



## **iTherapyRX Code Of Conduct**

### **I. Benefit to Others**

An iTherapyRX Counselor's primary professional responsibility is to the client. An iTherapyRX Counselor makes every reasonable effort to advance the welfare and best interests of all clients for whom they provide professional services.

### **II. Confidentiality**

iTherapyRX counselors will ensure that records are stored or disposed of in ways that maintain confidentiality. Counselors will not use a computer that is shared with others for online therapy. (If you must use a shared computer, always close the browser when you have finished your session, and make sure your information is password protected.) Smart Phones should be password protected as well. Do not share your computer or e-mail passwords with others. Double-check all communications between you and your clients to be sure they are properly addressed. Confidentiality breaches often occur when client or therapists click the wrong name in their address book.

### **III. Security**

iTherapyRX Counselors will assure that their work area is private, secure and free from interruptions such as people, phones, doorbells etc. for the duration of the session. If there is more than one person attending a session all persons in the exam room at both sites **shall** be identified to all participants prior to the consultation room. Disclosing persons who are attending the consultation **shall** be done by panning each end of the consultation with the video camera or at a minimum, announcing the presence of individuals present and asking the clients permission for additional persons to be in the room.

### **IV. Sexual or Other Relationships**

Sexual or romantic counselor–client interactions or relationships with current clients, their romantic partners, or their family members are prohibited. Sexual or romantic counselor–client interactions or relationships with former clients, their romantic partners, or their family members are prohibited for a period of 5 years following the last professional contact. Counselors, before engaging in sexual or romantic interactions or relationships with clients, their romantic partners, or client family members after 5 years following the last professional contact, demonstrate forethought and document (in written form) whether the interactions or relationship can be viewed as exploitive in some way and/or whether there is still potential to harm the former client; in cases of potential exploitation and/or harm, the counselor avoids entering such an interaction or relationship.

## V. iTherapyRX Clients

Clients and Counselors whose relationships are connected via iTherapyRX may not establish professional relationships outside of iTherapyRX. iTherapyRX counselors should refer to their contracts for details.

## VI. Termination of Services and Referrals

iTherapyRX Counselors will terminate therapy when the client has attained stated goals and objectives, or fails to benefit from counseling services. The counselor will discuss the termination of services to the client and offer alternatives if appropriate. Counselors terminate a counseling relationship when it becomes reasonably apparent that the client no longer needs assistance, is not likely to benefit, or is being harmed by continued counseling. Counselors may terminate counseling when in jeopardy of harm by the client, or another person with whom the client has a relationship, or when clients do not pay fees as agreed upon.

Counselors provide pre-termination counseling and recommend other service providers when necessary. Counselors do not abandon or neglect clients in counseling. Counselors assist in making appropriate arrangements for the continuation of treatment, when necessary, during interruptions such as vacations, illness, and following termination. If counselors determine an inability to be of professional assistance to clients, they avoid entering or continuing counseling relationships. Counselors are knowledgeable about culturally and clinically appropriate referral resources and suggest these alternatives. If clients decline the suggested referrals, counselors should discontinue the relationship.

When counselors transfer or refer clients to other practitioners, they ensure that appropriate clinical and administrative processes are completed and open communication is maintained with both clients and practitioners.

## VII. Timeliness and Professionalism

All iTherapyRX counselors are expected to be on time for all iTherapyRX internal and client appointments. Counselors are expected to provide clients with a 24 hour notification of appointment cancelation and must offer to reschedule within a reasonable timeframe for the client.

All iTherapyRX will inform their clients of the best way to contact them and will respond to any communication within 24 hours. iTherapyRX counselors will review crisis contact options with clients during their first session.

## VIII. Records and Notes

iTherapyRX Counselor's shall utilize Practice Fusion notes system for all iTherapyRX clients. All notes shall be completed and appointment documented as "completed" within 24 hours of appointment. Failure to "complete" process can interfere with timely payment to the provider. iTherapyRX counselors will maintain client treatment records for a reasonable amount of time consistent with state regulations and sound clinical practice, but not less than seven years from completion of treatment or termination of the therapeutic relationship.

## Codes of Conduct for All Professionals

All iTherapyRX Counselors are expected to follow the guidelines of their profession as well as the iTherapyRX Codes Of Conduct.

The following links are to the general codes of ethics which govern several disciplines of mental health professionals *in the United States*, in their day-to-day practices:

- Pastoral psychotherapists: [Code of Ethics of the American Association of Pastoral Counselors](#)
- Psychologists: [American Psychological Association Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct](#)
- Social Workers: [National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics](#)
- Marriage and Family Therapists: [American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy Code of Ethics](#)
- Licensed Professional Counselors: [National Board for Certified Counselors Code of Ethics](#)
- Psychiatrists: [American Psychiatric Association Principles Of Medical Ethics With Annotations Especially Applicable To Psychiatry](#)
- Counselors: [The Laypersons Guide to Counselor Ethics: What You Should Know About the Ethical Practice of Professional Counselors](#)
- Counselors: [ACA Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice](#)

## Standard Operating Procedures/Protocols

*iTherapyRX Complies with the Standard Operating Procedures and Protocols outlined below.*

Telemental health organizations and providers **shall** ensure that appropriate staff is available to meet patient and provider needs before, during, and after telemental health encounters of all types. Organizations and practitioners **shall** have agreements in place to assure licensing, credentialing, training, and authentication of patients and practitioners as appropriate and according to local, state, and national requirements.

Telemental health organizations and practitioners **shall be** aware of the enhanced requirements for privacy and confidentiality that is afforded to patients receiving mental health care. In the United States, additional state regulations for privacy, confidentiality and patient rights apply above and beyond requirements in place for general health care interactions. Telemental health organizations and practitioners **shall** have billing and coding processes in place that share information across systems for the purposes of payment that do not risk exposure of mental health patients' personal health information. Telemental health organizations and practitioners **shall** determine processes for documentation, storage, and retrieval of telemental health records.

Specific descriptions **shall** be in place that address who can have access to the records. Most organizations institute a higher level of security on mental health patients' records than on other patients' records.

Patients receiving mental health and substance abuse services are afforded a higher degree of patients' rights as well as organizational responsibilities. Telemental health organizations **shall** be aware of these additional responsibilities and ensure that they are achieved.

*iTherapyRX- August 26, 2011*