

Counseling Without Borders: The Future of Teletherapy

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1. The Evolution of Telehealth – Presenter: Beverly Ward

Overview:

Telehealth has transformed from early telephone hotlines to a fully integrated modality in modern counseling practice.

Milestones:

1953 – The Samaritans founded as the first crisis hotline

1958 – Los Angeles Suicide Prevention Hotline launched

1980s–1990s – Expansion of toll-free and early email therapy

2000s – Growth of VA telehealth programs

2020 – Global pandemic catalyzes rapid adoption of online counseling

2024 – 37 states join the Counseling Compact, expanding access

Key Idea:

“The heart of therapy — connection, safety, and growth — doesn’t change over a screen.”

Learning Points:

Connection remains the core of clinical effectiveness

Virtual access increases reach for rural, homebound, and working clients

The Counseling Compact creates continuity of care across state borders

References (APA 7th Edition):

Counseling Compact Commission. (2021). Model legislation. PDF link

Davis, K. A., et al. (2024). Therapeutic alliance and clinical outcomes in teletherapy vs. in-person psychotherapy. *Psychotherapy Research*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10503307.2023.2229505>

National Board for Certified Counselors. (2024). Counseling Compact update. link

Person, C. J., et al. (2023). Evaluating clinical outcomes in tele-behavioral health: A naturalistic, real-world analysis. *JMIR Formative Research*, 7(1), e53293. link

2. Clinical Effectiveness & Adaptation – Presenter: Dr. Sandra Bruno

Overview:

Research consistently demonstrates parity between teletherapy and in-person outcomes.

Evidence Highlights:

Aafjes-van Doorn et al. (2024): Alliance and outcome equivalence

Frayn et al. (2022): Depression treatment parity

Hubley et al. (2016): Satisfaction and engagement

Békés & Aafjes-van Doorn (2025): Digital alliance confirmed

Adapting Core Modalities:

CBT: Use shared screens and visual tools for thought mapping
Family / Play Therapy: Integrate parent coaching and home-based play
Group Therapy: Set clear online norms and confidentiality agreements
Trauma Therapy: Ensure safety plans, pacing, and stable connectivity

Key Takeaway:

“Transformation happens right where life happens — even on a screen.”

References (APA 7th Edition):

Aafjes-van Doorn, K., Spina, D. S., & Horne, S. J. (2024). The association between quality of therapeutic alliance and treatment outcomes in teletherapy: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Clinical Psychology Review*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cpr.2024.102430>
Békés, V., & Aafjes-van Doorn, K. (2025). Does the digital therapeutic alliance exist? *JMIR Mental Health*. <https://mental.jmir.org/2025/1/e69294>
Frayn, M., Fagan, M. J., & Kerns, C. (2022). Comparing efficacy of telehealth to in-person mental health care in depression: Real-world study. *JMIR Formative Research*, 7, e53293. [link](#)
Hubley, S., Lynch, S. B., Schneck, C., Thomas, M., & Shore, J. (2016). Review of key telepsychiatry outcomes. *World Journal of Psychiatry*, 6(2), 269–282. [link](#)

3. Ethics & Supervision in Telehealth – Presenter: Donda Goodson

Overview:

Ethical principles remain the same, but the context of application has changed. Competence now includes technical, legal, and relational awareness in virtual spaces.

Key Standards:

ACA (2014): Training and competence in technology
APA (2023): Informed consent, confidentiality, and data protection
NBCC (2024): Ongoing telehealth education requirements

Core Issues:

Confidentiality and HIPAA-compliant platforms
Jurisdiction and interstate practice boundaries
Informed consent and risk management
Wellness and supervision for clinicians

Best Practices for Telesupervision:

Written supervision contracts
Structured agendas and feedback sessions
Discuss technology fatigue and boundaries
Evaluate growth and ethical awareness

Key Quote:

“Ethical telesupervision isn’t about perfection — it’s about presence.”

References (APA 7th Edition):

American Counseling Association. (2014). *ACA Code of Ethics*. PDF
American Psychological Association. (2023). *Guidelines for the practice of telepsychology (revised)*. PDF
Counseling Compact Commission. (2021). *Model legislation*. PDF
McCord, C., et al. (2024). *Innovation in telesupervision: Evaluation of structure and support in digital*

training relationships. Journal of Technology in Behavioral Science. link

Perle, J. G., et al. (2023). A primer for understanding and utilizing telesupervision with counseling trainees. Counselling Psychology Quarterly. link

Stevens, M. M. (2025). Recommendations for telesupervision: Promoting ethical, competent practice. Journal of Counselor Preparation and Supervision. link

4. EMDR & Somatic Therapies Online – Presenter: Becky Moerbe

Overview:

Evidence supports EMDR and somatic interventions as feasible and effective in telehealth formats when safety and structure are prioritized.

Research Findings:

Kaptan et al., 2024 – Systematic review of remote EMDR therapy (Frontiers in Psychiatry)

McGowan et al., 2021 – Internet-delivered EMDR evaluation (BJPsych Open)

Strelchuk et al., 2023 – Online EMDR in NHS trauma service (BJPsych Open)

Yuen et al., 2015 – RCT of home-based telehealth prolonged exposure (Journal of Clinical Psychology)

Ahmad et al., 2020 – Web-based mindfulness RCT (JMIR Mental Health)

Practice Adaptations:

Use visual or auditory bilateral stimulation (BLS) tools

Reinforce client autonomy and grounding in their home environment

Maintain safety protocols and emergency plans

Client Perspective:

“I learned I can calm myself in my own home.”

Key Takeaway:

Tele-somatic work can empower clients to develop self-regulation in familiar spaces, increasing generalization of therapeutic gains.

References (APA 7th Edition):

Kaptan, S. K., Kaya, Z. M., & Akan, A. (2024). Addressing mental health need after COVID-19: A systematic review of remote EMDR therapy. *Frontiers in Psychiatry*, 14, 1336569. link

McGowan, I. W., et al. (2021). An evaluation of EMDR therapy delivered via the internet. *BJPsych Open*, 7(6), e186. link

Strelchuk, D., et al. (2023). Provision of online EMDR in an NHS trauma service. *BJPsych Open*, 9(5), e169. link

Yuen, E. K., Gros, D. F., Price, M., Zeigler, S., Tuerk, P. W., Foa, E. B., & Acierno, R. (2015). Randomized controlled trial of home-based telehealth vs in-person prolonged exposure for combat-related PTSD in veterans: Preliminary results. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 71(6), 500–512. link

Ahmad, F., et al. (2020). An eight-week, web-based mindfulness virtual community RCT. *JMIR Mental Health*, 7(2), e15520. link

5. Looking Ahead: Counseling Without Borders – Presenter: Beverly Ward

Overview:

Telehealth is now a permanent pillar of mental health care. The Counseling Compact and digital competence ensure continued expansion with ethical integrity.

Future Directions:

Continued integration of telehealth training in graduate education

Refinement of cross-state supervision standards

Enhanced focus on accessibility for underserved populations

Closing Thought:

“May you continue to bring light wherever you counsel.”

References (APA 7th Edition):

Aafjes-van Doorn, K., Spina, D. S., & Horne, S. J. (2024). The association between quality of therapeutic alliance and treatment outcomes in teletherapy: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Clinical Psychology Review*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cpr.2024.102430>

Békés, V., & Aafjes-van Doorn, K. (2025). Does the digital therapeutic alliance exist? Integrative review. *JMIR Mental Health*. <https://mental.jmir.org/2025/1/e69294>

National Board for Certified Counselors. (2024). Counseling Compact update. [link](#)