

Procedures and Guidelines Governing Psychotherapeutic Career Support

These procedures and guidelines apply to individual psychotherapeutic career appointment(s) with a Registered Psychotherapist (RP). The Career Counselling Team's RPs are members of the College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario (CRPO).

Note: Not all career appointments need to be psychotherapeutic in nature. You may work with an RP on your career-related concerns without engaging in psychotherapy.

You may access career support from an RP for a variety of reasons. Generally, an individual would seek psychotherapy when they have thoughts, feelings, moods and/or behaviours that are adversely affecting their day-to-day lives and the ability to enjoy life. Meeting with an RP, whose focus is career development and transition, is beneficial when these things occur in a career context. Through a psychotherapeutic process, you and your RP will work together to bring about positive change in your thinking, feeling, behaviour and/or social functioning within this career context. Some examples include:

- Struggling with your career goals because of anxiety/depression or another mental health concern
- Lack of confidence in your abilities (e.g. skills, making decisions)
- Having difficulty identifying a purpose in life

The RPs on the Career Counselling Team use an eclectic approach to therapy – meaning that they take parts of many therapy approaches to find the things that work best for the individual. Common modalities in a career context include, but are not limited to, Person Centred Therapy, Narrative Therapy, Solution Focused Therapy, Mindfulness, and Multi-Cultural Therapy.

Your individual appointment(s) will be 45 minutes in length. During this appointment your RP will ask you questions to gain an understanding of the nature of your concerns and to help determine the best course of action for meeting your goals. You may discuss the nature and purpose of the proposed psychotherapeutic treatment and/or assessment plan, the benefits, limitations, effects, alternative options, and other relevant information (including the number of appointments you will have). You may revisit/make changes to this plan at any time.

Privacy & Your Personal Health Information. The laws and standards mandated by CRPO require that we keep records of our appointments. The notes are simply a record of the date of our appointment and an account of what transpired in the session. As RPs we do not diagnose or interpret what you say and/or your actions, we simply observe and record them. Your file includes basic information relevant to your therapy and assessment results, to which only staff on the Career Counselling team have access. It is kept in an online database where steps have been taken to ensure that your records are secured and protected against theft, loss, unauthorized use or disclosure and unauthorized copying, modification or disposal. The College requires us to retain your records for 10 years. Subsequent to this retention period, your record will be destroyed in a manner compliant with the Ontario Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA).

In accordance with PHIPA, all communication between us is confidential and we will only release information about our work to others at your request and with your written permission. You have the right to look at your records at any time. By law, we must provide a copy of this information within a reasonable period of time.

The Career Counselling Team also plays a role in teaching and training. The psychotherapy we offer may be provided by graduate students in counselling psychology or social work, under the direct supervision of registered psychotherapists. In order to ensure that you receive the best possible care, information that you provide will be shared between your clinician and the registered psychotherapist supervising their work. The supervisor may observe your sessions, either live or from video or audio-recording. Your session will never be video or audio recorded without your knowledge and prior consent. All sessions that are audio/video recorded for training purposes, are stored securely, and are only accessible to appropriate staff and trainees. These recordings will be deleted when they are no longer needed for supervision or training purposes.

As part of ongoing professional training, the Career Counselling Team holds case consultations during which your RP or student trainee may present aspects of their work with you. The purpose of these case consultations is for the RP or student trainee to receive suggestions for improving care and to learn from each other's experiences. During these case consultations, all personal identifying information is omitted.

Limits to Confidentiality. The information you provide to your RP, including verbal, written, electronic, recorded or by means of questionnaires/assessments, is confidential with the following exceptions:

1. We are required by law to report to the appropriate authorities any suspicions that a child (i.e., someone who is presently under 16 years of age) has been or is being abused or mistreated. We may also make a report if we have suspicions that a youth under age 18 is in need of protection.
2. If you are in serious and imminent danger of hurting yourself or someone else, we may need to reveal to an appropriate third party (including your Emergency Contact person, your parents, and/or emergency personnel) enough information to help you or the person in danger.
3. If someone you know is at risk of harming themselves or someone else, we may need to reveal to an appropriate third party (i.e. emergency personnel) enough information to help the person in danger.
4. If you reveal to us that you have been sexually abused by a health care provider who is covered by the Regulated Health Professions Act (e.g., physicians, psychologists, RPs) we are required by law to report the name of the offending member to his or her governing body, although we will not reveal your name unless we receive written permission from you to do so. It should be noted that the current legal definition of sexual abuse includes both touching of a sexual nature and demeaning remarks of a sexual nature.
5. If you are a Western employee, we are required by law to comply with workplace legislation to protect you from violence or harassment at the workplace. In compliance with that legislation we may determine that it is necessary to disclose to others at the University, including Campus Police Service, or to external police agencies, information that you provide.
6. If you are involved in a legal proceeding, the court may subpoena our records.

Dispute or Complaint. As a client of a registered psychotherapist, you have the right to make a complaint to CRPO, if you deem it necessary. Oversight of Registered Psychotherapists is set out in the Ontario Registered Health Practitioners Act (RHPA). The College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario (CRPO) investigates concerns regarding member psychotherapist's professional conduct or competence.

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