



TELETHERAPY CONSENT

What is Teletherapy?

“Teletherapy” means, in short, “provision of mental health services with the provider (the therapist) and recipient (client) of services, being in separate locations, and the services being delivered over electronic media.”

Services delivered via Teletherapy rely on a number of electronic, often Internet-based, technological tools. These tools can include videoconferencing software, email, text messaging, specialized mobile apps, and others.

HomeTree provides Teletherapy services using the following tools:

- 🌳 SKYPE
- 🌳 WHATSAPP VIDEO CALL AND MESSAGING
- 🌳 ZOOM

You will need access to (Wi-Fi/ data/ internet) and tools like; a Smartphone, Tablet, Laptop, or computer to engage in Teletherapy.

If you have any questions or concerns about the above tools, please address them directly to your therapist so you can discuss their risks, benefits, and specific application to your treatment.



Receiving services via Teletherapy has the following Benefits:

Receiving services via Teletherapy allows you to:

- 🌳 Receive services when you are unable to travel to the therapist's office due to LOCK DOWN.
- 🌳 Receive services at times or in places where the service may not otherwise be available.
- 🌳 Receive services earlier when in need of an emergency appointment.
- 🌳 The unique characteristics of Teletherapy media may also help some people make improved progress on health goals that may not have been otherwise achievable without Teletherapy.

Receiving services via Teletherapy has the following risks:

🌳 Teletherapy services can be impacted by technical failures:

- 🌳 Internet connections and cloud services could cease working or become too unstable to use.
- 🌳 Computer or smartphone hardware can have sudden failures or run out of power, or local power services can go out.

🌳 Teletherapy services may introduce risks to your privacy:

- 🌳 Cloud-based service personnel, IT assistants, and malicious actors ("hackers") may have the ability to access your private information that is transmitted or stored in the process of Teletherapy-based service delivery.
- 🌳 If your devices do not have adequate security like unique passwords other people may access your device and obtain information from your history.

🌳 Teletherapy services may adversely affect your therapeutic experience because of the distance between you and your therapist at the time of service.

- 🌳 Because your therapist will not be able to be with you in-person, you may experience the lack of in-person contact or presence.
- 🌳 Interruptions may disrupt services at important moments, and your therapist may be unable to reach you quickly or not be able to use therapeutic tools to support you.
- 🌳 Teletherapy services may reduce your therapist's ability to directly intervene in crises or emergencies.



Assessing if Teletherapy will work for You

- ✿ Although it is well validated by research, service delivery via Teletherapy is not a good fit for every person.
- ✿ Your therapist will continuously assess if working via Teletherapy is appropriate for your needs and make alternative recommendations. This will be done in collaboration with you.
- ✿ Your therapist will continuously assess these potential benefits and risks, if it is not appropriate, your therapist will help you find alternative support which may include in hospital treatment.
- ✿ Please talk to your therapist if you find the Teletherapy media so difficult to use that it distracts you from the benefits of therapy, or if the medium causes you trouble focusing on your process, or if there are any other reasons why Teletherapy is not working for you.
- ✿ Raising your questions or concerns will not, by itself, result in termination of services. Bringing your concerns to your therapist is often a part of the process.
- ✿ You also have a right to stop receiving services by Teletherapy at any time without prejudice.
- ✿ When after the LOCKDOWN, HomeTree is able to provide in-person services again, and you are reasonably able to access the in-person services, you will not be prevented from accessing those services if you choose to stop using teletherapy.

Your Security and Privacy

- ✿ Except where otherwise noted, HomeTree employs software and hardware tools that adhere to security best practices and applicable legal standards for the purposes of protecting your privacy and ensuring that records of your health care services are not lost or damaged.
- ✿ As with all things in Teletherapy, however, you also have a role to play in maintaining your security. Please use reasonable security protocols to protect the privacy of your own health care information. For example: when communicating with HomeTree, use devices and service accounts that are protected by unique passwords that only you know.



Your Teletherapy Environment

You will be responsible for creating a safe and confidential space during sessions.

When setting up for your SKYPE/ WHATSAPP session, please ensure that:

- 🌳 You are in a private, sound proof, space with no interruptions.
- 🌳 Your device is sufficiently powered.
- 🌳 You have good WI FI / sufficient data coverage.
- 🌳 You have something to drink and tissues.
- 🌳 **PLEASE be ready at your appointment time in your safe space and all set up, ready to start.**
- 🌳 **Unfortunately due to circumstances out of our control your therapist may be delayed or due to poor connection not able to keep your appointment time. Under such circumstances you will be informed timeously.**

- 🌳 **To ensure Confidentiality please make sure that:**
- 🌳 Your device is securely protected by passwords. Please note that the practice cannot be held responsible for a breach of security on your device.
- 🌳 You have the latest version of SKYPE/ WHATSAPP which offers the best security.
- 🌳 If you are unsure of how to do this, please ask your therapist for assistance.

Recordings

YOU ARE UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES ALLOWED TO RECORD VIDEO OR AUDIO SESSIONS.

Please do not record video or audio sessions without your therapist's consent. If you have any reason at all to want to record sessions, please discuss it with your therapist and get written consent.

Making recordings can quickly and easily compromise your privacy, and will only be done WITH YOUR CONSENT by your therapist for the following reasons:

- 🌳 Referral to other mental health/medical service providers like psychiatrist & neurologist.
- 🌳 Supervision



Our Communication Plan

Our work is done primarily during our appointed sessions, which will generally occur during booked appointments during office hours thus 09h00 – 16h00.

- At our first session, we will develop a plan for backup communications in case of technology failures and a plan for responding to emergencies. If because of technical reasons your session can not be completed, we will reschedule an appointment to continue with your teletherapy session.

HOMETREE TELETHERAPY CELL: 063 333 55 63

**PLEASE NOTE THIS NUMBER IS EXCLUSIVELY USED FOR TELETHERAPY
AND MESSAGING TO CONTINUE TELETHERAPY SESSIONS**

NO BOOKINGS AND OTHER CALLS OR MESSAGES WILL BE ANSWERED

- Please note that all textual messages you exchange with your therapist, e.g. emails and text messages, will become a part of your health record.
- HomeTree may coordinate care with one or more of your other providers like psychiatrist and general practitioner.
- HomeTree will use reasonable care to ensure that those communications are secure and that they safeguard your privacy.

In addition to those plans, HomeTree has the following policies regarding communications, and communication between sessions should be directed to and limited to:

- Confirming or changing appointment times** to Practice Manager, Marietjie Basson.
- The best way to contact HomeTree between sessions is per phone call or message to [083 733 9900](tel:0837339900) or direct email to bookings@hometree.co.za.
- HomeTree will respond to your emails or text messages as soon as possible but definitely within 24 hours. HomeTree may also respond sooner than stated in this policy. That does not mean they will always respond that quickly.
- HomeTree accounting / billing is outsourced to VPROF. Please email Santi Pretorius at santi@vprof.co.za with account queries.



Please note that HomeTree will not respond at all on weekends or holidays.
In case of emergency during those times please consult your general practitioner.

Cancellations 24 hours in advance

Appointments not kept will be fully charged, so please make sure that you cancel your appointment 24 hours in advance per email to bookings@hometree.co.za.

Our Safety and Emergency Plan

As a recipient of Teletherapy-based services, you will need to participate in ensuring your safety during mental health crises, medical emergencies, and sessions that you have with your therapist.

Your therapist will also develop with you a plan for what to do during emergencies, and a plan for how to keep your space safe during sessions. It is important that you engage with HomeTree in the creation of these plans and that you follow them when you need to.

HomeTree will require you to designate an emergency contact. You will need to provide permission for HomeTree to communicate with this person about your care during emergencies. Please provide the following detail:

EMERGENCY CONTACT

Name of person:
Relationship:
Contact no:
Alternative No:
Name of General Practitioner:
Tel No of General Practitioner:
Name of psychiatrist:
Contact Tel No of psychiatrist:



TELETHERAPY CONSENT

I, _____ (Name & Surname),

ID: _____ herewith declare that:

1. I have carefully read and fully understand the conditions set out in this consent form.
2. I will ensure that my Teletherapy environment is set up according to specifications in this document.
3. I commit to the communication plan set out in this document.

I herewith give written consent to HomeTree Therapy Centre to:

1. Provide me with teletherapy services via SKYPE _____ (your SKYPE address)
/ WHATSAPP VIDEO CALL _____ (your cell no).
2. Contact my EMERGENCY CONTACT in circumstances deemed to be an emergency according to his/her professional judgment.

SIGNED AT _____ ON THIS THE ____ DAY OF _____ 2020.

FULL NAMES & SURNAME: _____

SIGNATURE _____

