

Grew, Morter & Hartye P.A.
Electronic Communication Policy

The purpose of this policy is to clarify the use, limitations, and risks of electronic communication during your treatment at GMH. Many forms of electronic communication can put your privacy at risk. Our goal is to communicate with you in ways that safeguard therapeutic boundaries, assure the security and confidentiality of your treatment, and are compliant with ethics and laws. Please read our policy carefully, and if you have any questions, please discuss them with your GMH clinician.

Email and Text Communications

Please be advised that not all GMH clinicians offer text and/or email as a means of communication. If your clinician does offer email and/or text communication, she or he will do so only with your permission, and only for administrative purposes. Therefore, email exchanges and text messages with your GMH clinician should be limited to things like setting and changing appointment times, notifying your clinician if you are running late to a session, and simple billing matters.

Due to limitations in security, please do not email or text your GMH clinician about clinical matters. All emails are stored in the logs of Internet service providers and/or employers. While it is unlikely that these logs will ever be reviewed, they are nevertheless available to be read by system administrator(s). If you choose to communicate with GMH via email, please be aware that any emails received from you, and any responses sent to you, become part of your clinical record.

If you need to discuss a clinical matter with your therapist, please call her/him directly, or wait to discuss it in your next session. The telephone and face-to-face context are the most secure modes of communication.

Website and Blog

GMH has a professional website and blog that are available to provide information about GMH and our clinicians, as well as to educate and provide resources. In order to protect your privacy, we have disabled the ability to leave comments on our blog. If you have questions or feedback about any of the information we share on our website or blog, please discuss them during your appointment time with your clinician.

If you wish to be notified when the blog is updated, you may subscribe to the blog. Other parties are unable to see who is subscribed to our blog. Clients may subscribe or unsubscribe to our blog as they see fit. GMH and its employees do not keep track of who is subscribed or not subscribed to our blog. We also do not share email addresses or personal information with third parties.

Social Media

Any social media accounts created and maintained by GMH (such as a GMH Facebook page, Twitter, or YouTube account) are for sharing GMH blog posts, practice updates, and educational videos and other resources. Clients may choose to follow or not follow the postings of GMH's social media sites. However, please be aware that information posted on our social media sites is also available directly at www.gmhpsych.com and therefore "friending," "liking," or "following" is not necessary.

For confidentiality reasons, GMH attempts to limit the visibility of followers' names and comments on our social media accounts. However, due to the transparent nature of social media, and frequent changes in privacy policies, be aware that if you do choose to "friend," "like," or "follow" any of GMH's social media accounts, it is highly likely that other users will be able to see your name and any comments you choose to make.

In addition to GMH's official social media accounts, GMH clinicians often participate *personally* on various social networks like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, and LinkedIn. However, GMH clinicians do not engage with any of their current or previous clients through these social media platforms as casual social contact could create significant security risks for clients and have the potential to compromise the professional relationship. Other standards include:

- Clinicians do not accept friend requests from current or previous clients on social networking sites.

- If your clinician discovers that she/he has accidentally established an online relationship with you, she/he will cancel that relationship.
- If you have an online presence, there is a possibility that you may encounter a GMH clinician's online presence by accident. If that occurs, please feel free to discuss it with your clinician during your time together.
- If you contact your clinician on social networking sites, your clinician will not respond.
- GMH clinicians will not "follow" or review their clients' personal online social networking activities. However, if there are aspects of your online life that you wish to share with your GMH clinician, please bring those to session with you where they can be discussed together.

Web Searches and Online Reviews

GMH clinicians will not use web searches to gather information about you without your permission as we believe this violates your privacy rights. However, we understand that you might choose to gather information about our clinicians in this way. There is a lot of information available about individuals on the internet, much of which may actually be known to that person and some of which may be inaccurate or unknown. If you encounter any information about your GMH clinician through web searches, please feel free to discuss this with your clinician during your session.

Recently it has become popular for clients to review their health care providers on various websites. Unfortunately, mental health professionals are not allowed to respond to such comments, or correct any errors, because of confidentiality restrictions. If you encounter such reviews of GMH or any GMH employee, please feel free to share them with us so we can address any concerns. In order to protect your confidentiality, we suggest you do not "rate" our work online, but discuss both positive experiences and concerns directly with your clinician or the GMH staff.

Emergency Assistance

Please do not contact GMH or your clinician via chat or messaging on sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, etc. Not only are these forms of communication not secure, your message might not be received in a timely fashion or may not be received at all. Should you need help or require contact between sessions, please contact your GMH clinician via telephone. If you have an emergency, please call 911 or go to your nearest emergency room and ask for the psychiatrist on call.

Acknowledgment of Receipt and Permissions

I understand that I may change or revoke any or all of my permissions at any time in the future, simply by discussing it with my clinician and signing a new Electronic Communication Policy. I have read and understand the GMH Electronic Communication Policy. I agree to the statements herein. This document was discussed with me and any questions I had were answered fully.

_____ I agree _____ do not agree to use texting as a way to communicate with my GMH clinician for administrative purposes **only**.

_____ I agree _____ do not agree to use email as a way to communicate with my GMH clinician for administrative purposes **only**.

_____ I understand that my clinician chooses **not** to use _____ email and/or _____ texting with clients.

Printed Name of Patient / Personal Representative

Client Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Clinician Signature

Date