

PLEASE KEEP IN MIND:

- All appointments with the nurse practitioner are made through your counselor by calling 227-7469. Paperwork **MUST be completed** prior to scheduling first appointment of any given year. **YOU are responsible for scheduling follow-up appointments and attending counseling sessions as directed.**
- Be sure to **schedule follow-up appointments well in advance, especially if you will be needing refills of your medication** or want to continue your medication and/or transfer your medication management care during school breaks (including summer).
- Discuss any questions about your medication usage as well as options for services during the semester. Contact your therapist if you have any additional questions or concerns regarding your psychiatric services.
- Anticipate your end-of-semester breaks, summer or graduation needs by meeting with the nurse practitioner 6-8 weeks in advance to discuss and plan for the transition.
- You may arrange a session with our Case Manager to gain support accessing community resources.

Referral to Psychiatric Services



Western Carolina University
Counseling and Psychological Services

*Nurturing People.
Fostering Change.*

Division of Student Affairs
Western Carolina University
2nd Floor Bird Building, Cullowhee, NC 28723
Phone: (828) 227-7469; Fax: (828) 227-7004

CounselingCenter.wcu.edu

You have been referred to consult with our nurse practitioner, Alida Herrera for further assessment and treatment recommendations. Alida works closely with our staff to devise a comprehensive treatment plan which ideally will assist you in addressing the issues that brought you to counseling. Alida's psychiatric appointments are scheduled one day each week during fall and spring semesters. Alternate locations are available at Jackson County Psychological Associates during the rest of the year.

As an enrolled Western student, you are eligible for assessment and follow-up sessions. All psychiatric appointments will be charged to your health insurance. Your initial visit with Alida Herrera will last approximately 45 minutes; if additional consultations are scheduled, these sessions will usually last approximately 15 minutes. If over 6 months have lapsed since your last psychiatric session, your next appointment will last approximately 30 minutes to assess a more thorough update and re-establish care. As part of your treatment plan, our nurse practitioner may prescribe medication. If you choose to take medication, please be aware of the following:

- **To ensure effective coordination of your health care**, clinical recommendations, diagnosis, and/or other specific information related to the medication evaluation, will be made available to WCU Health Services, as requested. Since most university psychiatric services are housed in university health centers, this coordination of communication around medically-relevant treatment will strengthen the quality of care you receive from both Health Services and Counseling & Psychological Services.
- **Follow-up appointments are necessary and recommended at certain intervals.** It is *your* responsibility to schedule these appointments (as well as your counseling appointments) according to the time frame and treatment plan recommended. Also, since time on campus is very limited, it is vital that you schedule appointments well in advance. Follow-up appointments can be scheduled in person or by calling 227-7469.
- **It is important that you have a clear understanding of how to use the medication.** Please make sure to fully discuss any concerns about your medication. Issues such as dosage, daily schedules, when to take the medication, side effects, use of alcohol/other drugs while on medication, when and how to discontinue the medication, etc., are important and should be clearly understood by you.

- **Your therapist will serve as your primary contact person between psychiatric appointments.** If you have any concerns about the medication you are taking, please bring these issues up with your therapist. When necessary, your therapist will contact Alida to consult about your situation and determine appropriate action.
- **In order to participate in psychiatric services, we require students to concurrently participate in regularly scheduled counseling.** Research has shown that for a majority of concerns, combining medication treatment with ongoing psychotherapy is most effective for making progress and preventing relapse. In some cases, failure to attend counseling sessions as directed above may result in cancellation of your next psychiatric visit.
- **As noted above, it is YOUR responsibility to make sure that you have adequate medication and medication refills.** Since CPS does not offer psychiatric services over the summer or any school breaks, it is *your* responsibility to ensure that you have an adequate supply of medication/medication refills to cover these periods.
- **For emergencies**, contact your CPS counselor to determine appropriateness and coordinate care. If your situation involves an urgent health risk, go to the closest emergency room. Before being discharged from the ER, authorize the hospital staff to coordinate aftercare with your CPS counselor and our nurse practitioner and schedule follow-up appointments accordingly.
- **Finally, please honor your appointment time.** Alida is usually booked with a full schedule, so please arrive on time. If you cannot keep your appointment, call us as soon as possible to reschedule. **If you fail to cancel appointments 48 hours in advance or no-show your appointment, you will be personally charged for that session.**