

# Email Communication Consent

Client/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Risks: The confidentiality of e-mail communication cannot be assured

- E-mail communication may be viewed by third parties.
- E-mail is sent across an open computer network & is generally unencrypted. It is thus accessible to prying eyes similar to a postcard.
- E-mail sent using an employer's e-mail system could legally be read by the employer
- The biggest threat to the confidentiality of e-mail is not hackers intercepting messages, but messages that are misaddressed, mistakenly forwarded to others, or are read using shared e-mail accounts or on computer screens when one forgets to log-off

Benefits:

- Use of e-mail may eliminate "telephone tag" between client and health care provider
- Non-urgent messages and questions may be communicated with less interruption than by phone
- Email allows a written record of communication, which can be a useful resource

Appropriate uses of e-mail for medical communication include:

- Addresses and telephone numbers of referring facilities
- Assessment results with interpretation and recommendation
- Before admission and after discharge instructions
- Client education
- Questions and answers about issues discussed during a previous visit
- Questions and answers about new symptoms by an established client
- Verification of future appointment dates/times
- Other messages of a similar nature to the topics above

E-mail should not be used to communicate:

- Emergencies and other time-sensitive issues
- Sensitive information, defined as any information that the client would not want anyone other than the health care provider to have

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (name of client/guardian) understand the risks, benefits, and appropriate uses of e-mail communication with my providers.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have reviewed this information above and wish to proceed.

\_\_\_\_\_ I do not wish to have staff correspond with myself or other therapists by email.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian E-mail

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date