




Mental Health Provided via Telehealth Platforms



Presentation provided for SJFC By

Tempestt Black MS, RN, PMHNP-BC
and
Brittany Aponte, LMHC, LPC



Overview and Objectives

- What is Telehealth?
 - Pandemic Implications
 - Privacy, Confidentiality and Security
 - Health Rules and Policies
 - Specific Knowledge and Training
 - Communication Difficulties
 - Technology Difficulties
 - Handling Emergency Situations
 - Higher Levels of Care
 - Pros and Cons of Telehealth
 - Questions
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What is Telehealth?

- Video sessions and/or online messages
- Allows sessions from anywhere
- Both client and counselor must have a stable internet connection
- All services can be provided - medication management, individual, group, family, couple, etc.

Pandemic Implications

- Many agencies began initiating telehealth services for the first time
- Policies continued to be updated as time moves forward
- NYS Waivers
- Insurance
- Now more infrastructure for this care
- More access to all, including medically confined

Privacy, Confidentiality and Security

- Always ensure your computer is in a secure location and the client joins from a private setting
- Provider must use headphones to ensure conversations stay private
- Provider must check ID's and verify the person they are meeting matches the uploaded ID
- When communicating de-identify as much as possible
- No paper records used, two factor identification is used whenever possible
- A hotline is provided to clients and staff to report unethical and illegal behavior
- A business affiliate contract is used to create hipaa compliant vendors and software
- Automatic logouts after a certain amount of time
- Mandated disclosure guideline: Authorization for release of protected health information. Authorization for release of psychotherapy note.

Health Rules and Policies

PMHNP

- Professional Practice Standards and Regulations in accordance to State Board of Nursing
- Collaborative and Supervised practice for NP's with less than 3600 hours of experience

LMHC

- NYS says both counselor and client must be in the state
- All the same in-person regulations apply (i.e. HIPPA)
- Telehealth consent should be a separate document
- When in doubt, always review the state website

Specific Knowledge and Training

PMHNP

- Health Policy, Scope of Practice, rules of engagement. (Ryan Haight act)
- Privacy rules regarding electronic platforms (When are ROI's actually required by law?)
- Get comfortable with seeking support from others

LMHC

- Telehealth specific CEUs are available and recommended if you are not starting with an agency
- Be sure your platform is HIPPA compliant
- Increase knowledge of online resources (i.e. virtual sand tray)

Communication Difficulties

- Phone vs. email vs. messaging
- Setting boundaries
- Scheduling
- Parent/Family Involvement
- No shows/ Frequent cancels
- Provider to Provider
 - Internal coverage and communication
 - Slack Channel/Other IM platforms

Technology Difficulties

1. Power/internet/tech failure
 - a. Make sure client has access to a phone
 2. Video platform dysfunction
 - a. Platform updates
 - b. Platform only works with certain browsers
 3. High definition Internet access is key
 - a. Choppy video
 - b. Disrupted audio
 4. Client is not familiar with technology used
 - a. Client late to session or absent from session
 - b. Client can be seen but not heard
 - c. Client can be heard but not seen
 5. Sharing education materials
 - a. After visit summaries
 - b. Screen share
 - c. Understanding phone apps
- A. Hardware
 - a. PC(Desktop or laptop) or Macbook, current generation, not older than 3 year
 - b. Secondary monitor, built in microphone or headset
 - c. Video camera if not built in USB camera, HD is preferred
 - B. Software
 - a. Microsoft Windows 10 antivirus, or other major brand
 - b. Chrome Web browser
 - c. Mac OS Catalina or newer, Windows 10 or 11

Higher Levels of Care

- When to treat vs. When to refer out
 - Active substance abuse
 - Recent psychiatric hospitalization
 - Schizophrenia or active psychosis
 - Borderline Personality
- Possible with Strict Boundaries
 - IOP
 - Day Treatment
 - PHP
- Not Possible
 - Residential Treatment
 - Inpatient

Handling Emergency Situations

- All clients should have been previously explained constraints and resources
 - When and who should they reach out to if they are unsafe?
- Always know your clients' location during a session so emergency services can be accurately sent
- Staying on the call when necessary for as long as necessary
- Emergency Contact(s)
- The importance of Clinical Judgement

Pros and Cons of the Telehealth Platform

Pros

- Accessibility
- Reducing Stigma
- Cost savings and convenience

Cons

- Type of service (some services are not as accessible via telehealth)
- Safety
- Engagement
- Understanding of service

Questions?

Contact Information

Tempestt Black MS, RN, PMHNP-BC

tblacknp@joinlavender.com

Brittany Aponte, LMHC, LPC

brittany@brittanyapontelpc.com

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/brittany-aponte-lpc-lmhc-909a86116/>