

PRACTICE PROCEDURES 2018

Kindly read this information sheet and initial the PRIVACY POLICY indicating you have read, understood and agree to the conditions.

Fees and Payment

The Australian Psychological Society recommended fee for psychological treatment is \$246 for a one hour consultation. I provide a standard appointment of 55 minutes at \$220 per session (\$225 from July 2018) as from. Cash, Eftpos or credit card (Visa, Bankcard) are acceptable. Credit card payments will, however, attract a surcharge of 1%. Please note that payment is required at the clinic at the time of consultation.

Medicare

Medicare rebates are available to clients who are referred by a treating Psychiatrist or consultant paediatrician, or by a General Practitioner who prepares a GP Mental Health Care Plan (Medicare item 2710). This will entitle you to six sessions of rebates and after a review by a GP, another 4 sessions per calendar year. The current rebate is \$124.50 per 50 minutes or longer session.

Health Insurance Rebates

If you have private health insurance ancillary cover, rebates may apply. Most funds have a rebate between \$40 and \$70 per session with a maximum amount payable per calendar year (maximums vary between \$500 and \$1400 depending on fund). Please check limits and the need for a referral with your fund.

Workers Compensation or Motor Vehicle Accidents

I am willing to see people who have compensation claims. Insurance companies charge a scheduled rate and if you have been approved for treatment, the cost of consultations will be billed directly to the insurance company (inc Comcare and Work Cover). It is important to note that ultimately responsibility for payment remains with you. As agencies such as Comcare do not pay cancellation fees, **these become the responsibility of any client seen under Comcare or any other agency arrangement.** Further, if your claim is in dispute, then you will be responsible for payment.

Cancellation

The cancellation policy of my practice is that, if cancellation of a 1 hour (55 minute) session occurs with less than 24 hours' notice, a cancellation fee equivalent to 3/4 the scheduled fee, will apply. If the cancellation is between 24 and 48 hours' notice, a fee of ½ the scheduled fee will apply. For cancellations provided with more than 48 hours' notice, consideration will be given to circumstances.

For appointments that have been scheduled to take up two to three hours, a minimum of 48 hours' notice of cancellation is required. Where adequate notice is not provided, the full cost of the two- or three-hour session will be charged.

Collection and use of information

Information discussed within a session is confidential and will be treated in accordance with my PRIVACY POLICY (please read) except in the case of significant risk to self or others. Please be aware that, in certain cases, personal or health information may be released. For example, if you have been referred by others, such as an insurance company, medical practitioner, solicitor or the courts, a progress report or full report may be provided to them. Where possible you will be advised of the possibility of the information being released to a third party. In cases where a report is requested for legal purposes, any information provided to me may be included. Under law, I am required to keep files for seven years from the completion of treatment, except in the case of a child, where a file must be kept for seven years from the point the child turns 18 years of age (ie until the child turns 25 years of age). Files will be destroyed in a secure fashion.

Reports

Dr Connor provides a large number of reports for educational, work-related, diagnostic, compensation and court-related purposes. The content and findings of these reports are not to be reproduced or given to other parties without the permission of the author. Reports are to be provided to any sources in their entirety- not in partial form. Dr Connor reserves the right to decide what details provided at the interview are to be included/excluded in the report, although is willing to discuss appropriate changes suggested by clients. Dr Connor will also make use of client statements and report as direct quotes within her reports to avoid changing the intended meaning through paraphrasing.

Availability

My availability is restricted to office hours, which includes some evening and Saturday consultations. I do not provide emergency crisis care services. In case of emergency, contact your GP, Local Hospital, and/or the Mental Health Crisis Team. I also have interstate work commitments so I may not be able to provide weekly continuity - if you foresee any of these factors being a problem, please consider an alternative therapist.

Requests for Repeat Receipts (due to receipt loss), Medical Certificates, Letters to other health professionals. Please note that these will attract a small fee of \$10 (for repeat receipts or medical certificates) to \$25 (for non-routine letters to Medical practitioners), depending on the time involved.

Completion of Disability/Pension/Comcare/ forms also attract a fee, or may be completed during a session, with normal session cost.

SOME COMMON QUESTIONS

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What Happens During Therapy?

Therapy involves three main aspects:

- Initially we meet to discuss the nature of your problem and examine the factors which may be causing it. Sometimes I may conduct some psychological tests to gain further insight into the nature of the problem (these tests are usually questionnaires).
- Experience has shown that current problems are often caused by emotional traumas or experiences from the past which have not been resolved. These may need to be resolved before the current behaviour will change. Once we have an understanding of the problem, we begin the change process. This involves identifying the *patterns* of dysfunctional thoughts or behaviour, understanding the consequences of the behaviour, and then seeking to change them. I use **four prime interventions** in working with people:
- **Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)**, which is a relatively short term, focused approach to the treatment of many types of emotional, behavioural and psychiatric problems. The application of CBT varies according to the problem being addressed, but is essentially a collaborative and individualised program that helps people to identify unhelpful thoughts and behaviours and learn or relearn healthier skills and habits. CBT has been practised widely for more than 30 years. It has been researched extensively, and has demonstrated effectiveness with a variety of emotional psychological and psychiatric difficulties.

- **Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)**, which gets its name from one of its core messages: accept what is out of your personal control, and commit to action that improves and enriches your life. The aim of ACT is to maximise human potential for a rich, full and meaningful life. ACT does this in the following ways:
 - a) teaching you psychological skills to deal with your painful thoughts and feelings effectively - in such a way that they have much less impact and influence over you (these are known as mindfulness skills).
 - b) helping you to clarify what is truly important and meaningful to you - i.e your values - then use that knowledge to guide, inspire and motivate you to change your life for the better.

- **EMDR: I am a trained EMDR practitioner** (which stands for **Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing**). This is a psychotherapy that enables people to heal from the symptoms and emotional distress that are the result of disturbing life experiences. Repeated studies show that by using EMDR people can experience the benefits of psychotherapy that once took years to make a difference. It is widely assumed that severe emotional pain requires a long time to heal. EMDR therapy shows that the mind can in fact heal from psychological trauma much as the body recovers from physical trauma. EMDR therapy demonstrates that a similar sequence of events occurs with mental processes. The brain's information processing system naturally moves toward mental health. If the system is blocked or imbalanced by the impact of a disturbing event, the emotional wound festers and can cause intense suffering. Once the block is removed, healing resumes. Using the detailed protocols and procedures learned in EMDR training sessions, clinicians help clients activate their natural healing processes.

- **Hypnosis:** prior to providing this form of therapy, however, I undertake a thorough assessment to ensure that this is the most appropriate form of therapy for the client, and that the client is ready for, understands this form of treatment. I am registered to provide hypnosis through ASCH.

