

**Practice Policies and Informed Consent**

Therapeutic Outcomes depend, in large part, on your engagement within and between our sessions and thus are highly dependent on good communication between us. If at any time during our therapeutic work you have any questions or concerns, feelings about something you believe I have said or suggested, or should you require such clarifications please do not hesitate to bring this up within our next session.

**Meetings, Cancellations, and Missed Appointments**

A regular psychotherapy session lasts for 50 minutes. Because therapeutic outcomes depend on the regularity and continuity of our meetings, the expectation is that we would meet at a minimum, once a week, ideally on a set day/time that we decide upon together.

Once agreed, I will reserve this regular meeting appointment for you. In the event where either of us may have to change this arrangement, as much advance notice on either side will be given.

Should you on occasion need to cancel or reschedule our regular appointment session, please let me know the week before. Appointment Cancellations within a calendar week of our agreed day/time will be charged for, regardless of the external circumstances, unless we can agree/find a rescheduled day/time within that same calendar week. If I am able to offer your cancelled appointment time to another then you will not be charged, so do please provide as much notice as possible. Always take responsibility to ensure that your notice for a cancellation/reschedule has been received.

**Consultation Fees**

During our initial consultation we will jointly agree a fee and payment schedule. Payment by cash or cheque is due at the beginning or end of each session. Electronic Bank Transfers need to be lodged in advance of our appointment time session. I periodically raise my fees with reasonable advance notice.

**Health Insurance**

Receipts will be provided should you be able to claim tax credits or Health Insurance reimbursements for the cost of our work. I do not deal directly or mediate for you with Health Insurance companies.

**Contacting Me** -

**By Phone**: Communication requiring immediate attention, or a timely response should be made by phone. You may contact me any time by voice or message on 086 8280033. Although I am often not immediately available, a message can be left any time of day or night. I check my phone throughout business hours and I will always attempt to return your call within 24 hours.

**By Email**: Because the security of email cannot be guaranteed, it would be recommended that email be limited to requests for phone contact, appointment arrangements, or requests for information. For your own privacy, only ever include in emails general information about yourself and our work.

 **Privacy**

Our clinical sessions are private. I do not take notes during or indeed after sessions. Any clinical discussions, for example with my clinical supervisors, guarantee anonymity by removing any personal names or identifiers. In signing below, both of us agree neither to record our therapeutic sessions through either video or audio recordings, nor to duplicate or disseminate any of our voice, message or email communications without the other’s knowledge and consent.

 **Confidentiality**

Everything spoken of within clinical sessions is confidential. This means that any information will not be shared without your knowledge and, ideally, your consent. There are, however, a few exceptions:

* Should a client present a threat/danger to themselves, to others, to property.
* Formal/legal communications being made that a client presents a danger to others or themselves.
* When there is a reasonable suspicion of child, dependent or elder abuse or neglect.
* In particular, I am required by law, under the Children First Act 2015 as amended by the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017, to share with Tusla any concerns regarding actual or potential harm to a child. This mandatory reporting falls to any key professionals, myself included, where any allegation of childhood sexual abuse, present or historical is told to me.\*

\*Further information on reporting child protection concerns can be found on the Tusla website: www.tusla.ie/children-first

These situations have very rarely occurred in my practice and wider professional encounters. However, if such a situation occurs, I will make every effort to fully discuss it with you before taking any action, as your position and primacy in our work is paramount. If I am concerned about your safety and well-being I would discuss with you contacting your GP or another healthcare professional.

I participate in regular professional consultations where client work and clinical treatment are discussed privately and professionally. In such cases neither your name nor any other identifying information about you will be revealed.

**Feel free to discuss any concerns you have about my confidentiality policy with me at any stage.**

**Ending Treatment**

Psychotherapy can have benefits and risks. As the work often involves discussing unpleasant aspects of one’s life, you may experience uncomfortable feelings and the process may, at times, feel quite difficult. You have the right to end or take a break from your treatment at any time, however, if you do decide to exercise this option, I encourage you to discuss the reason/s for your decision with me within our work to ensure it is not an (un)conscious fleeing or escaping and so that we can bring some level of closure to our work together. It would be best practice to draw therapeutic work to a close by agreeing upon a concluding date to work towards rather than just ‘disappearing’.

**Once you have read, discussed and understood these policies, please sign below:**

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