

CONSENT TO USE ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS¹

PATIENTS: Please complete each section of personal information on this page, initial the bottom of each page and any other required field noted through this document.

HOMEOPATH INFORMATION:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email (if applicable): _____

Phone (as required for Service(s)): _____

Website (if applicable): _____

The Homeopath has offered to communicate using the following means of electronic communication ("the Services"):

Email	(Videoconferencing (including Skype®, FaceTime®))
Text messaging (including instant messaging)	Website/Portal

Social media (specify): _____

(Other (specify): _____

PATIENT ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND AGREEMENT:

I acknowledge that I have read and fully understand the risks, limitations, conditions of use, and instructions for use of the selected electronic communication Services more fully described in the Appendix to this consent form. I understand and accept the risks outlined in the Appendix to this consent form, associated with the use of the Services in communications with the Homeopath and the Homeopath's staff. I consent to the conditions and will follow the instructions outlined in the Appendix, as well as any other conditions that the Homeopath may impose on communications with patients using the Services.

I acknowledge and understand that despite recommendations that encryption software be used as a security mechanism for electronic communications, it is possible that communications with the Homeopath or the Homeopath's staff using the Services may not be encrypted. Despite this, I agree to communicate with the Homeopath or the Homeopath's staff using these Services with a full understanding of the risk.

I acknowledge that either I or the Homeopath may, at any time, withdraw the option of communicating electronically through the Services upon providing written notice. Any questions I had have been answered.

Patient name: _____

Patient address: _____

Patient home phone: _____

Patient mobile phone: _____

Patient email (if applicable): _____

Other account information required to communicate via the Services (if applicable): _____

Patient signature: _____	Date: _____
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¹ This document has been adapted for the use of registrants of the College of Homeopaths of Ontario with permission from the Canadian Medical Protective Association.

APPENDIX

Risks of using electronic communication

The Homeopath will use reasonable means to protect the security and confidentiality of information sent and received using the Services ("Services" is defined in the attached Consent to use electronic communications). However, because of the risks outlined below, the Homeopath cannot guarantee the security and confidentiality of electronic communications:

- Use of electronic communications to discuss sensitive information can increase the risk of such information being disclosed to third parties.
- Despite reasonable efforts to protect the privacy and security of electronic communication, it is not possible to completely secure the information.
- Employers and online services may have a legal right to inspect and keep electronic communications that pass through their system.
- Electronic communications can introduce malware into a computer system, and potentially damage or disrupt the computer, networks, and security settings.
- Electronic communications can be forwarded, intercepted, circulated, stored, or even changed without the knowledge or permission of the Homeopath or the patient.
- Even after the sender and recipient have deleted copies of electronic communications, back-up copies may exist on a computer system.
- Electronic communications may be disclosed in accordance with a duty to report or a court order.
- Videoconferencing using services such as Skype, FaceTime or Zoom may be more open to interception than other forms of videoconferencing.

If the email or text is used as an e-communication tool, the following are additional risks:

- Email, text messages, and instant messages can more easily be misdirected, resulting in increased risk of being received by unintended and unknown recipients.
- Email, text messages, and instant messages can be easier to falsify than handwritten or signed hard copies. It is not feasible to verify the true identity of the sender, or to ensure that only

the recipient can read the message once it has been sent.

Conditions of using the Services

- While the Homeopath will attempt to review and respond in a timely fashion to your electronic communication, the Homeopath cannot guarantee that all electronic communications will be received, reviewed, and responded to within any specific period of time. The Services will not be used for medical emergencies or other time-sensitive matters.
- If your electronic communication requires or invites a response from the Homeopath and you have not received a response within a reasonable time period, it is your responsibility to follow up to determine whether the intended recipient received the electronic communication and when the recipient will respond.
- Electronic communication is not an appropriate substitute for in-person or over-the-telephone communication or clinical examinations, where appropriate, or for attending the Emergency Department when needed. You are responsible for following up on the Homeopath's electronic communication and for scheduling appointments where warranted.
- Electronic communications concerning homeopathic assessment or treatment may be printed or transcribed in full and made part of your medical record. Other individuals authorized to access the medical record, such as authorized staff, may have access to those communications.
- The Homeopath will not forward electronic communications to third parties, including family members, without your prior written authorization and consent, except as authorized or required by law.
- You agree to inform the Homeopath of any types of information you do not want sent via the Services in writing.
- Some Services might not be used for therapeutic purposes or to communicate clinical information. Where applicable, the use of these Services will be limited to education, information, and administrative purposes.
- The Homeopath is not responsible for information loss due to technical failures associated with your software or internet service provider.

APPENDIX CONTINUED

Instructions for communication using the Services

To communicate using the Services, you must:

- Reasonably limit or avoid using an employer's or other third party's computer.
- Inform the Homeopath of any changes in the patient's email address, contact phone number, or other account information necessary to communicate via the Services.

If the Services include email, instant messaging and/or text messaging, the following applies:

- Include in the message's subject line an appropriate description of the nature of the communication (e.g. "follow-up appointment"), and your full name in the body of the message.
- Review all electronic communications to ensure they maybe clearly understood by the recipient, and that all relevant information is provided before sending to the Homeopath.

- Ensure the Homeopath is aware when you receive an electronic communication from the Homeopath, such as by a reply message or allowing "read receipts" to be sent.
- Take precautions to preserve the confidentiality of electronic communications, such as using screen savers and safeguarding computer passwords.
- Withdraw consent only by email or written communication to the Homeopath.
- If you require immediate assistance, or if your condition appears serious or rapidly worsens, you should not rely on the Services. Rather, you should call the Homeopath's office or take other measures as appropriate, such as going to the nearest Emergency Department or urgent care clinic.
- Other conditions of use in addition to those set out above: **(patient to initial)**

I have reviewed and understand all of the risks, conditions, and instructions described in this Appendix.

Patient signature

Date

Patient initials _____