

# Notes to Online Therapy Institute Verification Application process.

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## Version 1.1(N) (March 2010)

This document is designed to help you fulfil the OTI Verification Application process, and should be read in conjunction with it. We also recommend reading the notes for other categories that may impact on your service design and delivery.

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We encourage ALL Online Therapy Institute Verification applicants to read through the applicable OTI Ethical Framework. We believe that whether you build services or conduct services, a fundamental understanding of the ethics involved in the delivery of mental health information and services is paramount.

### 1. Client Services (therapy, counselling/counseling, coaching)

#### General Note:

- Private Practitioners should be sure that 3<sup>rd</sup> party services used for communication follow these standards.
- E-Clinics should follow these standards.

#### 1.1 *Security/Compliance*

Encryption considerations are:

- Is data encrypted in transit via 256-bit SSL?
- Is all personal health information (PHI) encrypted using a modern method such as AES, MD5, or SHA-1?
- Has the service been audited by a reputable compliance and security firm?

Examples of security/confidentiality standards within jurisdictions are HIPAA in the U.S. or Data Protection Act in the U.K.

An example of required notices is HIPAA Privacy Policy

## **1.2 Safety/ethics**

OTI recommends Befrienders.org/Samaritans.org, where crisis email and phone numbers across the globe are available

Contacts details should not be personal – PO Box numbers and confidential voicemail business telephone numbers are examples of what could be used

## **1.4 Training**

We recommend any post master's training, certification or courses be listed. Continuing Professional Development or Continuing Education Units may also be listed if relevant

## **Therapist/Coach Directory**

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- Has the service been audited by a reputable compliance and security firm?

## **Social Network**

OTI recommends Befrienders.org/Samaritans.org, where crisis email and phone numbers across the globe are available

OTI recommends client cases (past or present) should never be discussed in any manner in a social media forum, even if the information has been “disguised” or “blinded.”

## Blog

OTI recommends Befrienders.org/Samaritans.org, where crisis email and phone numbers across the globe are available

OTI recommends client cases (past or present) should never be discussed in any manner in a blog, even if the information has been “disguised” or “blinded.”

Contacts details should not be personal – PO Box numbers Office mailing addresses and confidential voicemail business telephone numbers are examples of what could be used

## Peer Support

OTI recommends Befrienders.org/Samaritans.org, where crisis email and phone numbers across the globe are available

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- Is data encrypted in transit via 256-bit SSL?
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## Self Help

OTI recommends Befrienders.org/Samaritans.org, where crisis email and phone numbers across the globe are available

Examples of consumer entries are journal writing or mood tracking websites.

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- Has the service been audited by a reputable compliance and security firm?

## Practice Building/Marketing

OTI recommends Befrienders.org/Samaritans.org, where crisis email and phone numbers across the globe are available

Examples of maintaining a responsible professional web presence are ensuring confidentiality is kept and dual relationships are avoided within social media, such as Facebook and Twitter

## Supervision/Consultation

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## Education/Professional Development

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Examples for professional organisations:

- aims and objectives such as a mission statement,
- membership policies such as mandatory trainings and costs
- complaints procedures should outline a clear route for professionals and clients who wish to make a complaint

## Crisis Intervention

OTI recommends Befrienders.org/Samaritans.org, where crisis email and phone numbers across the globe are available