

## Q: Why not for anyone, anywhere?

Great question. During this pandemic, one of most pressing issues for mental health professionals is providing telementalhealth services across state lines and country borders.

Every state and most countries have laws and ethical guidelines regulating who can practice in their territory. The general rule of thumb is: *providers must be licensed in the state their client resides.* (e.g. If a student is home in Texas, the provider must be licensed in Texas.) If a provider violates these rules, there are civil & criminal penalties along with the potential of losing one's license to practice.

There are some state by state exceptions that allow temporary practice for 10 to 30 days for *existing* clients, but this does not apply to new clients nor do all states allow this flexibility.

Mental health professionals across the board have been lobbying hard to pass federal legislation for emergency interstate practice. In early March, Congress provided psychologists greater flexibility to work with seniors on Medicare during the pandemic but unfortunately the bill stopped there. Our advocates in D.C. are continuing to work on this issue but it may take some time.

## Q: How is the Stone Center addressing this issue?

The Stone Center is dedicated to supporting students' mental health needs. We are working closely with Wellesley College's General Counsel to keep abreast of changing regulations to provide compassionate and ethical care.

- If you need support and don't know where to begin, please contact us. We will help you connect with mental health resources, wherever you are.
- We are collaborating with student groups and campus partners to provide workshops & trainings addressing different mental health topics.
- We have been exploring external agencies to address the needs of students studying out-of-state & internationally. We will keep you posted!

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