

Diversified Lifestyle Services

Helping Others Reach Their Full Potential

Telehealth Counseling Policy

Different methods of providing counseling services are evolving all the time. At Diversified Lifestyle Services (DLS) we will utilize those means ethically and therapeutically. Technology-assisted distance counseling for individuals, couples, and groups involve the use of the telephone or the computer to enable Clinicians and clients to communicate at a distance when circumstances make this approach necessary or convenient. Telehealth counseling involves synchronous distance interaction among Clinicians and clients using one-to-one or conferencing features of the telephone to communicate or what is seen and heard via video to communicate. Telehealth via video is conducted within our secure HIPAA compliant electronic health record (EHR) system, Theranest.

In order to utilize technology for counseling, clients must (adapted from the NBCC code of ethics for technology-based counseling):

1. Be an established client with intake paperwork, payment information, and an emergency contact/face sheet on file with DLS.
2. Have a release of information for an emergency contact for the location from which the client will be calling.
3. Assume responsibility for securing a location to speak with the Clinician that is confidential.
4. Understand when communicating via technology, confidentiality cannot always be guaranteed. By engaging in counseling via technology, clients acknowledge that risk and hold DLS harmless.
5. Be domiciled (primary residence) in the state of Maryland (MD) or District of Columbia (DC) or be located on a US military base if outside of those jurisdictions to receive counseling services from DLS Clinicians. Some Clinicians at DLS are licensed to practice in the state of MD and DC.
6. Agree to an alternate form of communication in case technology fails during the counseling session. If counseling cannot be resumed, the client will still be charged for the session. If technical issues occur less than 15 minutes into a counseling session and communication cannot be reestablished, client can reschedule at no charge for the remainder of the missed session.

In addition:

1. Remember when visual cues (video) are unavailable, misunderstandings can occur.
2. Your technology-based sessions are not recorded or preserved in any way by DLS. Your Clinician will take notes (as directed by law).

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