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Telehealth Services Informed Consent

Please read the following document closely to understand how I use Telehealth services.

What is Telehealth?

Telehealth involves the use of interactive audio, video, or other electronic media for the purposes of medical, developmental, or mental health diagnosis and treatment with the provider and patient/client being in separate locations. As a licensed provider of mental health care I use the two HIPPA compliant platforms below for Telehealth:

**Webex at: <https://drgretazuck.my.webex.com/meet/zuckphd> |
Meeting code: 1260511611**

Doxy at: <https://doxy.me/drzuck>

Given the COVID-19 emergency many of the HIPPA compliant Telehealth platforms used by providers have been overloaded and therefore not consistently available for use when providers and patients attempt to log on for scheduled sessions.

Given this problem with service delivery the Department of Health and Human Services has provided an exception to the HIPPA rule. Effective March 19, 2020 providers may seek to communicate with clients through technologies which may not fully comply with the security requirements of HIPAA. This includes platforms such as Apple FaceTime, Google Hangouts video, and/or Skype. Providers may render services using these platforms without risk of penalty for noncompliance with the HIPAA rules during the COVID-19 nationwide public health emergency, as long as clients are in agreement for these platforms to be used and are aware of the privacy risks.

Benefits and Risks of Telehealth

Benefits: Telehealth care allows you to receive services at times or in places where services may not otherwise be available, allows you to receive services during times of national disaster, and allows for services when you are unable to travel outside your home.

Risks: Telehealth services can be impacted by technical failures, may introduce risks to privacy, and may reduce my ability to directly intervene in emergencies. For example, internet connections can cease working or become too unstable to use, malicious actors may have the ability to access private information, and service interruptions may disrupt service at important moments during treatment.

Telehealth Procedures

- Please create a safe and confidential space in your home for Telehealth care. To protect confidentiality when we meet please find a space that is free of distractions and one in which it is difficult or impossible for people outside the space to see or hear your interactions.
- Should we experience a technology failure, please contact me on my cell phone at 919-946-7609 or email at zuckphd@gmail.com. Please also provide an emergency contact and permission for me to communicate with this person about your care should an emergency occur with you while we are meeting.
Name of person and phone number _____.

- 🔒 The laws that protect the confidentiality of your personal information apply to Telehealth sessions the same as in-office sessions. That is, the information released by you during your sessions is generally confidential. Exceptions to confidentiality are stated in my professional disclosure form.
- 🔒 Please do not record video or audio sessions without my consent. Making recordings can easily compromise your privacy and should be done only with great care. I also will not record video or audio sessions.
- 🔒 Please hold our sessions in a quiet, private place in your home when possible, ideally the same location each week for consistency. Please try to reduce or remove any distractions in the environment.
- 🔒 If I am meeting with your child and you are not present, please be sure to have your phone on and with you in case I need to call you right away due to technical problems.
- 🔒 Headphones are useful for both privacy and your child's attention. If possible, please provide them for your child.
- 🔒 On your device---and as much as possible on other computers and devices that share your Internet connection---please avoid high bandwidth activities while we are meeting. This includes large downloads, large uploads, streaming video, cloud backups, and cloud file synchronizations (OneDrive, Dropbox).

Assessing Telehealth's Fit

Service delivery using Telehealth is not a good fit for all clients. We will continuously assess if it is appropriate. If not appropriate we will determine whether it best to cease services or find an alternative.

If you wish to file Teletherapy sessions for insurance reimbursement, please check with your insurance company. Telehealth may or may not be covered, and it may further depend on whether providers are in or out of network.

Given the COVID-19 emergency many insurers are changing their Telehealth policies. Please inquire directly with your insurance company. Beginning March 6, 2020, the presidential administration announced an emergency declaration under the Stafford Act and the National Emergencies Act, broadening CMS support for Telehealth benefits under the 1135 waiver authority and the Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act. Prior to this clinicians could only be paid for Telehealth services in certain circumstances, such as for remote locations. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services has expanded Telehealth coverage during the COVID-19 crisis to enable clients to receive virtual care. Medicare will temporarily pay physicians, nurse practitioners, and licensed mental health providers to provide Telehealth care. Clinicians can bill immediately for dates of service starting March 6 with Telehealth services paid under the Physician Fee Schedule at the same amount as in-person services.

It may take a few sessions to become adjusted to Teletherapy if you are not accustomed to communicating this way. Please talk with me if you find Telehealth technology too difficult or there are other challenges for you. You have the right to terminate Telehealth sessions at any time. Please sign below, acknowledging and agreeing to the above policies and procedures.

Greta Zuck, PhD, LCMHCS, NCC, RPT-S

Date

Client

Date