

## OFFICE POLICIES

### Office Hours:

- Our office is open Tuesday-Thursday 7:30am-5:00pm and Friday 7:00am-4:30pm, by appointment only
- Please note that the outer door to the building is locked before 7:45am; if you have an early morning appointment, please contact the office so we may let you in
- We observe major holidays and take vacation at various times; we will communicate when the office will be closed with as much notice as possible
- All first appointments are considered a consultation only; we will let you know if we are in the position to offer treatment services beyond the first appointment

### Emergencies/After Hours:

- Emergency psychiatric care is available 24 hours a day, but a patient in a situation requiring immediate care should call 911
- In the event of an emergency, call the office's main number (207-221-0635)

### Appointment Cancellations:

- Please provide as much notice as possible when canceling an appointment
- If an appointment is canceled with at least 24 hours' notice, there is no penalty
- Cancellations within 24 hours of the scheduled appointment (*Short-Notice Cancellation*):
  - First time not penalized
  - Second offense results in a \$50 fee, which must be paid prior to rescheduling
  - Third offense results in a \$50 fee and initiation of discharge from the practice
- If frequent cancellations become a pattern, we will provide a warning that additional cancellations, even with adequate notice, will be treated as *Short-Notice Cancellations*
- Insurers will not reimburse for appointments that do not happen, so the patient is personally responsible for any fees levied because of cancellations
- Exceptions will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis and are at the doctor's discretion

### Appointment Time:

- When an appointment is scheduled, that time has been specifically reserved for you and when it is missed that time cannot be used to treat another patient in need of care; we sincerely appreciate your assistance and cooperation as this allows for a smooth office flow and more efficiently uses your time
- Appointments start at the scheduled time
  - For all first appointments, we strongly encourage you to arrive 20 minutes prior to your scheduled appointment time to complete intake documentation and begin your appointment on-time
  - If you arrive early, please relax in the waiting area until your appointment time
  - If you arrive late, your session will not be extended



- If you are too late, leaving less than half the allotted time for the visit (*Tardiness*), we will not be able to see you; the session will be cancelled and treated as a *Short-Notice Cancellation* with regard to fees
- Insurers will not reimburse for appointments that do not happen, so the patient is personally responsible for any fees levied because of *Tardiness*
- Appointments end promptly on-time
  - **15-minute appointments** end **12 minutes** after the start-time to give us 3 minutes to send prescriptions, write notes, make collaborative calls
  - **30-minute appointments** end **25 minutes** after the start-time to give us 5 minutes to send prescriptions, write notes, make collaborative calls
  - **60-minute appointments** end **50 minutes** after the start-time to give us 10 minutes to send prescriptions, write notes, make collaborative calls
  - **Intake appointments** end **60 minutes** after the start-time

#### No-Shows:

- When a patient fails to attend a scheduled appointment and does not provide prior notice, it is considered a *No-Show*
- A *No-Show* incurs a fee equal to that of the scheduled appointment; it must be paid prior to rescheduling
- After the second *No-Show*, a 100% deposit will be required for any future appointments
- After three *No-Shows*, we will initiate your discharge from the practice
- Insurers will not reimburse for appointments that do not happen, so the patient is personally responsible for any fees levied because of *No-Shows*

#### Controlled Substance Agreement:

- There are times that we may prescribe a controlled substance to treat a health condition; Controlled substances are any drug or chemical that has its possession, use, or manufacture regulated by the government; These substances are regulated due to their potential for misuse, abuse, or addiction
- We will only prescribe a controlled substance for a legitimate medical purpose during appointments in the usual course of our professional practice
- If prescribed a controlled substance, you must agree to the following:
  1. I will keep (and be on time for) all my scheduled appointments with the doctor and other members of the treatment team
  2. I will participate in all other types of treatment that I am asked to participate in
  3. I will keep the medicine safe, secure and out of the reach of children; If the medicine is lost or stolen, I understand it will not be replaced until my next appointment, and may not be replaced at all
  4. I will take my medication as instructed and not change the way I take it without first talking to the doctor or other member of the treatment team
  5. I will not call between appointments, or at night or on the weekends looking for refills; I understand that prescriptions will be filled only during scheduled office visits with the treatment team



6. I will make sure I have an appointment for refills; If I am having trouble making an appointment, I will tell a member of the treatment team immediately
7. I will treat the staff at the office respectfully at all times; I understand that if I am disrespectful to staff or disrupt the care of other patients my treatment will be stopped
8. I will not sell this medicine or share it with others; I understand that if I do, my treatment will be stopped
9. I will sign a release form to let the doctor speak to all other doctors or providers that I see
10. I will tell the doctor all other medicines that I take, and let him/her know right away if I have a prescription for a new medicine
11. I will use only one pharmacy to get all my medicines
12. I will not get any other medicines that can be addictive such as opioid pain medicines, benzodiazepines (Klonopin, Xanax, Valium), or stimulants (Ritalin, amphetamine) without telling a member of the treatment team before I fill that prescription; I understand that the only exception to this is if I need pain medicine for an emergency at night or on the weekend
13. I will not use illegal drugs such as heroin, cocaine, marijuana, or amphetamines; I understand that if I do, my treatment may be stopped
14. I will avoid the use substances, medications, and foods (such as poppy seeds) that may cause “false positives” on drug testing; I understand that any “false positive” will therefore be considered a failed test
15. I will come in for drug testing and counting of my pills within 24 hours of being called; I understand that I must make sure the office has current contact information in order to reach me, and that any missed tests will be considered positive for drugs
16. I will keep up to date with any bills from the office and tell the doctor or member of the treatment team immediately if I lose my insurance or can't pay for treatment anymore
17. I understand that I may lose my right to treatment in this office if I break any part of this agreement; If the violation involves obtaining these medications from another individual, or fraudulently, I may also be reported to other physicians, pharmacies, medical facilities, and the appropriate authorities
18. If my doctor decides that this medicine is hurting me more than helping me, this medicine may be stopped by my doctor in a safe way

#### Prescription Refills:

- Our goal is to assure that you have enough medication prescribed to last until your next scheduled appointment
- Prescription refills require close monitoring to ensure the safe continuation of the appropriate dose, frequency, and term of that medication
- Please bring prescription refill requests to appointments; We will prescribe the appropriate number of prescription refills to last you until your next scheduled appointment



- As prescriptions are prescribed with the number of refills needed until the next appointment, almost all requests for prescription refills between regularly scheduled appointments will require an appointment in the office prior to authorization; It is the patient's responsibility to schedule your next appointment in advance and with adequate time to receive a prescription refill
- In the event that you require an emergency refill, prescriptions refill requests should be submitted to the refill line; If approved, an appropriate refill will be submitted to your local pharmacy; If your prescription refill is not approved, please contact the office to schedule an appointment
- Patients requesting new prescriptions must be seen for an appointment; They are not prescribed over the phone
- Maintaining current pharmacy information is the responsibility of the patient; Please confirm with the practice that your correct local pharmacy address and phone number or mail order pharmacy information is on file; Prescription refill requests will be submitted electronically to your pharmacy; Your local pharmacy will contact you when your prescription is ready
- We will always order generic prescriptions whenever available unless brand is medically necessary; Each insurance plan outlines a detailed classification for medications which could impact which medication, generic or brand, is prescribed and the cost to you; Contact your insurance plan for details
- Prescriptions classified as controlled substances are not processed after hours or on the weekends
- We participate in the Maine Prescription Monitoring Program
- Please allow 48–72 hours to process prescription requests; Medications requiring pre-authorization may require additional time to process; Please plan ahead for refills during holidays and when traveling
- We reserve the right to charge an administrative fee if there are multiple requests for prescriptions requested outside of a visit (\$25 for up to 2 prescriptions, \$10 per prescription above and beyond prescription 2)

#### Requests for Paperwork:

- Please bring letters, forms, and other administrative requests to appointments so we can complete these during your session
- If time needed to complete paperwork exceeds our available time, we require payment for this additional work (\$25 for up to 2 pages, \$10 per page above and beyond page 2)

#### Medical Records:

- Your medical records are protected by state law regarding confidentiality of patient records as well as federal HIPAA rules, and may be further protected by federal confidentiality rules (42 CFR, Part 2)
- These rules prohibit us from releasing medical records unless expressly permitted by the written consent of the person to whom it pertains; Refer to the *Notice of Privacy Practices* for more information about protected health information



- You may ask us to transmit your record to a specific person or entity by making a written, signed request
- You have the right to access, inspect, and copy your protected health information
  - This usually includes medical and/or billing records; You must submit a written request to us, and you agree to pay the reasonable costs associated with complying with your request before we provide you with your record
  - You may ask us to provide your electronic record in electronic format; If we are unable to provide your record in the format you request, we will provide the record in a form that works for you and our office
  - Under certain circumstances, we may not allow you to see or access certain parts of your record; You may ask that this decision be reviewed by another licensed professional
- We may charge for the reasonable costs associated with complying with medical record requests before we provide records (\$5 for the first page, \$0.25 per page above and beyond the first page)

#### Text Messaging Policy:

- We will ask for permission for text messaging reminders for appointments
- Both staff and the doctor read and respond to text messages
- By agreeing to communicate via text messaging, you are assuming a certain degree of risk of breach of privacy beyond that inherent in other modes of traditional communication (such as telephone, written, or face-to-face)
- We cannot ensure the confidentiality of our text messaging communications against purposeful or accidental network interception
- Due to this inherent vulnerability, we would caution you against text messaging anything of a very private nature
- Additionally, we will save your text messaging correspondence and these communications should be considered part of your medical record; therefore, you should consider that our text messaging communications may not be confidential and will be included in your medical chart
- Never send text messages of an urgent or emergent nature
- We will try to check text messages regularly; however, call our office if you have not received a reply within 72 hours

#### Email Policy:

- Please carbon-copy (*cc*) the Office Manager in any email
- By agreeing to communicate via email, you are assuming a certain degree of risk of breach of privacy beyond that inherent in other modes of traditional communication (such as telephone, written, or face-to-face)
- We cannot ensure the confidentiality of our electronic communications against purposeful or accidental network interception
- Due to this inherent vulnerability, we would caution you against emailing anything of a very private nature





- Additionally, we will save your email correspondence and these communications should be considered part of your medical record; therefore, you should consider that our electronic communications may not be confidential and will be included in your medical chart
- Never send emails of an urgent or emergent nature
- We will try to check email regularly; however, call our office if you have not received a reply within 72 hours

#### Payment Policies:

- We do not participate with Anthem, Blue Cross, Blue Shield, Medicare, or Mainecare (Medicaid)
- We participate in several health insurance plans, including Aetna, Allways, Beacon Health, Cigna, ComPsych, Community Health Options, GEHA, Harvard Pilgrim, Humana, Magellan, Optum, Tufts Health Plan, United Healthcare, Martin's Point US Family Health Plan, and VA Community Care; our participation may change over time and we will do our best to alert you if we stop participating with a particular plan
- If we do not participate with your health insurance plan, you will likely be able to receive reimbursement for a portion of your costs of treatment with us if you have out-of-network benefits; we can provide an invoice with the information needed to do so
- We recommend that you contact your insurance company for specific information about your coverage for mental health services
- It is your responsibility to keep all insurance and demographic information up to date
- You must make all co-payments at the time of your visit, as well as payments for any deductibles, co-insurance, or non-covered services
- If referral is required for your visit (common with HMO plans), it is your sole responsibility to arrive for your appointment with your required referral; If you do not have the required referral at the time of your appointment, you will be required to pay the full appointment fee at the time of service
- A 50% deposit is required to schedule an initial appointment for prospective self-pay patients; The remaining balance is due at the appointment; If the prospective patient:
  - cancels within 24 hours of the scheduled visit (*Short-Notice Cancellation*)
  - arrives too late, leaving less than half the allotted time for the visit (*Tardiness*)
  - fails to attend the visit and does not provide prior notice (*No-Show*)

the deposit will be forfeited to Jonathan C Fellers MD PA LLC; if we agree to reschedule another initial appointment, a 100% deposit will be required

- If a check is returned due to insufficient funds, you will be charged an additional fee of \$25
- Unless arrangements are made for a payment plan, all accounts that are outstanding for more than 90 days will be sent to a collection agency

#### Administrative Discharge:

- It may become necessary to end patient relationships that are no longer therapeutic or appropriate based on patient behaviors; If efforts to rehabilitate the relationship are not



appropriate or unsuccessful, we will administratively discharge a patient from the practice

- Generally, ending the relationship is considered under the following circumstances:
  - Treatment nonadherence: The patient does not or will not follow the treatment plan or the terms of a controlled substance contract or discontinues medication or therapy regimens prior to completion
  - Follow-up noncompliance: The patient repeatedly cancels follow-up visits or fails to keep scheduled appointments with providers or consultants
  - Office policy nonadherence: The patient fails to observe office policies, such as those implemented for prescription refills or appointment cancellations, or refuses to adhere to mandated infection-control precautions
  - Verbal abuse or violence: The patient, a family member, or a third-party caregiver is rude, uses disparaging or demeaning language, or sexually harasses office personnel or other patients, visitors, or vendors; exhibits violent or irrational behavior; makes threats of physical harm; or uses anger to jeopardize the safety and well-being of anyone present in the office
  - Display of firearms or weapons: The patient, a family member, or a third-party caregiver wields a firearm or weapon on the premises
  - Inappropriate or criminal conduct: The patient exhibits inappropriate sexual behavior toward providers or staff or participates in drug diversion, theft, or other criminal conduct involving the practice
  - Nonpayment: The patient owes a backlog of bills and has declined to work with the office to establish a payment plan or has discontinued making payments that had been agreed on previously

Signature:

- By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read the above information, and that I understand and agree to the above statements

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Patient or Legal Guardian (please print)

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Dated \_\_\_\_\_

