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How to Set Up Your Office for Teletherapy Sessions

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As you look to expand your services through teletherapy (online therapy (<https://www.theraplatform.com/blog/248/online-therapy>)), you will be able to reach many more potential clients. Those clients will be connecting to you through the convenience of their home. Meanwhile, you will be utilizing your office or therapy space in a whole new

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way. The traditional therapy set-up may not immediately adapt to the format of teletherapy. To set up your office for teletherapy sessions, consider giving attention to these components: ^

Background

In a typical therapy session, your client would be within your office setting and able to see a variety of décor. However, with teletherapy, your clients are only seeing a limited part of your therapy space, which will be the background behind you during the telehealth counseling sessions.

It is important to set up a background that is coherent and not too distracting, but which also represents yourself in some way. Be thoughtful about your décor selection and arrangement, then consider how that background looks on-screen, before the first teletherapy session.

Lighting

For many people, the ambience of lighting is an important component of their therapy space set-up. Many people like to keep lights low for calm or capitalize on natural lighting. When it comes to teletherapy sessions, lighting is both important and possibly challenging.

You will need to be thoughtful about having enough light behind yourself so that the background is not too dim. You will also need light in front of you to brighten your face. If you will be in a space with natural lighting, also pay attention to how different times of the day may look on screen to your clients. As much as possible, you want your clients to be able to see you clearly throughout the session.

Noise/Sound

While a quiet space is important for most therapy sessions, it becomes even more important during teletherapy. Without the total visual context, ambient sounds or noise can be quite distracting and potentially even distressing for clients. Make sure the space you will be using is quiet. Utilize a white noise sound machine outside your office door to help block outside sounds.

Comfort

During your teletherapy sessions, you will likely be sitting at a desk, which may feel a little different from your typical style during traditional therapy. Maximize your comfort for prolonged sitting with a desk that is the right height and a comfortable, perhaps even

ergonomic desk chair. Make sure to also keep nearby any items you need to remain comfortable, such as a beverage and tissues. This will allow you to remain mostly stationary throughout the duration of the teletherapy session. ^

Technology

A crucial element for your teletherapy sessions will be the technology (<https://www.theraplatform.com/blog/254/telehealth-let-s-talk-technology>) you need for communication. You will need to set up your space with a computer or laptop, webcam, and microphone, along with stable internet. When you set up these components, be sure to test them to ensure they are all working properly. You may even want to practice connecting with a friend or family member to check that your webcam and microphone settings are just right for your video and audio.

As you set up the technology you need for your teletherapy sessions, also keep in mind the online platform (HIPAA compliant video conferencing) you will use to connect with clients. You want to use a service that is both reliable and confidential. A reliable platform will look most professional to your clients. A confidential platform is required to ensure privacy and stay compliant with HIPAA regulations. TheraPlatform (<https://www.theraplatform.com/>) is a HIPAA compliant video conferencing platform for teletherapy or online therapy with practice management, EMR and billing features.



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