Lyra

Video Therapy Best Practices

Video Therapy is proven to be as clinically effective as in-person therapy. However, the modality has its own challenges. The most successful clinicians use the following practices:

- <u>Develop a good informed consent</u>: In addition to your normal consent process, include information on the risks and benefits of video therapy. Make sure the client understands how to navigate technical difficulties, understands your safety protocols, and is clear on your termination policy. (For additional recommendations, see the Lyra Video Therapy Manual.)

- <u>First Impressions Count</u>: Expect that your client will initially have apprehensions about the modality. Discuss the relative pros and cons with them. Recognize that they are only seeing your disembodied head out of context, so make a little more effort to "connect" with them. The more they know about you, the less they'll be distracted by their curiosity.

- <u>Be prepared</u>: This is the single most important practice and underlies most of the others. Plan the logistics for both your location and the client's location. Establish and communicate a process for transmitting documents. Make sure that your client can see you and any props you use. Help your client manage their environment to optimize privacy and reduce distractions.

- <u>Use your skills</u>: Use the excellent clinical skills you already have, just more of it. Building therapeutic alliance may take a bit more effort. Pay more attention to speaking clearly and slowly. Be effortful in compensating for the lack of nonverbal communication.

- <u>Don't sweat the small stuff</u>: Set realistic expectations. Technical difficulties will inevitably occur. Establish a well-defined plan for how to manage them (i.e. who calls who if the video fails). When other mishaps occur, don't let anxiety turn a molehill into a mountain.

- <u>Be ready for a true emergency</u>: Establish a Safety Plan to manage psychiatric or medical emergencies. The major challenge is connecting the client to emergency resources in their area. You cannot call 911 for a remote location. Lyra has a Sample Video Safety Protocol you can adjust to best fit your needs.

- <u>Know Your Tools</u>: Be familiar enough with the technology you are using so that you can

troubleshoot for both yourself and your client. Be fluent in making minor adjustments.

- <u>Reach Out for Help</u>: Lyra can provide resources and support. There is no need to reinvent the wheel. Contact education@lyraclinical.com with any questions.