



## **PSYCHOTHERAPY SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

Your privacy is of foremost concern and the use of technology in mental health is extremely complicated and creates a potential threat to your privacy. Due to the increased use of technology, and as recommended by the National Association of Social Workers, I am providing a social media policy, in writing, in order to clarify professional boundaries within the client/therapist relationship as it relates to technology. With the exception of OhMD, this is not a change in policy, but is being provided in written versus verbal form. This policy is in addition to, and does not replace or amend, section 20 of the Notice to Clients and Consent to Treatment Agreement, which speaks to communication with 3<sup>rd</sup> party payers and email.

**Given that electronic communication is complicated, constantly changing, and not completely secure or confidential, it is my recommendation that you only contact me via my office phone line or the U.S. postal service. If you attempt to send me treatment related information through any other means than you are doing so at your own risk and I will not respond.**

### **Friending, Endorsing & Following on Social Networks (e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, etc.)**

My practice does not have a professional Facebook page as I believe the risks to client privacy outweigh marketing needs. I do not accept friending, endorsing, or following requests from current or former clients from any social networking sites. Please do not attempt to request friending, endorsing or following requests as it is a potential risk to your privacy that will not be received. You will never receive a friending, endorsing, or following request from me. In the case that an indirect connection through social media occurs, I will never purposefully respond to a current or former client post, comment, like, etc.

### **Email**

My business email exists for administrative, not clinical purposes. I do not email with current or former clients as it is not secure or confidential. I will not open or respond to any email sent to me by a current or former client. The best way to share information with me is during your session. Sometimes it is necessary for me to send or receive information in a timely manner so I am happy to coordinate a time for drop offs, signatures, etc. outside of a scheduled appointment time.

### **Use of Search Engines**

It is not my general practice to use search engines to search client information. Exceptions would be in the rare case of a potentially life threatening crisis to protect someone who may be at risk, or through protected billing sites for billing purposes.

### **WIFI**

The WIFI in my office is secure and not available to the public or guests. While I recognize that this may be an inconvenience, it is an attempt to maintain client privacy.

### **Location-Based Services**

Please be advised that any GPS service on your mobile phone is a potential breach of privacy as your location i.e. the office location is being tracked.

### **Business Review Sites**

While business review sites can be extremely helpful in many industries, such as finding a restaurant while traveling, they are a potential threat to privacy in psychotherapy. Business review sites are often set up without permission and any rating site with myself or my practice has been posted without consent.

### **Partners in Family Wellness, PLLC Website**

The practice does maintain a website as an information source for clients and potential clients. I do not utilize the website for communication purposes.

### **SMS (short message services) Texting**

As previously mentioned, my office phone is the best way to communicate with me outside of our scheduled meeting time. While I strongly discourage the use of texting, I am finding that many clients use texting as their only source of communication.

If you choose to text for the sole purpose of scheduling appointments, please be aware that while I take every precaution to protect your privacy, texting is not completely secure and poses a potential risk to your privacy. Please be advised:

- **Never use OhMD as a means to communicate during an emergency- Please see section 17, Contacting Your Therapist/Emergency Coverage of the Notice to Clients and Consent to Treatment Agreement.**
- **Never send treatment related information to me via text, it is not protected.**
- **Misuse of OhMD may result in the termination of OhMD as a means of coordinating appointments, and you may terminate use at any time.**

Given the above information, if you would still like to utilize texting for the sole purpose managing appointments, please utilize the free, secure, HIPPA compliant app OhMD. Please be aware that even downloading an app potentially exposes you to a violation of privacy, utilizing this app is at your own risk, and I have no way of ensuring that OhMD, claims are valid.

You can download OhMD from your app store, and search for me as a provider. A request from you via OhMD will be considered consent to engage in this form of communication. For more information to make an informed decision go to *ohmd.com*.

### **Telehealth**

If you wish to participate in psychotherapy appoints via telehealth, please see our **Telehealth Electronic Informed Consent**.

**Please be advised this policy may be updated at any time in response to changes in the use of technology. All changes will be in writing and you will be provided with and updated copy.**