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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 help those seeking mental health services to find a competent provider.

- The private practitioner should have a minimum of a Masters degree from an accredited school in a clinical mental health field.
- He or she should be licensed in the state in which services are offered. This license should permit independent practice on the part of the practitioner.
- Masters level clinicians (e.g., LMSW, LMHC) should have completed at least 5 years of 30 hrs/wk of clinical work. Doctoral level therapists should have at least 3 years post licensure of 30 hrs/wk 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 first 10 years of practice should have ongoing supervision from a more experienced colleague.
- The private psychotherapist should have a *rav* of whom 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 **private** practitioners and thus contribute to more successful outcomes.