

March 16, 2020

Dear OCFI clients,

The current public health situation has resulted in uncertainty and stress for many of us. The Ottawa Couple and Family Institute is committed to doing its part to slow the spread of COVID-19, while upholding the health and safety of our team members, our clients, and the community at large.

Ottawa Public Health and the Chief Medical Officer are recommending that we limit social contact in order to flatten the curve and take responsible steps to manage the spread of the virus. In line with the current social distancing advisory issued by Ottawa Public Health, **we have transitioned all in-person sessions to telehealth format (i.e., video conferencing and telephone sessions) for the foreseeable future.** We will continue to offer services remotely until the COVID-19 situation is resolved and the advisories are lifted, at which point we will re-evaluate and keep you promptly informed.

Your therapist will be in touch with you regarding arrangements for the transition to telehealth services. This will include an informed consent Telehealth form sent by email which will also provide additional information about the process.

Videoconferencing takes place through a platform called Zoom ([www.zoom.us](http://www.zoom.us)). This platform is similar to Skype or FaceTime, and also conforms to the Canadian regulations set out in PHIPA (Personal Health Information Protection Act) and PIPEDA (Personal Information and Electronic Documents Act).

Using Zoom is straight forward. Once you and your therapist schedule an appointment, your therapist will email you an invitation. On the date and time of your appointment, rather than presenting to the clinic, you will simply click on the link sent to you by your therapist. This will prompt you to allow your computer, tablet, or mobile phone to download Zoom, which is free of charge and takes just a few seconds.

To ensure privacy, we ask that you find a private room in which you can talk openly with your therapist during the videoconferencing or phone conversation so that your privacy and confidentiality is protected. We also encourage you to check with your insurance provider regarding coverage for telehealth services.

For the latest information on the Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCov), we refer you to the Ottawa Public Health website at [ottawapublichealth.ca](http://ottawapublichealth.ca)

Your therapist and our administrative staff are here to help answer any questions you may have as we navigate this change together.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation as we all work together to keep ourselves and others safe.

Most sincerely,

OCFI Board of Directors