

information about e-counselling and telecounselling services

The following are some of the ways that electronic counselling differs from in-person counselling. Feel free to ask your therapist any questions you may have.

COMMUNICATION: One drawback of electronic counselling is the lack of availability to read each other's body language and pick up on subtle changes in the energy in the room. This could lead to unintentional misunderstandings by both the therapist and the client. As a result, it is very important you and your therapist raise issues that might be related to misunderstanding or miscommunications.

COMPUTER: Please protect your privacy by using a computer that is personal and is located in a place that feels comfortable to you and offers you privacy with minimal distractions. It is important to log out completely after every video session.

CRISIS SUPPORT: If you are unable to contact your therapist (during a session) and you are in immediate crisis, you should proceed to the nearest emergency department or call 911 immediately. In the Edmonton area, you may call the Edmonton Distress Line at 780-482-HELP (4357).

IDENTIFICATION: Your therapist may ask you to verify your identity to ensure no one can pretend to be you.

LIMITED SERVICES: In electronic counselling, there may be some services that your therapist cannot provide such as in-person assessments.

SESSIONS ARE NOT RECORDED

TECHNOLOGY CAN FAIL: When the e-connection is slow or suddenly stops working, it can be stressful, as you cannot connect with your therapist. Please attempt to reach your therapist by phone if the technology stops working during your session so the session can be continued by phone. You are also advised to seek technical support for any IT issues since your therapist is not trained in offering IT services.

TIME ZONES: If you are in a different time zone than that of your therapist, your therapist will make appointments based on Alberta's time zone.

WHEN E-COUNSELLING IS NOT A GOOD FIT: Although many issues are suitable for counselling via phone or video, sometimes there are circumstances when in-person sessions are better than e-counselling. Typically, clients will be referred to in-person services when they are acutely suicidal, harbouring serious threats of harm to others, and/or experiencing psychotic episodes.

