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## **COVID-19 Update October 2020**

### **On Line & Telephone Sessions**

On Line and telephone sessions are always available. For the duration of Level 5 restrictions, consider changing to online sessions if you have the capacity (privacy, no interruptions) and ability (you are okay with using the technology and communicating in this way) to do so.

### **Face to Face sessions**

As a mental health service, Psychotherapy is seen as an essential service, under the “Human Health and Social Work Activities” of the Dept. of Health Guidelines. However, safety restrictions are in place, in order to try and keep our premises, therapists and clients, safe.

The three core components in the Government guidelines on COVID-19 are to wear a mask, sanitise hands and maintain social distancing. Therefore, the following applies (subject to ongoing review):

1. Wearing a mask helps minimise spreading of the virus, particularly when sharing the same space for an extended period of conversation (like a 1-hour session). As this is contradictory to the concept of face to face therapy, this will probably be the most difficult challenge. For their own assurance, clients must provide their own mask or visor and remove it from the premises, each visit. The same applies to tissues, water bottles or anything else used by the client in the session.
2. A larger room is essential to maintain the 2m distance. We are fortunate in Santry, that both consulting rooms are large enough to maintain greater than a 2m distance and seating will be positioned as such.
3. Windows are open in the therapy room for the duration of each session since well-ventilated spaces are safer.
4. A 15-minute interval between clients is scheduled, in order to allow time for airborne droplets to settle. Sessions must be kept to time.
5. It is advised that waiting facilities not be used, including for people accompanying clients to appointments.

6. Relevant surfaces are wiped between sessions (chair surfaces, tables, tissue boxes, door handles etc). While tissues are provided, it is safer for clients to bring their own tissues.
7. Washing your hands before entering and after leaving the consulting room is requested and signs are posted as a reminder. Hand sanitisers are also provided in the waiting room and consulting rooms