

Hometown Mental Health Services, PLLC
Phone: 413-343-4175
Fax: 413-371-8098

Informed Consent: Telehealth Practices

Hometown Mental Health Services, PLLC is proud of our ability to offer high quality, evidence-based treatments to the clients we serve via tele-health. Because telehealth services offer treatment through technology over an internet connection, there are some risks to this service. We have created policies for our provider and clients to follow. This is to ensure that clients are afforded quality treatment, confidentiality, and respect at all times.

WHAT IS TELEHEALTH: Telehealth is the use of telecommunication and information technology to provide clinical health care from a distance. It has been used to overcome distance barriers and to improve access to medical services that would often not be consistently available in distant rural communities.

TELEHEALTH PORTAL: We primarily use the telehealth portal service through our EMR system- **Valant**. This is a HIPAA compliant portal service that has been approved for telehealth sessions. Your provider will send you a secure link to access your telehealth session. Other approved HIPAA compliant programs, such as **Doximity**, may be used if there are technical limitations, such as latency issues or inability to connect through the portal..

WHO CAN USE TELEHEALTH SERVICES: Telehealth services are online forms of treatment, often used as a convenience to clients, for inclement weather, or when there are barriers to access to care. We, by law, can only provide telehealth services in the state in which we are licensed. For example, if you are traveling to California, we could not meet with you on-line as we are not licensed in the State you are in. At this time, Hometown Mental Health Services, PLLC is only treating clients located in Massachusetts.

EQUIPMENT REQUIRED: In order to use the telehealth service within the patient portal clients will need a working computer with a microphone and camera, or a cell phone with internet capabilities. Provider equipment will be maintained through password.

FEES: There is no cost to the client for the telehealth service. Clients, however, are expected and responsible to pay for all services rendered. Some, but not all insurances cover telehealth services. It is your responsibility to verify with your insurance company if they will cover telehealth services. If insurance does cover these services, you are still responsible for any insurance deductibles and/or co-payments. If your insurance carrier does not cover telehealth services, you are able to pay out of pocket for such services. Because telehealth is a remote service, we require any payment to be made ahead of time or for a credit card to be kept on file for fees to be charged at the time of service.

CONTACTING US: We make every effort to be available by telephone during normal business hours. The best way to contact us is via the patient portal or by email at info@hometownmhs.com. We make every effort to return calls and email within 24 hours during normal business days. Alternatively, if you are having a medical emergency, contact your primary care physician, 9-1-1, or report to the nearest emergency room.

HOURS OF OPERATION: General office hours are Monday–Friday 9am-5pm. Other times may be available at the discretion of our provider as we try to accommodate all patient schedules. We are closed on major holidays.

BENEFITS, RISKS AND ALTERNATIVES TO TELEHEALTH SERVICES: Benefits: improved access to care, eliminates travel barriers and travel time, no need to cancel appointments due to inclement weather or illness. Risks: loss of interpersonal connection between yourself and your provider, possible technological difficulties or delays in care provision, possible slowed treatment progress, possible lack of coverage by insurance. Alternatives: face-to-face sessions with another provider, treatment at a higher level of care facility, or ending treatment.

TREATMENT PROVIDER CREDENTIALS: Geena Novinsky is a certified nurse practitioner licensed in the state of Massachusetts. She is board certified as a family nurse practitioner and a psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner. Continuing education is an obligation of all providers, and our provider continues to pursue professional development opportunities beyond minimum license requirements.

TERMINATION/DISCHARGE CRITERIA: There are circumstances under which clients may be involuntarily discharged from telehealth services, such as but not limited to failure to respect session times, failure to pay for treatment, failure to respect the boundaries and privacy of our staff, and not following treatment recommendations that can be life threatening. Before Hometown Mental Health Services, PLLC can involuntarily discharge a client, the clinic shall notify the client in writing of the reasons for the discharge, the effective date of the discharge, sources for further treatment, and of the client's right to have the discharge reviewed prior to the effective date of the discharge.

By signing below, I understand that I have read and understand this policy related to Telehealth Practices.

Client Name _____

Client Signature _____

Date _____

Guardian Name (if applicable) _____

Guardian Signature (if applicable) _____

Date _____