

Use of Telepractice

Telepractice involves the use of technology for the purpose of connecting Kerry's Place staff with the client/ family and may include various methods such as videoconferencing, telephone and video chat. It is important that everyone participating in telepractice sessions understands what is involved, what the limitations may be, what the risks and benefits are, and what other options may be available.

Ontario's privacy legislation also applies to telepractice. Kerry's Place has the same obligations to protect client personal information when delivering services via telepractice as they do when meeting face to face. The tools used to deliver telepractice will incorporate privacy and security protocols such as encryption deemed appropriate for community services settings in order to protect the confidentiality of client information. All information gathered via telepractice is considered to be client file information and will be stored in accordance with Kerry's Place policy and procedures.

While telepractice sessions may support improved access to information and services, and greater participation of families and convenience, it is important to understand the limitations of telepractice sessions. Please consider the following information:

- All images in telepractice are considered confidential and are not to be stored or used in any way. No recordings of sessions are made unless there is an expressed reason and consent to do so (e.g., for supervision or consultation purposes).
- There may be instances where a telepractice session is interrupted due to screen distortions, poor internet signal quality, technical failures or access by unauthorized persons which may cause the session to end sooner than anticipated. Before engaging in telepractice arrangements have an alternate way to contact each other should the session disconnect. Kerry's Place staff will discuss next steps with you should there be a technical failure.
- Kerry's Place staff will ensure confidentiality by using a private room or space for the session. The client/ family must assume responsibility for ensuring the privacy of the space that they use while participating in the telepractice session. It is recommended that families choose an environment for receiving services that is comfortable, free from distraction, and potential disruption.

- In some situations, the information transmitted via the telepractice equipment may not be sufficient (e.g., poor resolution of images, poor sound quality) to allow for appropriate assessment and decision making by your service provider. This may cause a delay from Kerry's place staff in making recommendations or providing further directions.
- There are inherent risks to privacy when using on-line programs and tools. Kerry's Place will to the best of their knowledge use platforms deemed secure for the sharing of personal information recognizing that technology is ever changing and always carries some risks. Kerry's Place staff will only share information that is necessary during the session and limit the amount of client personal information that is discussed. This may not always be possible given the nature of the session.
- The nature of some technologies may require others to be in the room during the telepractice session. Kerry's Place staff will always inform you of who is in the room. It is also expected that the client/family also share who might be joining the session from their location.
- Kerry's Place continues to have a duty to report to their local child welfare agency should they be concerned about a child's welfare while providing services including conducting telepractice session. Further, as per our Abuse Policy, any suspected / alleged abuse or mistreatment of an adult with ASD receiving services from Kerry's Place will be reported to Kerry's Place management and appropriate authorities as deemed necessary.