

Policies and Procedures for the
Psychiatric Practice of Mark D. Helm, M.D., P.L.
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Appointments

Appointments can be scheduled by calling (863) 683-2600. I strive to see patients at the time of their scheduled appointment. Please be on time for your appointment. I am not able to “make up for lost time” due to patient’s late arrival for appointments as this is unfair to other patients. Please keep in mind that there are times that medical emergencies and crisis do arise and that these may necessitate my running over a patient’s scheduled time or bringing in a patient for an unscheduled appointment. Please be patient at these times and know that should your situation require similar consideration I will provide for your care as well.

Patients are charged for missed appointments and for appointments that are not cancelled at least 24 hours before the time of the appointment (e.g. an 8AM Monday appointment would have to be cancelled by 8AM Friday). There will be no charge if I am able to schedule other patients into the missed appointment time. Therefore it is always helpful to call and notify me of late cancellations as I may be able to arrange for another patient to utilize the time.

Confidentiality

Generally all information provided by a patient in an evaluation or treatment session is confidential and will not be provided to anyone without the prior consent of the patient. Exceptions to this involve situations in which the patient provides information that leads me to believe that the patient is of danger to him/herself or to another person. I do not share information provided by children with the parents without the child’s prior agreement. Again, issues of safety are an exception.

I am legally required to report to the state all situations in which a child or disabled adult is thought to be a possible victim of abuse or neglect. It is my practice to inform the family of any decision to report suspected abuse or neglect so long as the time required to inform the family does not leave the child or disabled adult in danger of additional abuse or neglect. I am also legally required to report licensed healthcare providers who have impairment due to substance abuse or other mental health concerns.

At times family members contact me wanting to discuss a patient’s situation. I do not provide any information concerning a patient to family members without the patient’s permission. Family members can provide additional information to me with the understanding that I will talk to the patient about the conversation.

Fees for Services and Insurance Issues

Payment for service is expected at the time of the office visit. If you desire to make other payment arrangements, you should contact me before the appointment to discuss these arrangements. I will provide receipts for services that contain the diagnostic and procedure codes necessary for you to file claims with your insurance carrier. I am able to process credit card payments for Visa, Master Card, and Discover.

Calls to the Office

Patients should handle routine inquiries during scheduled office visits. If you have scheduled a 30 minute time slot and have reason to believe the issues to be discussed are likely to take longer than the allotted time, a longer time block should be scheduled prior to the session. If there are questions about medication side effects, new or worsening symptoms, or other issues that should not wait until the next scheduled visit these can usually be handled by calling me

during office hours. If I am not able to personally take your call you should leave a message on my voicemail. I am the only person who has access to the voicemail. Please be understanding of the fact that I am treating other patients during these hours and may not be able to immediately return your call. If the situation is a medical emergency, call 911-- Do Not wait for me to receive your message and return your call.

After Hours Calls

I am not routinely available for phone consultation after office hours. If you have a situation that cannot safely wait until office hours it may be necessary to go to the hospital emergency room for assessment. In a life threatening emergency it is appropriate to call 911.

Prescription Refills

Most medication prescriptions should be prepared during scheduled office visits. At the end of your appointment time you should leave the office with prescriptions to provide your medication until the next scheduled appointment. At times I ask patients to call between appointments to discuss their response to medication. If I advise you to increase your dose of medication the prescription may run out before your next scheduled appointment. In that case you will need to have your prescription refilled before the next scheduled appointment. Please allow me at least 48 hours to prepare prescriptions or contact the pharmacy authorizing refills. I do not refill prescriptions after office hours. I do not replace or refill prescriptions for controlled substances that have been lost or stolen. I do not refill prescriptions before the time of scheduled refill in situations in which the patient's medications have run out earlier than expected due to the patient taking larger doses than I have prescribed.

Completion of Forms

From time to time patients provide various types of insurance, disability, work, school, sports or other forms that they want me to complete. Usually these forms should be completed as part of a scheduled office visit. If you know that you need such a form to be completed please be sure you have scheduled a session that is long enough for this issue to be addressed during the appointment time.