

Distance Mental Health Services and You

Student Wellness Services is committed to supporting students, regardless where they are located. We have several distance options to keep students connected to our mental health resources. During a time of rapid change, we want students to feel comfortable using distance mental health services. The following information will help students make the most of their distance appointments:

What To Expect From Student Wellness Services:

- We will connect with you to discuss mental health services via Microsoft Teams or telephone. Your Counsellor or Student Support Advisor will provide information on how to join the session at the appointed time.
- If you are located out of province, be sure to let your Counsellor or Student Support Advisor know. Your location may affect eligibility for services and we will explore best options with you.
- As with in-person appointments, Student Wellness Services is required to protect your safety and confidentiality. We will verify your name, student ID, and emergency contact information. We will also discuss emergency resources and after-hours crisis services.
- We will provide a description of the risks associated with distance mental health services and information transmitted via the internet. We will discuss strategies to help students safeguard their privacy. Student Wellness Services uses a secure platform to provide video sessions. We will also ask for an alternate way to reach you, when using online services, should the connection be lost. We will also discuss how we will both manage a situation where your privacy may be interrupted.
- We will inform you about the potential for misunderstandings when visual cues are absent and/or limited in distance communications. We will ask you follow-up questions and for additional clarification, as needed.
- We will ask about your goals and hopes for counselling. You should feel that every session is productive.

Preparing For Your Distance Mental Health Appointment:

Protecting Your Privacy and Safety:

- Please have your student ID number and emergency contact information ready.
- Please ensure that you are in a quiet and private location for the appointment. If you are having difficulty securing privacy, please contact Student Wellness Services prior to the session. We can arrange a private location on campus.
- You are encouraged to wear headphones for video sessions, so that the counsellor's voice will not be audible to others. Sound quality is also usually better.
- If you are having a video session, please use a private and secure internet connection (e.g., your home wi-fi). Free or public wi-fi may compromise your confidentiality.

Getting the Most from Your Session:

- You may find it helpful to prepare for the session. This can include writing down questions you may have, resources you may need, or topics that you would like to discuss. Ask yourself: What is most important for me to talk about today?
- Be direct with the counsellor about your priorities and goals for the session.
- The relationship with your counsellor is important. You may want to consider the approach that is most helpful to you. Would you like 'homework' after each session? Would you like the counsellor to be directive, or would you prefer to take the lead in therapy? This will allow the counsellor to adjust their approach to fit your preferences.
- Please do not hesitate to seek clarification as needed. Student Wellness Services is happy to answer any questions you may have.

For additional information and resources, please visit our website:

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/wellness-services>