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Therapy Connections

Outpatient Clinical Services

Welcome to Therapy Connections, LLC

Welcome to Therapy Connections and thank you for your trust in our services.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION - PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

We find it helpful to our clients to provide a brief overview of our practice, policies, and the services we provide, as well as a discussion of the therapy process. In your first meeting at Therapy Connections, the therapist will discuss the issues that led you to contact us and will gather additional information needed to begin the therapeutic relationship. We will review confidentiality, privacy practices and financial responsibility. At any time during our work together, please ask any questions or alert the therapist to any concerns you may have.

Dimensions of Therapy:

Clients generally come to therapy because they are experiencing difficulties and desire to make some changes. Our focus is on each client's individual needs and goals. The therapy process requires commitment, flexibility and courage, since there may be some discomfort in therapy as we move towards change and reaching your goals. It is important to remember that new and sometimes unexpected insights can be gained through both positive and negative emotions. Together you and the therapist will work through any difficulties and insights gained during the therapy process.

Appointment Scheduling, Insurance, and Attendance:

Appointments are scheduled by calling the clinic office. As with any other medical provider, therapy appointments do occasionally require some flexibility with scheduling. Regular therapy appointments are fifty minutes. All appointments, changes, or cancellations are scheduled by phone. Texting or email is neither confidential nor secure, and we do not arrange appointments by these means in order to remain in compliance with federal HIPAA regulations.

If insurance is to be used for payment, the coverage is verified and approved prior to scheduling any appointments. If a different form of insurance (e.g. different insurance company, policy number, EAP, responsible party, etc.) is presented at the appointment, in most cases the session **will not be held** at that time, and will need to be rescheduled. This is required in order to prevent the client from being responsible for an unexpected out-of-pocket expense.

While we do work with children in therapy, we are not able to provide oversight of children in the reception area. If a child is left in the reception area and engages in disruptive or other behaviors that we deem inappropriate, your session will need to be interrupted so you can redirect your child and address their behaviors.

First Appointment

Date: _____

Time: _____

Phone: _____

If you are unable to keep this appointment please call to reschedule.

Office: 763-270-0054

Fax: 763-208-6371

Contacting Your Therapist:

Our therapists make every effort to return phone calls promptly and typically respond within 24 hours, Monday thru Friday. If staff is unavailable when you call, leave a message and include your phone number on the voicemail as messages are checked regularly. To comply with HIPAA confidentiality requirements, our therapists do not receive or respond to emails or text messages. E-mail and text messaging are NOT secure forms of communication and therapists are required to protect clients confidentiality at all times, so do not send or expect to receive any communications by those means.

Missed Appointments:

Your therapist reserves a block of time for you and your scheduled appointment. If you cannot attend your scheduled session, you must notify the clinic office as soon as possible. Cancellations made less than 24 hours before a scheduled appointment will be charged a \$75 late cancellation / missed appointment fee, except in the case of illness, medical, or family emergency. Your therapist will discuss any missed appointment with you; however, it is your responsibility to call your therapist as soon as is reasonably possible. If you do not call, you will be charged the standard \$75 fee for a missed appointment. Remember that appointment cancellations or changes must be made by a phone call. We are not able to accept appointment cancellations by e-mail or text messaging. Contact our office at 763-270-0054 to change or cancel an appointment.

Insurance/EAP providers do not pay for missed appointments and require the missed appointment charge to be reflected on your statement. Note that EAP providers require notification from the therapist of missed/cancelled appointments.

Missed appointments need to be kept to a minimum if progress is to continue in therapy. Multiple cancelled appointments will be discussed and if we decide that the commitment to therapy is not possible, then therapy services can be placed on hold or your case closed. Clients can return to therapy at a better time and when the necessary time commitment can be made.

Professional Fees:

Fees vary depending upon whether the work is individual, couple, family, etc. Your therapist will be happy to discuss your particular situation and our fees with you.

- Payment options - We accept cash, check, MasterCard, Visa, and Discover. We also accept most insurance plans.
- Payment for services is due in full at the time of service unless you have insurance (see Insurance/Billing below). If you do not have insurance, or prefer not to use your insurance, payment is due in full at the time of service.
 - If the fee cannot be paid in full at the appointment, two options are available:
 - 1) Send in full payment before your next appointment
 - 2) Bring full payment to the next appointment (including any payment due for the current session)
 - Therapy Connections will not schedule or hold any further appointments until any outstanding balance is paid in full.
- Co-pays are due at the time of service. Co-pays are the clients responsibility in accordance with the contractual obligations and agreements of the insurance plan.
- Any co-insurance or deductible will be due within 30 days following notification by your insurance company to Therapy Connections of the co-insurance or deductible amount.

- Non-payment of co-pays, or client balances, will result in termination of services until balances are paid. We understand that financial situations occur which can make paying a balance in full difficult. If you experience this type of difficulty, talk to your therapist or call our office as soon as possible so we can make the appropriate arrangements. If a bill remains unpaid after thirty (30) days, our office will call you to set up a payment schedule.

Services We Do Not Provide:

Therapy Connections **does not provide** insurance or disability evaluations, nor custody, parenting evaluations, or mediation. We will attempt to provide you with references of professionals who do perform those services if requested. Therapy Connections does not perform court evaluations, does not appear in court on behalf of clients, and does not maintain client records intended for use in court proceedings. The typical therapeutic relationship involves trust and confidentiality, and becoming involved in court proceedings can significantly damage that trust, thereby damaging the professional relationship of client and therapist.

In the event that Therapy Connections is subpoenaed or ordered by a court to produce records, Therapy Connections will charge the full amount applicable under state law, or the usual and customary fees for our services. This includes:

- Copies of records will be made available for a \$16.25 processing fee, plus \$1.23 per page for copying (Minnesota Statute 144.292, Subd. 6).
- If Therapy Connections testifies in any court proceeding, whether voluntarily, by subpoena, or by court order, the client agrees to pay Therapy Connections for the testimony related services (including, but not limited to, parking, meals, travel, necessary expenditures, time spent speaking with attorneys, preparation, etc), at the rate of \$250.00 per hour.
- The client further agrees to pay a non-refundable retainer fee of \$2,000.00 at least two weeks prior to the appearance, presentation of records, or testimony requested. Cash, or a Cashier's Check payable to Therapy Connections, will be the only acceptable forms of payment.

Additional Services:

These include things such as: letters, court summaries, consultation with other professionals, etc. These types of requests will be discussed and reviewed to ensure that, in the professional opinion of the therapist, it is appropriate for them to act on the request.

Once the therapist determines that it is appropriate, and has agreed to act on the request, the standard fee is \$250 per hour, with a minimum fee of one hour (i.e. \$250). No work will be initiated on any request until the minimum fee of \$250.00 is received. Cash, personal check, or a Cashier's Check payable to Therapy Connections, will be the only acceptable forms of payment. After payment is received, due to client scheduling and other professional commitments, no less than two (2) weeks will be required to respond to the request (i.e. provide letters, court summaries, professional consultation, etc.). Requests for documentation or action in less than two (2) weeks will be denied.

EAP Sessions

Some clients have Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services provided by their employer at no cost to the employee. EAP services are not free psychotherapy sessions, they are brief assessment, counseling, and referral based services which are typically used only once for a given client issue. If a client is seen for EAP sessions and then chooses to continue with therapy, additional EAP sessions WILL NOT be utilized for future sessions (e.g. when additional EAP sessions may become available to the client on an annual basis). Once a client has decided to utilize professional psychotherapy services, it is not ethically or clinically appropriate to temporarily return to brief assessment and referral (i.e. EAP) services. Clients

desiring to utilize EAP sessions at Therapy Connections must notify the clinic office before scheduling and attending any appointments, as: 1) not all therapists take all EAP plans; 2) prior authorization and certification numbers must be obtained and provided by the client before any appointments, and; 3) the services which may be provided in EAP sessions is very limited by the EAP contract. While EAP sessions can be useful for brief counseling, clients experiencing significant difficulties or traumatic experiences will frequently require therapeutic assistance beyond the brief assessment and counseling that EAP benefits can provide. If a client is seen for EAP sessions and the therapist determines that additional psychotherapy is recommended, continuing with the current therapist may be an option, or referral to other professionals will be made or recommended. Clients who provide non-EAP insurance information, and then come to an initial appointment expecting to use EAP sessions will not be able to be seen as an EAP client. Either the client may be seen under their insurance coverage, or the session will need to be rescheduled subsequent to the client providing the EAP authorization and certification numbers.

Insurance/Billing:

Therapy Connections offers a full billing service for our clients with insurance.

If you have insurance, our billing service will send service claims to your insurance provider. Following adjudication of the claim by your insurance company, you are responsible for paying your portion (if any) of the fee, as will be shown on the Explanation of Benefits statement you should receive from your insurance provider. For any unpaid balance, you will receive a statement from Therapy Connections. Your payment is due, in full, within 30 days of the billing date, unless we have made other arrangements in advance. Unpaid amounts over 30 days old will be subject to 8% per annum fee, and any unpaid fees which are ninety (90) days old or greater will be turned over to a Collections agency for handling and reporting to Credit Bureaus, unless we have a previous payment arrangement in place.

Termination of Therapy Services:

Termination is part of the normal process of therapy. Like any other relationship, either person can decide to end it at any time, but ideally it will be a mutual agreement. When you begin working with your therapist, you will discuss your goals in therapy and decide how you both will know when those goals have been met. When these are achieved, you can expect to review progress, current status, and expectations for your continued success apart from therapy.

There may be circumstances in which your therapist determines that a referral to another professional is appropriate. In this event, you may expect your therapist to provide you with referrals to other resources. This will not be a judgment of you or the therapist, or of your work together, instead it will be a recommendation for a resource to better allow you to meet your goals.

Emergencies:

In the event of a mental health or medical emergency, call 911, or the Crisis Connection at 612-379-6363.

During any therapist's scheduled vacations, another qualified mental health professional will be scheduled to be available for emergency consultation or support. Contact information will be provided to clients who request this service.