



## Informed Consent for Telehealth Sessions during COVID19

During the Coronavirus outbreak, public health officials are recommending restricted travel and social distancing as an effort to mitigate the effects of the pandemic. If you would like to engage in psychotherapy sessions and psychiatric sessions via telehealth (phone or video conferencing), please read and verbally agree to this informed consent.

**Confidentiality:** No information will be shared without your written permission, with the exceptions provided by legal statute. The same laws protecting the confidentiality of your medical information in the office apply to telehealth sessions, including mandatory reporting and permitted exceptions. The client and provider both agree to not record the telehealth sessions without prior written consent.

Telephone sessions will originate within the office or home of the provider and will be placed either on a landline or a mobile phone. Please note that communications from a mobile phone could be intercepted and a third party could listen in on the conversation. Similarly, video conferencing may use platforms that are not guaranteed to be secure. If you choose to continue with telehealth, please consider this risk to your confidentiality. If you have Caller ID, it will read "Private" or "Blocked" so that anyone else who sees the Caller ID will not be informed where the call is originating from.

When you answer the telephone or video call for your session, you must be in a private area. You will be asked to provide the address of where you will be during the call. Please make every attempt to take the call in a private place so that no one besides the patient and the parent/guardian can overhear your call.

If parent/guardian is not present, they may provide verbal or written Release of Information for an adult who will be on site with the child for the duration of the call (considered an "other authorized adult providing care"). This person must be able to have knowledge of the child's protected health information. Only adult caregivers (e.g. stepparent, grandparent) will be allowed to fill this role at the discretion of the provider.

Children and parent/guardian or other authorized adult providing care are expected to be on the call at the beginning of the session. After the session has started, the provider may decide to only speak to one or the other in the party. The parent/guardian or other authorized adult providing care is expected to be in the home during the entirety of the call.

**Documentation:** The clinical record keeping for these telephone sessions is the same as in-person sessions. Clinical case notes are recorded in your medical chart by date and time of the session.

**Billing:** Billing procedures for the telephone services will remain the same as the procedures for in-person treatment. If you are using insurance for your treatment you will still be responsible for payment of all deductibles and co-pays as defined by your insurance coverage. You will be able to pay your portion of the bill online. Please visit our website at [www.catalpahealth.org](http://www.catalpahealth.org) for information about paying your bill.

**Scheduling:** Telehealth sessions are scheduled ahead of time at regular times. These appointments reserve time specifically for you. Just as with in-person appointments, you are responsible for keeping and paying for all telehealth appointments. In all telehealth sessions, the therapist will initiate the telehealth session, unless other arrangements are made in advance. A window of 15 minutes will remain open after the start time of your session. Your therapist will make two attempts to reach you in the first 15 minutes of your call. Cancellations and missed appointments are handled in the same way as in-person cancellations.

There may be technical difficulties that could occur during the telehealth appointment. The provider will make attempts to reach you should you become disconnected. The provider or the patient may discontinue the appointment if it is felt that the connection is not adequate for the situation. If the call/video is dropped, the provider will make two attempts to reach back out to the patient during the appointment time. If there are safety concerns at the time of the disconnection, the provider may reach out to emergency services.

**Clinical information:** Telephone sessions do not have a face-to-face component; similarly video calls may miss some content of what is happening. There is information from facial expressions, body language, and interactions that is not available during a telephone or video session, so your provider may need to ask you more detailed questions to make a full assessment of your condition.

In cases where there is risk to self or others, the provider will need to make a full assessment to ensure your safety. If the result of the assessment is that it is uncertain that you will be safe, the provider may need to request a wellness check from the local police department or county crisis support. They may also request that you go to the emergency room.

Telephone sessions and/or video conferencing are being provided due to the outbreak of the Coronavirus. As the public health situation improves, sessions will return to normal and you will be seen in the offices of Catalpa Health. These sessions are only available to residents of Wisconsin.

As signatures are unable to be obtained, verbal consent is being obtained prior to or at time of first telehealth visit. Do you consent to treatment via telehealth?