

Therapy Information and Disclosure Statement

This document contains important information about the psychological services and business policies. Please read it carefully and make note of any questions you might have, so it can be discussed with your therapist. The information contained in this letter is summarized in the consent form that you will be asked to sign prior to engaging our services. Signing the consent represents a formal agreement.

Psychological Services:

Psychological therapy varies depending on the personalities of the therapist and patient, and the particular problems being brought forward. Psychologists may draw from a variety of therapeutic modalities, techniques, and approaches to best serve your particular needs. Effective therapy involves active client effort, which requires dynamic participation in the session and working on things at home.

Psychotherapy has many benefits, as well as potential risks. Since therapy often involves discussing unpleasant aspects of your life, you may experience uncomfortable feelings, such as sadness, guilt, anger, frustration, and helplessness. Some of these feelings may continue after the session. You may also experience the resurfacing of memories or experiences, which can cause disturbance. The psychologist will work with you to ensure your emotional safety and will respect your limits. As difficult as the process can be, the benefits of therapy are great and include personal growth, improved relationships, reduced anxiety & stress, improvement in functioning and wellbeing, and at times, solutions to specific problems.

Therapy involves a large commitment of time, money, and energy. As well, the therapeutic relationship is a significant factor in healing and growth. With these factors in mind, it is imperative that you feel comfortable working with your psychologist and that you trust in their abilities. If you have any questions about procedures, please bring these questions forward so that your psychologist can work with you to either better understand the methods or to adjust the approach to better fit your needs. If doubt in your psychologist persists, we will be happy to refer you to another psychologist.

Treatment Information:

The therapeutic session is 50 minutes long and is only part of what comprises the 'clinical hour'. In addition to maintaining clinical notes, which can be time consuming, the therapist also researches and prepares for every session to ensure the quality of the treatment being received. As well, therapists participate in correspondence, which is also considered part of the clinical work.

While not always possible, the preference is to meet weekly. This is particularly helpful in the early stages of therapy, as it allows for momentum to build. As therapy progresses, it is common for clients transition into bi-weekly or monthly treatment.

The course of therapy varies for everyone. Generally speaking, the first two sessions are used for evaluation of needs and relationship building purposes. By the end of the evaluation stage, the psychologist will be able to offer more specific information about the treatment plan and course of treatment.

There are several ways to approach treatment. Short-term therapy (4-10 sessions) is solution-focused and is designed to address one specific problem. This may be beneficial for clients with time/financial restrictions; however, because our challenges are often interrelated, it can be hard to work on them in isolation of each other. As such, short-term therapy may be less effective overall.

It may be helpful to think of your mental health like a patch of grass. If you mow over the weeds, your lawn will temporarily look nice. However, if the roots are still there, the weeds will continue to grow back. Longer-term therapy (10-30 sessions) provides opportunity for broader healing and growth, by attending to our problems from different angles and effectively pulling the weed out from the root. Just as roots have branches and offshoots, so do your challenges. As such, you may find yourself spending time talking about things that seem unrelated to your purpose of seeking treatment, but be assured it is relevant.

Appointments:

The therapists at Transcend do their best to accommodate the needs of their clients. Given their specializations, they are very busy and have limited availability of appointments. When engaging our services, we expect our clients to make a reasonable commitment to treatment.

Due to the high demand for our services, it is particularly important that clients attend their scheduled appointments. If you are unable to attend an appointment we require a minimum of 24 hours notice, which permits us to offer the appointment time to a client on our waitlist.

Missed appointments or late cancellations (within 24 hours) are billed at the usual rate and clients are responsible to provide full payment prior to rescheduling.

We can appreciate that life can be unpredictable and that there are many reasons why people are unable to provide a full 24 hours notice to cancel an appointment. If this is the case, please call as soon as possible and keep in mind that rescheduling may involve a delay of several weeks. Also, please note that if you acquire two missed appointments (including late cancellations), therapy will be terminated. As well, if you arrive more than 20 minutes late for an appointment, you may not be seen for the remainder of the hour and you may be asked to reschedule.

These policies ensure that the time of the psychologist and other clients is respected.

Fee Schedule:

Transcend Psychological applies the Psychologists Association of Alberta's recommended rate of \$190/clinical hour. Fees for assessments are \$220 per hour, which goes towards the cost of testing materials and the time required for scoring, interpretation of results, and report preparation.

Reduced rates or payment plans are available for students, recent graduates, and individuals that demonstrate significant financial need.

Fees are paid prior to the session, unless otherwise agreed upon. Payments can be made via cheque, Visa, Mastercard, debit, email money transfer, or cash. Clinical assessments are paid for in two parts, half prior to initiating the assessment and the remaining balance upon receipt of the report. Additional services for all clients, such as letter writing, case consultation, preparation of treatment summaries, and extended phone calls/emails (over 15 minutes), are prorated at the usual rate or \$190/clinical hour.

In the event of an overdue account (over 60 days) where arrangements have not been agreed upon, we reserve the option of using legal means to secure payment. This may involve hiring a collection agency or going through small claims court. If legal action is necessary, it's costs will be included in the claim. In most legal stations, the only information released regarding the patient's treatment is the clients name, the nature of the services provided, and the amount due. It is our legal right to disclose this information in the event that we need to collect overdue payment.

Insurance Reimbursement:

Most health insurance or benefit programs offer coverage for mental health treatment. Unfortunately, we are not in a position to access direct billing for insurance companies, meaning that you will be initially responsible for full payment of fees. We are happy to fill our forms and provide assistance in helping you access your benefits. We encourage you to read carefully your benefit plan and if necessary, call your insurance provider to clarify questions about coverage. **Clients are responsible for all fees not covered by their benefit or insurance plans. This includes charges for missed appointments.**

Coverage is often limited to short-term treatment approaches designed to work out specific problems that interfere with a person's functioning. While a lot can be accomplished in short-term therapy, some clients feel that they need more services after benefit coverage ends. It is important to remember that clients have the right to pay for services and continue treatment.

You should also be aware that some programs, including WCB, Veterans Affairs, and many insurance plans, require a clinical diagnosis. At times, these plans will request additional clinical information, such as treatment plans or summaries, or copies of the entire file (in rare cases). If requested, you will be provided with a copy of any report that is submitted. Please note, that this information will become a part of the insurance company file.

Professional Records:

The laws and standards governing the profession require that psychologists keep treatment records. The information contained within client files includes all paperwork completed by the client, as well as case notes. Case notes vary for each therapist, but generally include basic information about what has been discussed during each session and may include treatment planning and conceptualization notes. By law, the client files are required to be maintained for a minimum of ten years, at which time they are destroyed. Files are stored in a secure and confidential manner.

As a client, you are entitled to receive a copy or a summary of your records. It is recommended that these summaries be reviewed with the psychologist, to avoid misinterpretation. Patients will be charged an appropriate fee for any professional time spent in responding to information requests.

Confidentiality:

In general, law protects the privacy of all communications between a patient and a therapist, and therefore information about your work will only be released with your written permission. There are three possible exceptions:

- If there is reason to believe that you are a harm or risk to yourself or others (suicidal or homicidal), the psychologist is required to take protective action.
- If there is suspicion or report of ongoing abuse or neglect to a child or dependent adult, the psychologist is required to report the concern.
- If a court of law subpoenas the content of your file or calls for testimony in court.

With regards to the potential limits to confidentiality, please note that these situations have rarely occurred in this practice, and be assured that in the event confidentiality needs to be breached, every effort will be made to discuss it with you prior to taking any action. If action is required, in the case of risk of harm to self or others, action may include calling the police or emergency response teams or notifying personal supports and family. In most legal proceedings, the client has the right to prevent a psychologist from providing information about treatment.

It is important to note that if a psychologist seeks consultation with another professional, every effort is made to avoid revealing identifying information about the client. As well, the consultant

is legally bound to keep information confidential. If you don't object, these consultations may be done without your knowledge, unless it is important for the clinical work.

Contact:

Your psychologist may not be immediately available by telephone. You are welcome to leave a message on the confidential voicemail and every effort will be made to return your call as soon as possible. You are also welcome to send an email, but please note that information sent electronically is not perfectly secure. Please note that communication on evenings and weekends will be limited. If your psychologist will be away for an extended time, you will be provided with an alternate contact.

If you are difficult to reach, please provide information of when you will be available or if you are comfortable, provide your email address. Please note that emails are not to be intended for therapeutic purposes.

If it is an emergency, please contact your family physician or the nearest emergency room and ask for the psychologist or psychiatrist on call. Alternatively, please contact 211 or 780-482-HELP (4357) for immediate support.

Termination of Treatment:

Ideally, therapy ends when it is agreed that treatment goals have been achieved, however, if at any point the psychologist determines that they are not equipped to continue treatment, they will terminate therapy. Several reasons this may be the case is if the area of need is outside the psychologist's area of competence or if it is reasonably clear that you are not receiving benefit. Other situations may include: regularly becoming enraged or threatening during sessions, bringing a weapon onto the premises, or arriving under the influence of a substance.

As a client, you have the right to stop treatment at any time. If you make this choice, you will be provided with referrals to other therapists and will be asked to attend a final 'termination' session.

Please feel free to bring forward any questions or concerns about the information contained within this document. Your psychologist will be happy to discuss them with you. You are also invited to ask your therapist information about their education, training, and experience as a clinician.