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The International Network of Orthodox Mental Health Professionals

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A Word to the Mental Health Consumer from NEFESH

The International Network of Orthodox Mental Health Professionals

In an effort to improve the quality of mental health services to the Torah community, the Board of Directors of Nefesh International has developed a set of guidelines for the consumer. These guidelines are intended to help those seeking mental health services from a **private/independent** practitioner to find a competent provider. On the other hand, psychotherapists in a **clinic** setting should receive clinical supervision from a licensed practitioner.

- ✓ Every practitioner should have a minimum of a Master's degree from an accredited school in a clinical mental health field.
- ✓ The psychotherapist should be licensed in the state in which services are offered. This license should permit independent clinical practice by the practitioner.
- ✓ Masters level clinicians (e.g., LMSW, LMHC, LCSW) in private practice should have completed at least 5 years of 30 hours/week of clinical work.

  Doctoral level therapists should have at least 2 years post licensure of 30 hours/week of clinical work.

  Psychiatrists should have completed a residency program accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education in the field of psychiatry.
- ✓ A private clinician in his/her first 10 years of practice should have ongoing supervision from a more experienced colleague.
- ✓ The private psychotherapist should have a *rav* of whom s/he asks *sh'eilos*.

The consumer should not be reluctant to ask a potential provider whether he or she meets these standards. It is our hope that these suggestions will encourage better choices in the selection of either **private or clinic-based** practitioners and thus contribute to more successful outcomes.

While these guidelines were developed relative to practice in New York and New Jersey, they generally can and should be applied to any geographical area.

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