

Consent Information

Please email Consent Form to drclark@gctc.com

or

fax to Dr. Matthew Clark (616) 825-6225

- Informed consent

I agree that I have been informed of the following information before I receive online mental health services.

Process

1. Possible misunderstandings

I am aware that misunderstandings are possible with text-based modalities such as email (since nonverbal cues are relatively lacking) and even with videoconferencing (since bandwidth is always limited).

2. Turnaround time

One issue specific to the provision of mental health services using asynchronous (not in "real time") communication is that of turnaround time. I am informed that I may expect a response within 48 hours.

Counselor

When the client and the counselor do not meet in person, the client is less able to assess the counselor and to decide whether or not to enter into a treatment relationship with him or her.

3. Name

The client is informed that his therapist is Dr. Matthew Clark, Psy.D. (Licensed Psychologist, license number available upon request)

- b. Potential benefits

Potential benefits of email and video therapy/consultation may include: (1) being able to send messages at any time of day or night; (2) never having to leave messages with intermediaries; (3) avoiding not only intermediaries, but also voice mail and "telephone

tag"; (4) being able to take as long as one wants to compose, and having the opportunity to reflect upon, one's messages; (5) automatically having a record of communications to refer to later; and (6) feeling less inhibited than in person.

- c. The potential risks of email may include (1) messages not being received and (2) confidentiality being breached. Emails could fail to be received if they are sent to the wrong address (which might also breach of confidentiality) or if they just are not noticed by the counselor. Confidentiality could be breached in transit by hackers or Internet service providers or at either end by others with access to the email account or the computer. Extra safeguards should be considered when the computer is shared by family members, students, library patrons, etc.

d. Safeguards

The client should be informed of safeguards that are taken by the counselor and could be taken by himself or herself against the potential risks. For example, (1) a "return receipt" can be requested whenever an email is sent and (2) a password can be required for access to the computer or, more secure, but also more difficult to set up, encryption can be used.

e. Proxies

Some clients are not in a position to consent themselves to receive mental health services. In those cases, consent should be obtained from a parent, legal guardian, or other authorized party -- and the identity of that party should be verified. For example children under 18 years of age.

Signed _____ Date _____