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May 25, 2020

Dear Clients,

In light of the new announcements from the Ontario government regarding availability of in-person counselling during the COVID-19 pandemic, I am writing with an update about psychological services at my office. I trust that you and your loved ones continue to be well and safe during this challenging period.

Protecting Your Health, Your Family's Health and the Health of our Healthcare System

Within the last two weeks, a number of documents have been issued by the Ontario Ministry of Health, College of Psychologists of Ontario, and Ontario Psychological Association to provide guidance about protecting clients attending mental health services in community settings. As you know, limiting person-to-person interactions (physical distancing) continues to be the primary health strategy to interrupt viral chains of transmission in our communities, and ensure sufficient healthcare capacity to manage outbreaks of COVID-19. As the next phase unfolds in Ontario (Phase I), including the re-opening of some businesses, strategies to manage infection risk are necessary in settings where people interact with each other and with the environment (eg., pre-entry client screening, physical distancing, personal protective equipment, cleaning/disinfection).

After reviewing these documents, and assessing their impact on our therapeutic work, I do not feel able to provide the necessary safety for my clients within the rental suites where I offer services. As such, I have decided to continue offering virtual and telephone meetings until September 2020, and re-evaluate options at that time.

Technology-Assisted Care

Mental health services continue to be available via telephone and Zoom Media. Zoom offers a secure (PHIPA/HIPAA compliant) and user-friendly video-conferencing service. Encrypted email solutions continue to be used to share written materials and receipts. Payments are accepted via e-transfer.

To use Zoom requires use of an App on either a desktop computer, tablet, or mobile phone. Please visit the following links to learn more:

1. Zoom Mobile Apps for [iPhone](#) or [Android](#) (free)
2. Try a [test](#) meeting for Zoom on your desktop

Information About Tele-Psychology

A written tele-psychology consent form is available for review by new and returning clients.

Service Hours

Service hours were expanded to accommodate clients' schedules of work and childcare. The service hours are:

Tuesdays & Wednesdays: 9 am to 9 pm

Fridays & Saturdays: 9 am to 2 pm

Alternative Options

Your well-being is important to me. Some clients may have concerns about using tele-psychology, adequate privacy at home, and/or challenges in securing child-free time to participate. These concerns are understandable. Please reach out to discuss them with me.

At this time, it remains unlikely that in-person services will be available in our community. The most recent guidance from the College of Psychologists (May 14, 2020) has recommended continued use of virtual modalities (except for crisis or urgent care). However, if you would like to be referred to another provider for in-person therapy, I can assist you in trying to locate a provider, but I cannot offer any guarantees about being able to locate a match.

Be Vigilant About Fraud

I encourage all clients to continue to be mindful of fraud. I do not send unsolicited emails asking for confidential information (eg., passwords, PINs, credit card numbers, health information, etc.) or inviting you to make purchases. Please contact me by phone if you receive an email and are unsure if it originated from my account.

Take Care

As a reminder, if you develop symptoms (fever, cough, difficulty breathing), please stay home. Phone your family physician, Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000 or your local [public health unit](#) for guidance.

The following resources from government, health authorities and national associations may also be of assistance:

- Public Health Agency of Canada's advice regarding physical distancing by avoiding public gatherings and practicing good health hygiene ([Link](#))
- National Association of School Psychologists - Parent and Teacher Resources ([Link](#))
- Ontario Ministry of Health ([Link](#))
- Public Health Ontario ([Link](#))
- Government of Canada ([Link](#))

Staying Informed

It is difficult to predict when in-person meetings will resume. I continue to review information provided by local, provincial and federal health authorities, who monitor the health risk. Any developments or changes in my practice will be shared with you as they become available.

It will be a pleasure to resume in-person meetings when it is deemed safe to do so. Please let me know if there is anything else I can do to support you.

Feel free to contact me via email (drpaulamiceli@gmail.com) or phone (416-275-3735), if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Paula Miceli, Ph.D., C.Psych.
Clinical & Health Psychologist (#6027)