

CADS Online appointments, counselling and email

Online appointments



During the Covid-19 pandemic we learnt a lot about providing on-line counselling, groups and appointments. Although we prefer seeing you in real life (IRL) we are continuing to offer online options particularly when clients prefer it or it makes sense to do so. We are using the Zoom online video-conferencing platform for one to one, family whānau and group sessions. The usual guidelines apply though there are some additional things to be aware of for online sessions such as:

- Security: No internet-based communication platform can guarantee it 100% - confidentiality and technical problems can arise
- Please don't share the zoom links/ID/passwords with other people
- Just like IRL you need privacy: use a space where you will not be overheard or interrupted
- Using headphones improves sound quality and is more private
- Pay attention just as you would IRL and try to avoid distractions. For your own and others safety we ask that you please don't drive while online with us
- If an online session is disrupted the counsellor or group facilitator will try to call you back via Zoom or the phone. If it is not possible to reconnect, another session will be scheduled as soon as possible

When there are more people than you and the clinician

- You are welcome to have a family member/ whānau or friend with you during the appointment. Just remember to tell the health professional who is with you when you join your appointment
- We will discuss how the session will work i.e. we may spend some time with you before or after bringing everyone together on screen
- If you are in a CADS group you also need to protect the confidentiality of the other group members so please be extra mindful of the environment you are zooming from. It is not okay to have flatmates friends or family members able to see and/or hear anyone else in the group.

Using email

We are happy to use email for some communication though it does carry some security risks so please note:

- The first time you provide us with an email address, we will email you at that address to confirm we have recorded it correctly and that you are the recipient. We do not want to breach anyone's privacy by sending info to the wrong email address so please reply. If you do not reply no further e-mails will be sent to that address
- We try to minimise the amount of private clinical information contained in emails so will not use email to communicate a diagnosis or specific treatment advice unless this has been explicitly discussed with you

- Email communication will be between yourself and our service and will not usually include other people

Phone calls are still the best point of contact

- Emails are not checked regularly so if you need urgent assistance please call your clinician, your CADS team or the after-hours mental health crisis line 0800 800 717 This is the same for texts. They are useful for appointment information and updates, but not for urgent or important information about your health
- If you have any immediate safety concerns for yourself or anyone in your care please phone 111.

