



## **In-Person Therapy Policy**

### **Family And Children's Services Covid-19 Response Measures and Practices**

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Ontario Government's recent announcement regarding certain medical services resuming (including in person counselling) with the implementation of required infection and prevention measures, Family and Children's Services Sexual Abuse Treatment Program has made significant adjustments to our service delivery and procedures. These measures are designed to ensure compliance with Public Health and other government directives to ensure the safety of both our clients and staff.

Wherever possible, our practice will endeavor to provide services in a safe and timely manner. There will be a gradual return to in person counselling sessions beginning June 22, 2020 and will include a limit of 1 staff practicing in the office at any given time. Both clients and staff will have the opportunity to choose the modality of service (e.g. in-person or tele-therapy service) they feel the most safe and comfortable with given their own personal and unique circumstances. Should any client or family continue to choose to suspend service at this time, their counselling spots will be held by our practice's waitlist.

#### **Virtual Service provision:**

Where services are delivered remotely by video, it will be by doxy.me that has end-to-end encryption features, ensuring privacy and adhering to PHIPA.

#### **Direct Service provision:**

Effective June 22, 2020, direct services may be provided, on a case by case basis, following compliance with these measures by both staff and clients:

- Client appointments will be scheduled to limit the number of clients and staff in the office at one given time. There will be a maximum of 1 staff and 2 clients (or in appropriate circumstances 1 client and their designated caregiver).
- Additional family members and/or support persons are discouraged from attending and will be asked to wait outside the office for the duration of the therapy session
- Designated waiting areas will be maintained to be a minimum physical distance of two meters (note that household contacts are not required to separate. Clients will be asked



to strongly consider an alternative to waiting in the office, such as waiting in their vehicles and text messaging or calling their respective therapist just prior to their session appointment time.

- Non-essential items such as magazines, toys, books, etc. will be removed from the waiting areas until the risk of transmission dissipates
- Hand sanitizer dispensing machines will be available at the front entry for immediate use upon entering. Clients will be asked to bring and wear a personal protective face mask upon entering the office space.
- If clients do not have their own, they will be provided one at the time of session and will be asked to return it at the end of the session into a plastic lined garbage disposal can, to be sanitized and washed in hot water prior to its next use. Staff will also be wearing a protective personal face mask.
- Clients and staff will be asked to thoroughly wash their hands prior to, and at the end of each session, using warm water and soap (washing for at least 20 seconds) and drying with the provided paper towels and once finished, discarding the paper towel in the designated garbage cans. Clients and staff are also asked to wash their hands after each and every use of the washroom facilities
- Clients and staff are asked to follow respiratory etiquette at all times, including coughing and sneezing into their arms even when wearing protective face masks.
- Clients will be asked at time of booking and at the time of session if they have been experiencing symptoms of illness consistent with COVID-19; anyone who has symptoms will be offered a remote session or will be scheduled for a later time. We ask that anyone who has been directed to self isolate due to possible exposure to someone who has or may have contracted COVID -19 or as a result of traveling outside the province of Ontario refrain from attending in person sessions for a period of 14 days or longer.
- Clients and staff will be [screened](#) during entry to the building prior to each and every in-person therapy sessions.

#### **During Appointments:**

- Therapy rooms will be furnished to ensure physical distancing between staff and clients.
- All materials (e.g.: miniatures, figurines) used in session will be removed and placed in a



- designated disinfectant bucket, and will be thoroughly sanitized at the end of each business day. Any materials that cannot be sanitized (e.g., clay) will be temporarily removed until the risk of transmitting COVID-19 is reduced. EMDR equipment will be wiped down with disinfectant wipes after each use. All hard surfaces (e.g. tables, doorknobs) in the therapy rooms will be wiped down with a designated sanitizer spray at the end of each session.

**After Appointments:**

- Waiting areas and other high-touch surfaces and objects (e.g. seating areas, doors, handrails, filing cabinets) will be cleaned and disinfected at regular intervals with a designated sanitizer spray

I confirm that I have read and understand the above Covid 19 Response policy. Further, I understand that I can ask for clarification of any of these practices at any time.



**COVID -19 Screening Questions:**

**Q1:** Do you have a fever, new onset of cough, worsening chronic cough, shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing?

**Q2:** Do you have any of the following symptoms: sore throat, difficulty swallowing, unexplained runny nose/sneezing or nasal congestion, decrease or loss of sense of smell, chills, unusual or long lasting headaches, unexplained fatigue/malaise, diarrhea, abdominal pain, or nausea/vomiting, pink eye?

**Q3:** Do you yourself have a confirmed case of COVID-19 or have you had close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19?

**Q4:** Have you had close contact with anyone who is sick with a new cough, fever or difficulty breathing or who has travelled outside of Canada in the past 14 days?

**Q5:** Have you travelled outside of Canada in the last 14 days?

**\*A close contact is defined as less than 2M away in the same room for more than 15 minutes (without appropriate PPE) or living in the same home**

Should staff or clients respond YES to any of these symptoms, a direct service session will not take place. In such instances, every effort will be made to provide support via video session if possible.

Should a client be experiencing crisis requiring immediate direct support, we recommend calling the Ontario Telehealth (1-866-797-0000), 911, or accessing help from the Hospital Emergency service closest to client's home.

I have read the above Covid 19 Screening questions and agree to answer them each and every time I attend an in-person session at Family and Children's Services of the Waterloo Region.



I understand that I can choose to attend virtual therapy session, at any time. I also understand that my assigned clinician may choose to only provide virtual therapy. I have been advised that I can request re-assignment to another therapist with Family and Children's Services of Waterloo Region, who offers in-person therapy, when permitted by government public health guidelines.

While I understand that Family and Children's Services of the Waterloo Region will strictly adhere to the above policies to reduce the risk of clients or staff contracting Covid 19, I accept risk inherent to in-person sessions and will remove Family and Children's Services of the Waterloo Region from any and all liability should I, or my children, be exposed to or contract Covid 19 as a result of my attending in-person therapy sessions.

I understand the need and consent to Family a Children's Services of the Waterloo Region providing my name and contact information to the Public Health Department and the dates of my contacts at the practice should it be confirmed that I, or another person, at Family and Children's Services of the Waterloo Region has contracted Covid-19. I understand that this information will be provided solely for contact tracing purposes and no information about the nature of my counselling with Family and Children's Services of the Waterloo Region will be provided.

I have read and signed this form on today's date. (YYYY-MM-DD)