

PATIENT NAME: _____ DOB: _____

GREATLAND CLINICAL ASSOCIATES

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TBH INFORMED CONSENT FORM

(Tele-Behavioral Health)

THIS FORM CONTAINS IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING REMOTE CARE VIA TELECOMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES.

What is TBH? Tele-Behavioral Health (TBH) refers to remote psychiatric, psychotherapeutic, and related services using telecommunication technologies (i.e. telephone, mobile devices, computers, videoconferencing, the internet, cellular connection, etc.). This includes using platforms such as Zoom, Vsee Messenger, Doxy, etc.

Electronic Communications:

Device Types/ Specifications: TBH appointments require a visual component in addition to audio connection, so it is mandatory that devices used for TBH are capable of both video and audio connection, simultaneously. Participants are solely responsible for obtaining necessary equipment, accessories, or software to partake in TBH, including related costs.

Platform Types/ Specifications: The specific platform over which TBH sessions are conducted depends upon which provider a patient is receiving care from. Each of these videoconferencing platforms will have slightly different utilization methods. The front desk staff will help you if you have any questions or need assistance with your TBH session.

TBH Benefits & Risks: Probably the most obvious benefit to TBH appointments is the convenience of receiving/ providing care wherever there is internet or phone service; however, this convenience comes with some risks that must be acknowledged, such as: risks to confidentiality, issues related to technology, and the efficacy regarding care.

- **Risks to Confidentiality:** The private office of a mental healthcare provider offers a secure space, where patients and providers may meet with assured privacy. TBH sessions take place outside of the provider's private office, which inherently affects that guarantee of confidentiality. Remote care introduces the potential for other people to overhear sensitive information throughout sessions, so participation in TBH should always be conducted in a room or area where other people are not present and cannot overhear the conversations. It is also important that devices on which TBH sessions are conducted (i.e., phone, computer, or other devices) are set up to help protect the privacy of TBH sessions. This includes device settings, updates, anti-virus software, and/ or other active protection methods. **All GCA providers have a legal and ethical responsibility to take these preventative security measures, but it is equally imperative that patients/ other participants in TBH sessions take security measures, as there is a risk that electronic communications may be compromised, unsecured, or accessed by others.** Please note that even with preventative measures in place, TBH still increases privacy risks, in ways such as: unauthorized people or companies obtaining access to private conversation or stored data.
- **Efficacy:** It is crucial that TBH participants are in private spaces for appointments, where interruptions are prohibited and focus may remain on the session. As long as sessions remain uninterrupted and private, most research shows that TBH is about as effective as in-person meetings; however, there is debate regarding a provider's ability to fully assess a patient in areas such as non-verbal information when working remotely. Many people also find that interpersonal connections are stronger and more natural in-person than through a screen. This type of connection is especially important for mental healthcare, where much of the care revolves around emotionally-charged, difficult subjects. **Due to our clinic's commitment to providing exceptional care and the potential limitations of TBH, many of our providers either default-to or require sessions to be in person. Certain medications may also affect approval of an appointment being set as TBH, as there are federal laws and regulations that our medications management providers must abide by.**
- **Issues Related to Technology:** There are many ways that technology has the capacity to hinder TBH sessions, and it is advisable to make efforts well in advance of the appointment start time to set the session up for success.

Key Tips: Turn the device on, make sure it is properly charged and/ or plugged in, ensure the internet connection is active, and verify that the link/ username and password information is accurate. Turning the device off and on again may also help. Test calls (*with the GCA Front Desk*) are also recommended if there is any uncertainty

regarding the TBH appointment's success. TBH does require some technological competence to be successful, but if you need assistance, please call the GCA Front Desk.

TBH Emergency, Crisis, and Session-Interruption Procedures:

Assessing and evaluating threats and other emergencies can be more difficult when conducting TBH than in traditional in-person appointments. To address some of these difficulties, it is important for patients to disclose their current location at the start of each session, as well as to provide emergency support contact information.

Emergency Support Contact Information

In the event of an emergency during a TBH session, GCA requires every patient to provide emergency contact information, designating a trusted individual GCA may contact if necessary.

Emergency Contact Name: _____

Phone #: _____ **Relationship to Patient:** _____

Please note that practitioners may contact this emergency support person and/or local authorities in case of emergency or other genuine concerns regarding someone's safety.

Procedures for Session Interruption: If a TBH session is interrupted for any reason (such as a technological error or connection failure), follow these instructions:

- **EMERGENCY:** If there is an emergency that could result in harm to a participant (or another person with said participant), do not focus on reconnecting with the GCA provider. Instead, call 911, contact your local primary care provider, or go to the nearest emergency care center. Contact GCA after obtaining emergency services. To be clear, TBH providers are not able to render any emergency assistance in the event of a crisis.
- **Non-Emergent Procedures:** If the session is interrupted and you are *not* having an emergency, disconnect from the session and attempt to re- contact via the TBH platform. If this is not successful, then implement the previously agreed upon plan developed together in the case of appointment disruptions.

TBH Fees:

- Attendance for TBH appointments must be treated with the same respect as In-Person appointments. Showing up on time for TBH sessions is especially important, since technical difficulties may arise. No-Show and Late-Cancellation Fee rules will apply as outlined in the intake paperwork (*Consent, Commitments, and Expectations*).
- **All patients should contact their insurance(s) prior to engaging in TBH care to verify details regarding coverage of TBH sessions.** Generally, the same rates will apply for TBH sessions as apply for in-person services; however, some insurances and other managed care providers may *not* cover sessions that are conducted via telecommunication. If a patients' insurance, third-party payor, or other managed care provider does not cover TBH appointments, that patient will be solely responsible for the entire fee. (Medicaid and Medicare are contractual exceptions. Patients with Medicaid and/or Medicare shall not be responsible for fees denied by them for TBH appointments.)

TBH Records: Neither audio nor video recordings shall be made of TBH sessions, unless agreed to in writing by mutual consent. Progress Notes will be documented in the same fashion as in-person appointments. All session notes, regardless of format (TBH or in-person) will be equally protected by confidentiality laws (HIPAA). Please review GCA's *Privacy Policy* for further information on the confidentiality constitutions.

TBH Informed Consent: I have read through and understand the above explanation of the risks and responsibilities involved with TBH (Tele-Behavioral Health) participation. My signature below indicates agreement with its terms and conditions.

Print Name: _____ **Signature:** _____

Date: _____