

INFORMED CONSENT

The following information is provided to help you become acquainted with our practice policies. Please review this information and sign on the signature page. We will gladly discuss any of these items with you.

Professional Services

Effective psychotherapy requires a good match between client and therapist. Should you or your therapist determine after the first few sessions that you and your therapist are not the right fit for you, you will be provided with a referral.

Treatment

People begin therapy for any number of reasons. We assume you wish to make changes in some area(s) of your life and we will work together to establish mutually agreed upon goals for treatment. While our desire is to help you achieve these changes, we cannot guarantee a particular result. There are both benefits and side effects associated with psychotherapy. Initial benefits of treatment may include a lessening of symptoms and an increased sense of well-being. During the therapeutic process you may experience uncomfortable feelings, including sadness, anger, guilt, fear or anxiety. These feelings are often a natural part of the healing process. Because there can be biological factors that contribute to psychological distress, your therapist may at times ask about your diet and health. In some cases, medical assessment and intervention is helpful and/or necessary.

Business Hours

North Shore Senior Options hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 9AM-5PM. In an emergency situation outside of normal business hours:

- For life-threatening emergencies: call 911
- To speak to someone about suicidal thoughts or thoughts of harming yourself:
 - Friendship Line 1-800-971-0016
 - National HopeLine 1-800-273-8255
- If you think you cannot keep yourself safe, call 911 or go to your nearest emergency room.

Appointments and Cancellations

Appointments are usually 60 minutes in length and occur once per week. Since an appointment time is reserved for you only, it is important that this appointment be kept or you provide notice of cancellation. To receive the full benefit of psychotherapy, it is important to attend sessions regularly. If you are unable to keep your scheduled appointment, you must notify your therapist telephonically no less than twenty-four (24) hours in advance of your appointment time. Discontinuation of services may be initiated by either party or by mutual consent. Clients who do not show up for their appointment without a call to cancel the appointment will be

considered a **NO SHOW**. Clients who No-Show two (2) or more times in a 12 month period, may be dismissed from the practice and denied future appointments. Clients will be subject to a \$100.00 fee for a No Show.

The Cancellation and No Show fees are the sole responsibility of the patient and must be paid in full before the patient's next appointment.

Fee

Our fee for therapy is \$113.46 for the first session and then \$110.36 per 60 minute session. Full payment is due at the time services are rendered. **North Shore Senior Center is a Medicare provider and we will submit bills directly to Medicare.** Please note that you are responsible for the portion not covered by Medicare and your supplemental policy. Please be advised that depending on your plan, you may be responsible for session fees until your deductible has been met in addition to your plan's predetermined co-pay. It is your responsibility to confirm that sessions are covered by Medicare. If you have other insurance, North Shore Senior Options will provide you with a billing statement that includes all the information required by most insurance carriers to file for reimbursement for an out-of-network provider.

Non-Covered Services

Should you choose to continue services while hospitalized or in a skilled nursing facility, those services are not reimbursable by Medicare and therefore will be billed at the out-of-pocket rate of \$110.36/hour. Additionally, therapy and/or counseling services provided by telephone are not reimbursable and therefore will be billed to you directly and not to insurance.

Medication, Referral and Hospitalization

If medication is indicated as part of your treatment, you and your therapist will discuss various referral options. If referral to a specialist is necessary, your therapist will collaborate with him/her to supplement or replace therapeutic work as needed. In some circumstances a higher level of care may be required. If this should become necessary, you and your therapist will discuss the need for more intensive care.

Privacy and Confidentiality

North Shore Senior Options is bound by the state (Illinois Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Confidentiality Act) and federal (The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)) law, as well as the social work Code of Ethics. If you would like certain information to be provided to a third party, you must complete a written release of information. Applicable law and ethical standards permit or require us to disclose information about you without your authorization only in a limited number of other situations. The types of uses and disclosures that may be made without your authorization include but are not limited to the following:

- As required by Law, such as the mandatory reporting of abuse or neglect of a child, an adult with disabilities, or an elder or mandatory government agency audits or investigations
- As required by Court Order or other judicial and administrative proceedings

- When your therapist has reason to believe that there is a clear and imminent threat of you harming yourself or another person. To protect you or others from harm, your therapist is required by law to disclose information or take other actions to protect you or another person from physical harm. Protective actions may include contacting the police or seeking hospitalization for you.
- When necessary to the provision of emergency medical care
- When necessary to initiate or continue civil commitment or involuntary treatment proceedings
- As required by law to law enforcement

Email

Email can be helpful when communicating about general topics, such as, appointment confirmation. However, since email is not confidential communication, North Shore Senior Center asks that you not email your therapist about content related to therapy sessions. Please also note that any emails between you and your therapist will become a part of your record/chart.

Consultation

Consultation is a standard and ethical part of high quality mental health practice. Your therapist may consult with other experienced licensed mental health professionals regarding your treatment. During consultation your therapist will share limited information and avoid revealing client identity. The consultant is also bound to keep the information confidential.