

# Video Consultation and Mobile Health Apps in Psychotherapy in Germany

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NPCE Meeting

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## Professional code of conduct for psychotherapists in Germany:

- The standard of conducting psychotherapy is in direct personal contact with the patient (“face-to-face”)
- Use of electronic communication is allowed under consideration of the duty of psychotherapeutic care
- Diagnostics, indication of treatment and patient information needs to be conducted in direct personal contact with the patient
- Adequate treatment monitoring needs to be ensured

# Video consultation: regulatory framework

- Costs for psychotherapeutic video consultation is covered by statutory health insurance since October 2019
- Only Software that is certified concerning data security and privacy can be used to conduct video consultations
- First sessions need to be conducted in direct personal contact with the patient before starting video consultation
- A maximum of 20 % of all patients/sessions can be conducted via video consultation
- Since the Covid-19 pandemic the 20 % restriction is paused

## **Survey on the use of video consultation during the pandemic:**

- 77 % of the psychotherapists used video consultations
- 95 % started using video consultation during the pandemic
- On average 40 % of all patients are treated via video consultation

## **Evaluation of video consultation by psychotherapists:**

- Great benefits for some patients (e.g. severe somatic illness)
  - Not suitable for every patient (e.g. young kids)
  - Technical problems can interfere with psychotherapeutic interventions
- Good supplement but no replacement for face-to-face psychotherapy

## Law on digital healthcare in November 2019:

- Digital Health Applications (DiGA) will be covered by statutory health insurance
- Federal Institute for Drugs and Medical Devices will assess health apps leading to a listing in a directory of reimbursable digital health applications
- Physicians and psychotherapists can prescribe DiGA listed in the directory
- DiGA need to be medical devices and fulfil additional requirements regarding data protection, user friendliness and the examination of the evidence of positive healthcare effects

Thank you for your attention!

# Psychotherapist: New Structure of Qualification in Germany

**Dr. Nikolaus Melcop**

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→ Since the Psychotherapeutengesetz (psychotherapists law) of 1999, psychological psychotherapists and child and adolescent psychotherapists **have been recognised as** health professions with state approval (Approbation). (Clinical psychology is not an independent profession in Germany). Each of these psychotherapists is a member of a regional chamber and can be reimbursed by health insurance funds. The service is basically free for most people.

# Current situation

- The qualification for psychological psychotherapists and child and adolescent psychotherapists is separate for each profession
- The qualification process has a minimum duration of three (full-time) or five (part-time) years of postgraduate specialist training in psychotherapy and certification in an approved psychotherapeutic approach
- Following that, psychotherapists need to pass a state examination and then the candidates are licensed

# Most urgent problems

→ The current graduation is not adjusted to the structure of bachelor's and master's degree

→ There is a very low payment during postgraduate training

## Future structure

**On September 1. 2020 the law for the reform of the psychothrapists law came into power:**

- Master's degree with intense practical and scientific qualification
- In conclusion state exam and state certification (license to practise independently)
- Legal professional title „Psychotherapeut/in“ (psychotherapist)

## Future structure

- Following state certification (Approbation), further training with appropriate payment and for the whole range of the psychotherapeutic care system (outpatient, inpatient and other institutions, e.g. youth care)
- Advanced training for Children and Youth psychotherapists or for adult psychotherapists, based on a scientifically approved psychotherapeutic approach
- “Specialised psychotherapist for children and adolescents /or adults” will be the official title
- Admission to treat patients in a private practice within the system of statutory health insurance

# New structure of qualification

<b>Course of study</b>	Psychotherapy
Focus:	Scientific and practical psychotherapeutic knowledge
Degree:	Bachelor's and master's degree
State examination:	Licensure ("Approbation")
<b>Training</b>	Advanced Training
<i>Status during training</i>	Employee
<i>Duration</i>	Minimum 5 years full-time
Payment	Regular salary
Components of the training	Psychotherapist in a (psychiatric) clinic (minimum 2 years) Outpatient treatment (minimum 2 years) Possible: Specialised centres (1 year) Self-experience / supervision / theory
Specialisation	Scientifically approved psychotherapeutic approach Exam (conducted by the state psychotherapist chambers)
Degree	Specialised psychotherapist for children and adolescents / or / adults
Admission	Admission to statutory health insurance

# Our agenda?

The Chambers of Germany are developing regulations regarding content and structure of the advanced training

In 2022, the new training courses with approved institutions and licensed trainers will start

Thank you very much for your attention!