

## **Psychiatry Informed Consent**

Psychiatric services focus on diagnosing, treating, and preventing mental, emotional, and behavioral disorders. Treatment through the use of psychiatric services often involves medication as a primary tool to manage and provide relief from symptoms related to a mental health condition. In the course of treatment patients are assessed in regards to emotional and mental health by means of acquiring a medical and mental health history, a thorough understanding of symptoms, and determining the impact emotional and mental health conditions have on a patient's ability to function in his/her life. Psychiatrists may recommend other resources to improve a patient's mental wellness, such as talk therapy, healthy coping skills, and other health screenings that would be helpful in identifying underlying physical health factors that affect mental and emotional health.

### **Medication**

The use of medication to treat mental, emotional, and behavioral conditions is often an effective approach to relieve patients of unwanted symptoms that interfere with their ability to live a full life. Like all other medications, those used to treat mental health conditions may come with side effects that must be monitored and reported to the treating psychiatrist. On rare occasions, medications can cause serious complications. Your psychiatrist will educate you regarding the possible side effects of the medications prescribed to you. Medications that are prescribed to you are chosen based on the information that you provide regarding your symptoms and health history during your initial evaluation and follow up medication management. It is important for patients to provide their psychiatrist with accurate and thorough information so that treatment methods can be most effectively and safely chosen. Be aware that psychiatrists may ask their patients to complete medical screenings to ensure overall health prior to prescribing a medication. While completing medical tests or screenings can be inconvenient, psychiatrists require thorough evaluations for the patients' safety and to provide the highest level of quality care. Often psychiatrists will prescribe a maintenance medication that the patient is instructed to take daily at consistent times. Following the psychiatrist's instructions is important to the patient's safety and effectiveness of care.

Further, the patient must be aware and proactive in regards to ensuring that he/she has enough medication to last between appointments. In the event that a patient will not have enough medication to last between appointments, the patient must make the office staff and psychiatrist aware as soon as possible to prevent a lapse in treatment. Patients who notify office staff and the psychiatrist with only one to two days notice may not receive a refill in time to prevent a lapse in medication. Nights, weekends, and holidays often delay the ability to provide a patient with a refill prior to the next appointment. Pharmacy issues and the availability of prescribed medication also impact the timeliness of prescription refill and cannot be controlled by the treating psychiatrist.

Finally, it is NEVER recommended that a patient alter the dosage or discontinue the use of a medication without instruction from the treating psychiatrist, especially if the patient has been on a particular medication for an extended period of time. When prescribing a patient with a new medication, the psychiatrist will provide the patient with possible side effects and often give instruction to discontinue the use of a new medication should a patient experience certain or extreme side effects. Be aware that some mild side effects should be expected when introducing a new medication into your body. A patient must monitor, record, and report any side effects experienced as a result of a medication. Any symptoms that could be deemed life threatening must be treated immediately at the nearest emergency room. Though very rare symptoms such as chest pain, difficulty breathing, loss of consciousness, psychosis, or thoughts of suicide must be addressed first in an emergency room and reported to the treating psychiatrist after emergency care is received.

### **Appointments**

Complying with medication management is another aspect of patient safety and providing quality care. Psychiatrists will instruct patients to schedule appointments for a certain length of time after the initial or current appointment. Often new patients can expect to be seen in 2 to 4 week intervals so that the psychiatrist can closely monitor and adjust medications for effectiveness and reducing the risk of side effects. Once a patient has achieved stability on a medication, the

psychiatrist will often increase the amount of time between appointments, usually 2 to 3 month intervals. It is imperative that patients comply with medication management appointments to increase safety and care. Patients who do not comply with medication management will not receive prescriptions without being seen and assessed by the treating psychiatrist. Psychiatrists schedules can be difficult to maneuver at times, so diligent scheduling is helpful in achieving smooth, seamless care without interruption of treatment. In the event that a patient's treating psychiatrist is out of the office for an extended period of time (a week or more) an alternate clinician will be appointed to manage patient care in the psychiatrist's absence. As with any medical appointment, there are times when a psychiatrist will be running late due to the needs of other patients and emergent situations that may present themselves throughout the day. The psychiatrist works diligently to be on time, but delays are always a possibility, as the psychiatrist strives to provide each patient with thorough care.

### **Therapy/Counseling**

The therapeutic relationship is unique in that it is a highly personal and at the same time, a contractual agreement. Given this, it is important for us to reach a clear understanding about how our relationship will work, and what each of us can expect. This consent will provide a clear framework for our work together. If you have any questions regarding this consent, your clinician will happily answer them for you.

### **The Therapeutic Process**

You have taken a very positive step by deciding to seek therapy and/or psychiatry services. The outcome of your treatment depends largely on your willingness to engage in this process, which may, at times, result in considerable discomfort. Remembering unpleasant events and becoming aware of feelings attached to those events can bring on strong feelings of anger, depression, anxiety, etc. I cannot promise that your behavior or circumstance will change. I can promise to support you and do my very best to understand you and repeating patterns, as well as to help you clarify what it is that you want for yourself.

### **Confidentiality**

The session content and all relevant materials to the client's treatment will be held confidential unless the client requests in writing to have all or portions of such content released to a specifically named person/persons. Limitations of such client held privilege of confidentiality exist and are itemized below:

If a client threatens or attempts to commit suicide or otherwise conducts him/her self in a manner in which there is a substantial risk of incurring serious bodily harm.

If a client threatens grave bodily harm or death to another person.

If the therapist has a reasonable suspicion that a client or other named victim is the perpetrator, observer of, or actual victim of physical, emotional or sexual abuse of children under the age of 18 years.

Suspicious as stated above in the case of an elderly person who may be subjected to these abuses.

Suspected neglect of the parties named in items #3 and # 4.

If a court of law issues a legitimate subpoena for information stated on the subpoena.

If a client is in therapy or being treated by order of a court of law, or if information is obtained for the purpose of rendering an expert's report to an attorney.

Occasionally I may need to consult with other professionals in their areas of expertise in order to provide the best treatment for you. Information about you may be shared in this context without using your name.

In the case that the client is a couple or a family, there is a no secrets policy. For clients receiving couple or family counseling, information disclosed during treatment will be utilized by the clinician for treatment purposes. At times, a clinician will meet with individual clients as a part of the couple or family counseling process. These sessions are still considered couples or family counseling and are NOT individual counseling.

### **Agreement Regarding Fees**

All fees are payable before or on the date of service. Please find a list of our fees on the Office Policies form. State and Federal Laws require Zaborac Counseling Group/Doreen A. Zaborac & Associates, Inc. to collect payments, co-insurance, and deductibles in full. If an account is sent to a collection agency or attorney for collection, the client will be responsible for the full balance plus a collection fee of 33% of my principle balance. Also, the clinician may not be able to provide services in the event that an account is sent to collections.

**EMERGENCIES:** In the event of an emergency that is life threatening, call 911 immediately or go to your nearest emergency room. You can contact the office during business hours for non-life threatening emergencies, and our clinicians will return your call within 2 business days.