



RE: COVID-19

March 9, 2020

To Our Drama Therapy Educators,

The Education Chair and the NADTA board, in its position as an accrediting entity to several universities and as a guide to board-certified trainers mentoring AT learners, realize that specific guidelines and program modifications with regard to COVID-19 may be taking place now or in the near future at universities and schools across different countries. Adjustments in reference to students attending clinical internships, drama therapy/psychology classes, and in-person clinical supervision during student internships and practicums may need to occur during this period. In some areas, there is the possibility that instructors may need to teach remotely or even self-quarantine. We want to extend our camaraderie and support during this challenging time. Should there be disruption of courses and meetings in schools, we encourage department heads to issue updated guidelines to students and faculty members, referring them to the information provided by the CDC <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/warning/novel-coronavirus-china> and their university/school protocols. We have also compiled some useful resources that may assist teachers in university departments and BCTs who teach in private drama therapy institutions.

Resources List:

(Telehealth practices in CA)

<https://www.cphins.com/cali-tele-camft/>

(HIPAA compliance training info)

<https://www.hipaatraining.com/>

(Making ZOOM platform HIPAA compliant)

<https://www.hipaaguide.net/is-zoom-hipaa-compliant/>

(ZOOM telehealth/HIPAA info and institutional fees)

<https://zoom.us/healthcare>

(Thera-link—HIPAA compliant & affordable alternative to ZOOM)

<https://www.thera-link.com/how-it-works/>

(HIPAA compliant client note taking methods via Hush & other platforms)

<https://www.thera-link.com/partners/>

(Resources from HIPAA Journal—i.e. Facetime usage)

<https://www.hipaajournal.com/facetime-hipaa-compliant/>

Telehealth for Supervision During Internship: Telehealth refers to the mode of delivering health care services via information and communication technologies to facilitate the diagnosis, consultation, treatment, education, care management, and self-management of a patient's healthcare while the patient is at the originating site and the health care provider is at a distant site. Telehealth or remote communication via ZOOM or other internet platforms may be utilized by drama therapy students and their schools in order to facilitate clients; thereby earning internship hours. However, we recommend students and faculty check with their board of behavioral sciences and/or state licensing requirements when it comes to remote supervision. For those students wanting to dually count their hours for school/the RDT and licensure please note various states such as Washington and New York may have different rules about supervision online, although licensing agencies may be making accommodations due to COVID-19. For instance, in California, you can only do supervision over video conference if your site is a government facility. So, please investigate regulations that may change due to the current circumstances.

Telehealth for Internship Usage: As far as the use of ZOOM or other platforms to practice telehealth therapy, there are ethical stipulations involved with this way of working. Please check your state's licensure board and clinical standards of practice about telehealth and hours allowed during supervision. These are some standard and added stipulations to consider as you do therapy with clients.

1. Both therapist and client need to be using the video platform of Zoom or another platform (see options included).
2. The sites also need to have clear policies and procedures about addressing safety by a) collecting clients' current locations at the start of the session and b) ensuring confidentiality by requiring clients to be in a private space or if semi-private c) using headphones and d) making certain backgrounds are free of other persons for the duration of the sessions.
3. Similarly, there should be some stipulation about place of practice (i.e. both therapist and client are in the same state, though this is more of an issue for license and regulation compliance that we would also expect the sites to have policy around). The assumption is that most sites would already have these issues addressed so it should not be much of an obstacle.

4. Perhaps a simple **form for internships** that use ZOOM or other platforms can be created by supervisors/instructors that makes clear these stipulations are followed--verifying student/therapist adheres to ethical standards according to licensing bodies and school protocol during this period. Please secure (with **documentation**) that the **sites have clear policies and procedures** addressing teletherapy ethics. Site supervisors /advisors can **sign off on the form** remotely. Document in some way and file for future reference. Documentation is also important for BCTs who are teaching AT programs and have students doing their internships.

5. Ideally, there is an **area on the form** that states the student/therapist uses **action-based therapies**/drama therapy and not just talk with the client in the form of projective methods, minimal sculpting, group work that does not require physical contact, etc.

For Those who Continue to Practice Drama Therapy in Person (i.e those in essential care areas) we continue to recommend for both clients and therapists these steps:

1. using hand sanitizing gel/foam when entering and leaving groups and encouraging their clients to do the same
2. washing their hands frequently
3. covering coughs, doing the vampire cough (into the crook of your arm)
4. avoiding physical contact in groups- avoiding props that will be handled by various group members
5. sanitizing art equipment before and after use or providing single-use or individually assigned art materials
6. calling out sick if your temperature is 100.4 or above, or you have onset respiratory symptoms, or you've been in areas exposed to the virus

We hope this information will be useful to all who mentor and teach our drama therapy students both in university settings and private settings during this time as we make required adjustments. Please continue to reach out to your NADTA leadership if you need any assistance. We also hope for the best during the next days and weeks to come. Thank you.

In Solidarity,

Mimi Savage –NADTA Education Chair & Josiah Stickels --NADTA President