March 13, 2020

The Ottawa Institute of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy is taking COVID-19 seriously and is monitoring its development. While we strive to continue to provide the best services we can, the health of our clients and that of our clinicians and staff is of utmost importance to us. For that reason, we ask that you refrain from coming to our clinic under the following circumstances:

(1) You experience flu-like symptoms (fever, cough, and/or breathing difficulties);
(2) You have recently (i.e., less than 14 days) returned from a COVID-19 impacted area;
(3) You have been in close contact with a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19; or
(4) You have been in close contact with a person with acute respiratory illness who has been to a COVID-19 impacted area.

Please notify your therapist as soon as possible if you meet any of these four criteria so your therapist can make alternative arrangements to provide you with services over the phone or by videoconferencing. Empirical evidence supports the use of such delivery means for the provision of health care services (Bashshur et al., 2016; Tutty et al., 2010), so you should be able to continue receiving high-quality services even if you cannot come to the clinic. Such arrangements are also possible for individuals who would prefer to receive services from a remote location until the COVID-19 situation is resolved.

Videoconferencing takes place through a platform called Zoom (www.zoom.us). This platform is similar to FaceTime or Skype, but meets the Canadian regulations set out for information privacy and security by being compliant with the Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA) and the Personal Information and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA). For more information on this please visit https://blog.zoom.us/wordpress/2018/11/12/zoom-serves-canadian-healthcare-pipeda-phipa-compliance/.

Using Zoom is simple. Once you and your therapist agree on a meeting time, your therapist will email you an email invitation. On the day & time of your appointment you click on the link sent by your therapist. This will prompt you to allow your computer to download Zoom, which takes just a few seconds.

In the event where you need to receive services from a remote location (by phone or through Zoom) it is essential that you find a private room where no one else around you can listen in on your conversation so that you can talk openly with your therapist, and, in the event where you are engaged in group therapy, so that other participants’ privacy and confidentiality is protected.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

Sincerely,

____________________________________
Dr. Connie Dalton, C.Psych.
Director
Ottawa Institute of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy