

## **COMMUNICATION & SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

The rapid growth of social and new media technologies has made communication faster and easier than ever before. These same technologies, however, raise questions and concerns regarding communication behaviors while using these tools. These concerns include but are not limited to risks blurring the boundaries between professional and personal relationships. The following guidelines seek to provide the policy of Comprehensive Counseling Services regarding communication and the use of social media between our providers and clients.

### **Internet Reviews & Google**

It is our clinic policy to not search or do research of our clients on Google or other internet search engines. There may be occasions where a client requests their individual provider to look up something related to their life or experience on the internet. We recommend that you discuss such requests with your individual provider.

Information about each of the providers at Comprehensive Counseling Services is available on the clinic website at [www.compcounselingservices.com](http://www.compcounselingservices.com) . In order to avoid blurring the boundaries between professional and social relationships, our preference is that you ask your provider directly about any questions you have about him or her. We ask clients to respect the privacy of their individual provider. If you choose to look up or “google” a provider at the clinic, please keep in mind that all information on the internet is not necessarily true or accurate. Rating and review sites may contain information that is biased or questionable. Please ask your individual provider about any concerns or information that you find troubling if discovered on the internet. We cannot respond to information about us unless you ask.

### **Social Networking Sites**

Many people today have accounts on social networking sites such as Facebook or LinkedIn. Some of our providers may have accounts on these social networking sites. It is our policy to not accept contact or “friend” requests from clients on these social networking sites in order to maintain boundaries within the therapeutic relationship and avoid compromising the mutual privacy of our clients and providers.

## *Comprehensive Counseling Services*

### **Phone Calls, Email & Text Messaging**

Outside of appointments in the office, our clinic policy is to generally communicate with clients by US mail, fax or telephone. On a case by case basis, a provider may accept information via email from a client. Please know that information exchanged over the internet may be more at risk of no longer being private or confidential. Such exchanges of information should be discussed with the provider prior to sending them. If you need to communicate with your provider or the office staff, we recommend doing so by telephone. Please do not use email or text messaging including blogs or Twitter to communicate with your provider or the clinic staff. If you must contact your provider or the clinic staff to arrange or modify an appointment, please use the clinic phone number and leave a voicemail message if someone is not immediately available.

Our outgoing voicemail lists an after-hours emergency phone number to contact in case you need to contact your provider or someone in the clinic after hours. We request that you only use this phone number in emergency situations.

### **Recording Conversations**

We respect that all discussions with our clients are private. As described in our Patient Rights and Responsibilities information, we will not record any conversations with our clients unless first obtaining written consent. We also expect our clients to not record conversations they have with providers or clinic staff in treatment sessions or by phone unless obtaining consent from your individual provider or clinic staff first.

### **Telephone & Internet Counseling Services**

Some clients request treatment services via the internet (ie, skype or Facetime) or telephone in addition to or in lieu of face to face services in the office.

Internet and telephone counseling services are not typically available except under rare and special circumstances. In addition, internet and telephone services are not billable to insurance companies and must be paid by the client. If you have questions about internet or telephone counseling services, please consult your individual provider or the Clinic Director.

**Compliance with this policy helps insure a healthy therapeutic relationship between client and provider. Non-compliance with this policy may adversely affect the treatment relationship including possible discharge from treatment.**