

Telepractice and Cogmed

The telepractice information in this document is intended to support professionals in making informed, well-reasoned decisions around remote intervention. This information is not intended to be comprehensive regarding all considerations for intervention via telepractice. It should not be interpreted as a requirement or recommendation to conduct intervention via telepractice.

Professionals should remain mindful to:

- Follow professional best practice recommendations and respective ethical codes
- Follow telepractice regulations and legal requirements from federal, state and local authorities, licensing boards, professional liability insurance providers, and payors
- Develop competence with intervention via telepractice through activities such as practicing, studying, consulting with other professionals, and engaging in professional development.

Cogmed Working Memory Training (Cogmed; Pearson, 2020) is well-suited to use in telepractice (often referred to as telepsychology) or distance learning settings. The Cogmed training is usually done at home by clients in a healthcare setting and this same approach can be used with students who need to do training outside of the school or school day.

When working with a Cogmed user (trainee) in a remote setting, it is important for the Cogmed coach to establish a positive rapport with the trainee. This can be accomplished using a videoconference platform (preferred) or over the phone. Ongoing coaching sessions during the training protocol can also be accomplished in either manner. This is very consistent with Cogmed training best practices and this approach has been used successfully by Cogmed coaches for many years.

Actual Cogmed training sessions (Blocks) are usually completed by the trainee independently from the Cogmed coach. In the case of young children, a parent or other adult can provide motivational support and supervision during the training session. Cogmed regular coaching sessions are a separate activity and can be conducted via telepractice. The following guidelines refer primarily to these regular coaching sessions.

Conducting Telepractice Intervention

In addition to the general information on Pearson’s telepractice page, professionals should address the following factors (Eichstadt et al., 2013) when planning to administer interventions via telepractice:

- Telepractice Environment & Equipment
- Trainee Considerations

Telepractice Environment & Equipment

Computers and Connectivity

Two computers with audio and video capability and stable internet connectivity—one for the Cogmed coach and one for the user (trainee)—are required if using teleconferencing software. A web camera, microphone, and speakers or headphones are required for both the coach and the trainee.

Image/Screen Size

It is recommended that computer screens used for teleconference intervention be at least 15” measured diagonally if using teleconferencing software.

Audio Considerations

High-quality audio capabilities are required during the coaching session. An over the head, two-ear, stereo headset with attached boom microphone is recommended for both the coach and trainee. Headphones with a microphone may be used if a headset is not available.

The coach should test the audio for both the coach and trainee in the initial virtual meeting and at the beginning of the coaching session to ensure a high-quality audio environment is present. Testing the audio should include an informal conversation before the coaching session where the coach is listening for any clicks, pops, or breaks in the audio signal that distort or interrupt the voice of the trainee. The coach should also ask if there are any interruptions or distortions in the audio signal on the trainee’s end.

Lighting

If using teleconferencing software, good overhead and facial lighting should be established for the coach and trainee. Blinds or shades should be closed to reduce sun glare on faces and the computer screens.

Teleconferencing Software

Teleconferencing software is preferred, but Cogmed can also be coached by telephone. Ongoing coaching sessions during the training protocol can also be accomplished in either manner. This is very consistent with Cogmed training best practices and this approach has been used successfully by Cogmed coaches for many years.

Video

If using teleconferencing software, high-quality video (HD preferred) is required during the coaching session. Make sure the full faces of the coach and the trainee are seen using each respective web camera.

Trainee Considerations

Appropriateness

The coach should first ensure that a telepractice coaching session is appropriate for the trainee and for the purpose of the intervention. Clinical judgment, best practice guidance for telepractice (e.g., American Psychological Association Services, 2020; Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards, 2013; Inter Organizational Practice Committee, 2020), information from professional organizations and other professional entities (e.g., licensing boards, legal resources, professional liability insurance providers, payors), consultation with other knowledgeable professionals, existing research, and any available federal or state regulations should be considered in the decision-making process. Consideration should be given to whether the necessary administrative and technological tasks involved in a telepractice session can be accomplished without impacting the efficacy of the training.

Conclusion

Cogmed is designed for and well-suited to a telepractice coaching session. It may be used via telepractice without additional permission from Pearson.

References

- American Psychological Association Services. (2020). *Guidance on psychological tele-assessment during the COVID-19 crisis*. (2020). https://www.apaservices.org/practice/reimbursement/health-codes/testing/tele-assessment-covid-19?fbclid=IwAR1d_YNXYS2Yc5mdlz_ZIYSkrj_6A9BQeKulHxEEjjRh1XDR6fOYncM3b4
- Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards. (2013). *ASPPB telepsychology task force principles and standards*. http://houstonneuropsych.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/ASPPB_TELEPSYCH_PRINCIPLES.pdf
- Eichstadt, T. J., Castilleja, N., Jakubowitz, M., & Wallace, A. (2013, November). Standardized assessment via telepractice: Qualitative review and survey data [Paper presentation]. Annual meeting of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, Chicago, IL, United States.
- Inter Organizational Practice Committee. (2020). *Recommendations/guidance for teleneuropsychology (TeleNP) in response to the COVID-19 pandemic*. <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/50a3e393e4b07025e1a4f0d0/t/5e8260be9a64587cfd3a9832/1585602750557/Recommendations-Guidance+for+Teleneuropsychology-COVID-19-4.pdf>
- Pearson. (2020). *Cogmed Working Memory Training*.