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### **Consent to online therapy**

Thank you for your interest in engaging with online therapy. The following sheet provides information about online therapy which will allow you to decide whether you want to consent to psychotherapy therapy using this medium. Please feel free to ask any questions if you need clarification.

#### **Clinical benefits and limitations**

Online therapy is a convenient alternative to traditional face-to-face therapy and has been shown to be effective in helping with many difficulties. However online therapy has limitations. There is a lack of “personal” face-to-face interaction which can make therapy less of a relational experience. It is also not an appropriate medium if you are seriously depressed, have serious substance dependence, or you are experiencing intense suicidal or homicidal thoughts. Seeing a mental health professional face-to-face is recommended in these situations.

#### **Technological requirements and competences**

To engage in online therapy, you will require a device that can connect to the internet and be able to install and use the software that we agree to use for communication. A reliable high-speed internet connection (minimum 4Mbps for video) is also required. Please be aware that online therapy may utilise significant amounts of data, especially if video (300-800MB/hour) is used.

#### **Procedures for technical difficulties**

Disruptions can occur when using the internet to communicate. Should our communication be disrupted, I will immediately attempt to reconnect and resume the session. However, if I am repeatedly unable to reconnect for about 10 minutes, I may attempt a telephonic consult in certain circumstances or I will utilise WhatsApp for a video call if appropriate, or the session will be rescheduled (via email) to a later date once connectivity is resumed.

#### **Confidentiality**

Any information provided to me will remain confidential and will not be given to a third party unless you give me specific permission to release the information. However please be aware that if there is a significant risk of you seriously harming yourself or another person, I am obliged to act to prevent harm, which may involve giving information to a third party. Online therapy utilizes the Internet for the transmission of personal information and therefore there are increased risks to confidentiality, and it cannot be guaranteed. To protect your confidentiality, I will require that we use services that provide encryption to communicate. Please consider password protecting the devices you use and installing antivirus software to prevent access by third parties. Please ensure that you use a private environment when engaging in online therapy so that intrusions can be minimised. Recording of sessions is prohibited.

#### **Records**

The psychologist will maintain records of online psychotherapy and/or consultation services. All clinical records will be maintained as required by applicable legal and ethical standards according to HPCSA.

