled substance under federal law may be prescribed at the psychiatrist's discretion. If the psychiatrist elects to prescribe a controlled substance on an on-going basis, the client must come for an in-person appointment at least once every two years under federal law.

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### **Changes to Telemedicine Policies:**

Telemedicine policies are subject to change. Notice of changes to our telemedicine policies will be available upon request, in our office, and on our web site.

**Effective Date of this Notice:** September 2, 2018

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