**Phone/Zoom-Based Telehealth Informed Consent**

**(For the rest of Spring Quarter)**

* **Telehealth Counseling Credentials:** As a student-counselor providing counseling services in an educational setting, your counselor will not possess any credentials relative to Telehealth Counseling (counseling via Phone/Zoom); however, your counselor has undergone telehealth training by the WWU faculty and will be receiving on-going, virtual clinical supervision.
* **Security and Physical Location of Practice:** Our student-counselors are working with you either on the phone from a private location or via Zoom from a private location and using an encrypted wifi network. Only the student counselor, their supervisor, and other students in practicum will be present during the meeting.
* **Contact Information:** If the phone/Zoom call is dropped for some reason, you should:
  1. Wait 15 minutes and see if your counselor calls you
  2. If the counselor does not call you back within 15 minutes, they will attempt to contact you again at the next scheduled meeting time (the following week’s session).
  3. You may also call the WWU Counseling Training Clinic front desk and leave a message until notified otherwise at 360-650-3184.
* **Potential Risks:** As with all types of counseling, there are both potential risks, as well as, benefits. Some potential risks include: Cannot 100% guarantee confidentiality by phone; student-counselors have a more difficult time using non-verbal cues to enhance client care; some interventions will need to be adapted for use over the phone/Zoom; and telehealth services are not developmentally, culturally, and clinically appropriate for all clients.
* **Potential Benefits:** Some potential benefits of counseling via telephone include: greater continuity of care during what would otherwise be an interruption of service; enhanced access to your counselor during this ongoing health crisis; and telehealth services may be an effective substitute for face-to-face counseling for some clients’ needs.
* **Addressing Communication Difference in Telephone Counseling:** Your student-counselor will work with their supervisor to educate you on how to prevent and address potential misunderstandings arising from the lack of visual cues. For example, your student-counselor might suggest and affirm that any perceived misunderstandings from either the student-counselor or the client stemming from the use of phones be discussed openly and transparently as they arise, before moving on with a counseling session.
* **Record Keeping:** Your student-counselor will be using HIPAA-compliant SharePoint based record keeping that was approved by WWU’s Internal Compliance Office for private and secure record keeping from home.
* **Possibility of Technology Failure and Alternate Methods of Service Delivery:** Your student-counselor will work with you to develop procedures for what would happen in the event that there is a technology failure that prevents an effective internet or telephone connection with your counselor. In most cases where phone services are not possible due to technology failure, a referral to an in-person community-based (i.e., not affiliated with Western Washington University) counselor will be provided.
* **Emergency Procedures:** Your student-counselor will work in conjunction with you and their clinical supervisor to develop emergency procedures in the event of a crisis, which at a minimum will include: Documenting your physical address and a name and number for an emergency contact.
* **Effectiveness of Services:** When telehealth counseling services are deemed ineffective by the student counselor, client, or the clinical supervisor, you will receive a referral for face-to-face counseling with a counselor in the community (unaffiliated with WWU) or resume in person services when the restrictions are lifted.
* **Client Rights:** For your convenience, this informed consent document, as well as, the American Counseling Association’s (2014) Code of Ethics may be accessed by going to: <https://wp.wwu.edu/trainingclinic/>..
* **Time Zone Differences**: We are unable to work with clients that are out of State via telehealth because each State has different laws governing telehealth services. This said, you will only be allowed to work with your counselor by phone/Zoom when you are currently in the State of Washington.
* **Cultural and/or Language Differences:** Your counselor will work with you to assess any accommodations based on cultural or language-differences, such as, providing step-by-step instructions for operating your phone and how to make contact with your counselor.
* **Social Media Policy and Professional Boundaries in Telehealth Counseling:** While your student-counselor will be working with you via phone for the foreseeable future, phone-based contacts will not extend outside of phone contact during designated session-times. It is unethical for student-counselors to extend their professional boundaries by doing things such as adding clients on social media; texting or emailing clients; other forms of distance-interaction unrelated to counseling services.

Finally, say out loud to your client:

*“As a reminder, if the phone call is dropped for some reason, you should wait 15 minutes see if your counselor calls you back. Your counselor will make every attempt to be back in touch with you for the next 15 minutes but if they are unable to make contact, they will attempt to make contact again at the time of your next regularly scheduled session. Finally, I will send you a copy of this telehealth informed consent once the restrictions are lifted.”*