

Stepping Stones Psychiatric Services, PLLC

Practice Information and Agreement

Introduction:

Welcome to Stepping Stones Psychiatric Services. We are committed to taking the journey to wellness together. Our goal is to develop a professional relationship with each patient and their family members that is satisfactory for everyone. The following information is provided in hopes of helping you to understand the philosophies and policies of our practice. If you have any questions and/or concerns we welcome your feedback. Please feel free to talk with our office manager or to your provider if you have questions. Thank you for entrusting Stepping Stones Psychiatric Services with your mental health needs.

Confidentiality:

Our services are confidential. Tennessee law states: Confidential information is controlled by the patient or by the patient's legal representative. No information will be released to anyone without your specific authorization. There are three exceptions to this rule. First, Tennessee law requires that child abuse be reported to the Department of Human Services. Secondly, in the case of an emergency, or when there is imminent danger to the patient or to other persons, the mental health provider may breach the requirement of confidentiality. Lastly, it is possible that a judge may require that certain information be released to the court. Additionally, when a physician or other professional refers you or your child as a patient we may communicate with that professional unless you specify to the contrary.

If you choose to submit a claim to your insurance for services received at Stepping Stones Psychiatric Services confidential information must be released to the insurance company. Information that the insurance company requires depends upon the insurance policy. At a minimum we will be required to provide a diagnosis with corresponding diagnostic codes and billable service codes for each date of service.

Cost:

Stepping Stones Psychiatric Services has opted not to participate in any insurance plans including Medicare. Our goal is to provide affordable comprehensive mental health services to those seeking care. Initial 60-minute evaluation appointments are \$300 and 30 minute follow up medication management appointments are \$150. When scheduling a new patient evaluation appointment a deposit in the amount of \$150 is required at the time of scheduling and will be applied to the cost of your initial evaluation appointment. Deposits will be forfeited for individuals that do not show up for or cancel their initial appointment at least 48 hours prior to the appointment. Follow up appointments require a minimum of 24 hours notification to cancel and/or reschedule. The no show/late cancellation fee is \$100. A service fee in the amount of \$6.00 will be added to all electronic payment transactions. Acceptable payment methods include cash, credit cards, and most health savings accounts. Payments are due at time of service. The maintenance of your account is considered part of the therapeutic agreement and may be indicative of your motivation to engage in treatment. Failure to make payment at the time of service, unless otherwise agreed upon with your provider, may prevent scheduling of additional appointments, medication refills, and ultimately termination of service and pursuit of outstanding balances through collections.

Insurance:

We do not accept insurance. This does not mean that you cannot use your insurance for medications that may be prescribed by your provider. Not accepting insurance allows you to choose whether financial parties have access to your medical records. Additionally, this allows us to provide affordable rates for all patients. We will provide a receipt for submission to your insurance company with your diagnosis, procedure code and date of service at your request. Some insurance providers do have out of network benefits and may reimburse a portion of your expense directly to you. It is your responsibility to get information directly from your insurance plan regarding reimbursement rates, policies and procedures.

Unfortunately, if you are a TennCare, Medicaid, or Medicare QMB recipient, we are not able to provide care due to federal and state regulations. Failure to disclose this information will result in immediate termination of services.

Cancellation Policy:

Cancellations must be made within 24 hours of your scheduled follow up appointment. All follow up appointments not canceled within 24 hours will be billed as a missed appointment or late cancellation and you will be charged \$100 (+\$6 service fee). This fee will be charged to the credit card on file the same day in which the appointment is missed. New patient appointments require 48 hours notification to cancel or reschedule without forfeiting the new patient appointment deposit of \$150. Your account must be current prior to making additional appointments and prior to receiving medication refills.

Consent for Medication Agreement:

Medication cannot be given until the patient or parent/legal guardian has spoken with the medical provider and verbal and/or written consent is given for each medication being prescribed.

Medication can be refused at any time, but it is recommended that patient or parent/legal guardian discuss the decision to refuse and/or stop medications with medical provider before stopping or making any changes to medications prescribed.

Before medications are prescribed, I understand that my medical provider will discuss the following:

- The nature of my mental condition
- Reasons for prescribing the medication, including the likelihood of my condition improving or not improving without the medication
- Reasonable alternative treatments available for my condition

- The type of medication I will be receiving, the frequency and range of dosages, the method by which I will take the medication, and the duration of such treatment
- The common side effects of medication being prescribed and any (Particular) side effects likely to affect me

Women who are or may become pregnant, or are breast-feeding, agree to discuss this potential conflict with their provider **BEFORE** taking any medication.

Medication refills are generally taken care of at each scheduled appointment. Additional refills on any medication outside scheduled appointments will be at the discretion of the provider. If the provider opts to refill a medication, even partially, pending a rescheduled missed appointment, there will be a \$50.00 refill charge in addition to the fee for the missed appointment. These fees will need to be paid prior to medication refill(s) being submitted to the requested pharmacy. In most cases the refill will be a supply to last only until the date of the rescheduled appointment.

There are **no** early refills permitted for controlled substances.

A urine drug screen may be ordered by the provider at any time at the expense of the patient. If a urine screen is not submitted when ordered or if a urine screen is failed the provider may opt to terminate treatment.

Care will be terminated immediately if our office discovers any misuse of your medication including seeking and/or obtaining additional medications from other providers.

Requests for specific medications may be considered but all medications prescribed will be at the discretion of the provider.

All requests for medication refills require 72-hours notice. Please submit only one request for medication refills within the 72 hours required of notification request.

Paperwork and Reports:

Forensic evaluations will not be provided

All requests for FMLA, short-term disability, long-term disability, school letters and forms, etc. will be at the discretion of the provider. Being an active patient is not a guarantee that requests will be honored. The cost for these service range from \$50 to \$100 (+\$6 service fee)

Consideration of completing long-term disability and social security disability paperwork will not be given until you have been an established patient for minimally six months. Paperwork will not be completed for any patient that has not kept scheduled appointments.

Please discuss any requests for letters, reports or other paper work needs during your appointment with your provider when possible.

Office Hours:

Appointments are generally scheduled during the following times:

Monday - Thursday 8:00am to 5:00pm

1st Friday and 1st Saturday of each month - 8:00am to 12:00pm

Other appointment times may be arranged with provider approval. Please let our office staff know of any specific scheduling need you may have and we will do our best to accommodate those needs when possible.

Appointments are offered in person and via telehealth. All initial evaluation appointments are scheduled as in person and at the providers discretion future appointments may have the option of telehealth.

Administrative staff is generally available for phone calls Monday through Wednesday 8:00am to 4:30pm and Friday 8:00am to 4:30pm with a scheduled break 12:00pm to 1:00pm daily.

Communication:

When our phone is unattended voicemail will record your confidential message and your call will be returned within 72 hours or the following business day if it is the weekend. If you have an emergency please do not hesitate to call 911; go to the nearest emergency room or contact the Crisis Intervention Center at (615) 244-7444. Our goal is to meet every need; however, safety is of the utmost importance. If needed please access resources that may be more readily available.

Services Provided:

Psychiatric evaluation, medication management and brief therapy are provided to children (ages 6 and older), adolescents and adults. We diagnose and treat Anxiety Disorders, Mood Disorders such as depression and bipolar affective disorder, PTSD, Schizophrenia and other thought disorders, ADHD, Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery, Post-Partum Depression, Autism Spectrum Disorders and Eating Disorders. As with any medical treatment, a guarantee of a specific outcome cannot be given. Psychiatric evaluations are provided for diagnostic purposes and are useful in helping understand the symptomology individuals are experiencing as well as providing a basis for us to discuss all treatment recommendations which may include recommendations for medication intervention. When medications are being used to manage symptoms as part of the treatment plan it is important to keep scheduled appointments with your provider for ongoing monitoring and to also avoid disruption in medications. Your provider will make every effort to discuss treatment and recommendations in simple, non-technical terms. Please feel free to ask additional questions when needed. The therapeutic relationship is a team approach and open communication will serve patient, family members and the provider well.

Stepping Stones Psychiatric Services does **not** provide:

Forensic Services

SSI or SSDI Disability Determination

Psychological Evaluations or Psychoeducational Testing

Multiple Providers:

It is important to maintain one provider to prescribe your psychiatric medications. We will not provide medications if you are receiving medications for the same or similar condition from another provider as this affects our ability to adequately monitor your care. We encourage patients to seek routine care from their primary care provider to address general medical needs including appropriate lab monitoring.

Welcome to Stepping Stones Psychiatric Services. It is our pleasure to take the journey to wellness with you. If you have any questions or concerns do not hesitate to speak with a member of our staff.

Revised

8/12/2023