



HART TO HEART COUNSELING, PLLC

Miscellaneous Policies

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Hart to Heart Counseling is to provide quality in-home and office counseling services, with minimal financial burden, during the hours individuals and families are most available, with an industry leading response time. Our goal is to have available appointment times for initial intake within one week of inquiry. We target times of the day so you do not have to miss work or school. We work with many insurance providers and EAP companies to be cost effective for you and/or your family.

FINANCIAL & SLIDING FEES POLICY

1. Each client or his/her guarantor is responsible for the full costs of all services provided. Exceptions to this include:
 - Clients covered by specific contracts and grants
 - Clients covered by Medical Assistance
 - Clients covered by Medicare are responsible for the portion of the fees not covered by Medicare up to the total fee allowed by Medicare.
 - Clients without insurance coverage who are eligible for Hart to Heart Counseling's sliding fee schedule.
 - Grant monies and sliding scale fees are available for individuals and families when copayments cause financial hardship. To be considered for sliding or discounted fees please complete the sliding fee application form. Grants may be used to cover co-pay, deductible, and nominal fees.
2. Currently our fees for individual, couple, family, and group counseling vary according to the clinician(s) providing the service. Included in the client's bill are costs which relate to direct services (actual time with the clinician) and indirect services (dictation time, some telephone consultations, etc.) All fees are available upon personal request. Sliding scale fees are posted on <http://www.hart2heart.org/rates---insurance.htm> Hart to Heart will charge a \$5 nominal fee for services if at or below 100% of federal poverty guideline.
3. Hart to Heart Counseling will bill insurance for the client's convenience but insurance reimbursement is not guaranteed.
4. Clients, who may qualify for Medical Assistance, MN Care, or other healthcare programs, are expected to make application for benefits.
5. Clients are responsible for discussing special circumstances with their clinician/or the Privacy Official. Hart to Heart Counseling will never send your account to collections. **Clients are responsible for notifying Hart to Heart Counseling of any change in their billing status. All fees are subject to change at any time, without notice.**
6. Hart to Heart Counseling will never send your account to collections or charge interest on unpaid balances.

ACCESS TO ANCILLARY, INPATIENT, AND SPECIALITY CARE

When inpatient care is needed or requested, Hart to Heart Counseling will inform client to go to the Altru Emergency Room. Altru is the only in-patient Psychiatric Center in the Grand Forks and East Grand Forks area. To be admitted, individuals must be assessed at the emergency room, where their staff will determine client needs and which course of action to take. Hart to Heart Counseling cannot make referrals directly to the Psychiatric Center. Client's may always make a self-referral by exploring other agencies outside of a 75 mile radius.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Hart to Heart Counseling is committed to serve all patients. We offer discounted fees for patients who qualify and accept insurance, including Medicaid, Medicare, and Children's Health Insurance Program. Hart to Heart Counseling will not deny services based on race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, inability to pay, or military status, in any of its activities or operations. These activities include, but are not limited to, hiring and firing of staff, selection of volunteers and vendors, and provision of services. We are committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our staff, clients, volunteers, subcontractors, vendors, and clients.

Hart to Heart Counseling is an equal opportunity employer. We will not discriminate and will take affirmative action measures to ensure against discrimination in employment, recruitment, advertisements for employment, compensation, termination, upgrading, promotions, and other conditions of employment against any employee or job applicant on the bases of race, color, gender, national origin, age, religion, creed, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.

This statement is in accordance with the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and Regulations of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services issued pursuant to these statutes at Title 45 Code of Federal Regulations Pats 80, 84, and 91.

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION POLICY

Recruitment and Retention Plan serves as the blueprint for hiring and retaining employees at Hart to Heart Counseling. Hart to Heart Counseling is an equal opportunity employer. We will not discriminate and will take affirmative action measures to ensure against discrimination in employment, recruitment, advertisements for employment, compensation, termination, upgrading, promotions, and other conditions of employment against any employee or job applicant on the bases of race, color, gender, national origin, age, religion, creed, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.

IDENTIFYING NEED

When client demand outweighs clinician availability, additional positions and space will be explored. This will be defined as not being able to offer a client an appointment slot within 7 business days. If an additional position is needed, Hart to Heart counseling will develop a job description and advertise that position.

Person responsible, CEO

ADVERTISING POSITIONS

Hart to Heart Counseling will advertise the opening in the Grand Forks Herald, The Exponent (East Grand Forks), Crookston Times, and on the NHSC website. Applications will be collected and screened for meeting position qualifications.

Person responsible, CEO

SCREENING PROCESS

Unqualified applicants will be notified by letter, which will include which qualifications they did not meet. Qualified applicants will be contacted and offered an interview. Interviews will be held in person or via tele-conference.

- Screening candidates for the best all around “fit”.

- Establishing mutual expectations during the interview and reiterating these before an offer is made (i.e. client caseload, schedule, etc.).
- Ensuring that candidates know exactly what to expect.
- Offering to screen the spouse for career objectives or requirements, or other means to connect with the community.
- Offering to assist with connecting family members to education and recreation.
- Integrating “retention” into the interview process. Communicating to candidates upon interview that one of the primary goals of the recruitment process is retention.
- Continuing communications and follow up with new hires each month for the first three years of employment at Hart to Heart Counseling.

Person responsible, CEO

NEW HIRING PROCESS

- Offer of employment contingent on background and verification of qualifications (license, credentials, etc).
- Develop and complete employee checklist based on position.
- Signed employee agreement.
- Verify licensure and credentialing.
- Background check.
- Start date.

Person responsible, CEO

ORIENTATION

Provide an orientation program and support network for all new employees. Schedule monthly meetings for the first three years to discuss concerns, offer feedback, improve wellness of the employee.

Person responsible, CEO

RETENTION

A successful recruitment is defined as a candidate who stays at least three years with our organization. Our plan addresses a number of elements that affect retention success.

- Incorporate retention in the interview process.
- Welcoming providers and family members.
- Maximize communication through informal method and formal monthly meetings to ensure employee wellness is identified and concerns addressed.
- Month evaluation, 3 month evaluation, semiannual evaluations, discussing performance, strengths, and identifying professional and personal growth areas.
- Conduct and analyze exit interviews when staff leaves their position.
- Evaluate and refine recruitment and retention strategies.

Person responsible, CEO



POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR COMMUNICATION WITH PERSONS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

POLICY:

Hart to Heart Counseling will take reasonable steps to ensure that persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) have meaningful access and an equal opportunity to participate in our services, activities, programs and other benefits. The policy of Hart to Heart Counseling is to ensure meaningful communication with LEP patients/clients and their authorized representatives involving their medical conditions and treatment. The policy also provides for communication of information contained in vital documents, including but not limited to, all intake paperwork/forms, waivers of rights, consent to treatment forms, financial and insurance benefit forms, etc. All interpreters, translators and other aids needed to comply with this policy shall be provided without cost to the person being served, and patients/clients and their families will be informed of the availability of such assistance free of charge.

Language assistance will be provided through use of competent bilingual staff, staff interpreters, contracts or formal arrangements with local organizations providing interpretation or translation services, or technology and telephonic interpretation services. All staff will be provided notice of this policy and procedure, and staff that may have direct contact with LEP individuals will be trained in effective communication techniques, including the effective use of an interpreter.

Hart to Heart Counseling will conduct a regular review of the language access needs of our patient population, as well as update and monitor the implementation of this policy and these procedures, as necessary.

PROCEDURES:

1. IDENTIFYING LEP PERSONS AND THEIR LANGUAGE

Hart to Heart Counseling will promptly identify the language and communication needs of the LEP person. If necessary, staff will use a language identification card (or "I speak cards," available online at www.lep.gov) or posters to determine the language. In addition, when records are kept of past interactions with patients (clients/residents) or family members, the language used to communicate with the LEP person will be included as part of the record.

2. OBTAINING A QUALIFIED INTERPRETER

Hart to Heart Counseling is/are responsible for:

- (a)** Maintaining an accurate and current list showing the name, language, phone number and hours of availability of bilingual staff;
- (b)** Contacting the appropriate bilingual staff member to interpret, in the event that an interpreter is needed, if an employee who speaks the needed language is available and is qualified to interpret;

(c) Obtaining an outside interpreter if a bilingual staff or staff interpreter is not available or does not speak the needed language.

Some LEP persons may prefer or request to use a family member or friend as an interpreter. However, family members or friends of the LEP person will not be used as interpreters unless specifically requested by that individual and **after** the LEP person has understood that an offer of an interpreter at no charge to the person has been made by the facility. Such an offer and the response will be documented in the person's file. If the LEP person chooses to use a family member or friend as an interpreter, issues of competency of interpretation, confidentiality, privacy, and conflict of interest will be considered. If the family member or friend is not competent or appropriate for any of these reasons, competent interpreter services will be provided to the LEP person.

Children and other clients/patients/residents will **not** be used to interpret, in order to ensure confidentiality of information and accurate communication.

3. PROVIDING WRITTEN TRANSLATIONS

(a) When translation of vital documents is needed, each unit in Hart to Heart Counseling will submit documents for translation into frequently-encountered languages to Hart to Heart Counseling. Original documents being submitted for translation will be in final, approved form with updated and accurate legal and medical information.

(b) Facilities will provide translation of other written materials, if needed, as well as written notice of the availability of translation, free of charge, for LEP individuals.

(c) Hart to Heart Counseling will set benchmarks for translation of vital documents into additional languages over time.

4. PROVIDING NOTICE TO LEP PERSONS

Hart to Heart Counseling will inform LEP persons of the availability of language assistance, free of charge, by providing written notice in languages LEP persons will understand. At a minimum, notices and signs will be provided during intake appointments. Notification will also be provided through one or more of the following: outreach documents.

5. MONITORING LANGUAGE NEEDS AND IMPLEMENTATION

On an ongoing basis, Hart to Heart Counseling will assess changes in demographics, types of services or other needs that may require reevaluation of this policy and its procedures. In addition, Hart to Heart Counseling will regularly assess the efficacy of these procedures, including but not limited to mechanisms for securing interpreter services, equipment used for the delivery of language assistance, complaints filed by LEP persons, feedback from patients and community organizations, etc.



AUXILIARY AIDS AND SERVICES FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

POLICY:

Hart to Heart Counseling will take appropriate steps to ensure that persons with disabilities, including persons who are deaf, hard of hearing, or blind, or who have other sensory or manual impairments, have an equal opportunity to participate in our services, activities, programs and other benefits. The procedures outlined below are intended to ensure effective communication with patients/clients involving their medical conditions, treatment, services and benefits. The procedures also apply to, among other types of communication, communication of information contained in important documents, including waivers of rights, consent to treatment forms, financial and insurance benefits forms, etc. All necessary auxiliary aids and services shall be provided without cost to the person being served.

All staff will be provided written notice of this policy and procedure, and staff that may have direct contact with individuals with disabilities will be trained in effective communication techniques, including the effective use of interpreters.

PROCEDURES:

1. Identification and assessment of need:

Hart to Heart Counseling provides notice of the availability of and procedure for requesting auxiliary aids and services through notices in our intake process and through notices posted on our website. When an individual self-identifies as a person with a disability that affects the ability to communicate or to access or manipulate written materials or requests an auxiliary aid or service, staff will consult with the individual to determine what aids or services are necessary to provide effective communication in particular situations.

2. Provision of Auxiliary Aids and Services:

Hart to Heart Counseling shall provide the following services or aids to achieve effective communication with persons with disabilities:

A. For Persons Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

(i) For persons who are deaf/hard of hearing and who use sign language as their primary means of communication, the Privacy Official at 218.230.8619, is responsible for providing effective interpretation or arranging for a qualified interpreter when needed.

In the event that an interpreter is needed, the Privacy Official at 218.230.8619, is responsible for:

Maintaining a list of qualified interpreters on staff showing their names, phone numbers, qualifications and hours of availability;

Contacting the appropriate interpreter on staff to interpret, if one is available and qualified to interpret; or

Obtaining an outside interpreter if a qualified interpreter on staff is not available.

(ii) Communicating by Telephone with Persons Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

Hart to Heart Counseling utilizes relay services for external telephone with TTY users. We accept and make calls through a relay service. The state relay service number is To place a Minnesota Relay call, dial: 7-1-1 or 1-800-627-3529.

(iii) For the following auxiliary aids and services, staff will contact (**responsible staff person or position and telephone number**), who is responsible to provide the aids and services in a timely manner:

Note-takers; computer-aided transcription services; telephone handset amplifiers; written copies of oral announcements; assistive listening devices; assistive listening systems; telephones compatible with hearing aids; closed caption decoders; open and closed captioning; telecommunications devices for deaf persons (TDDs); videotext displays; or other effective methods that help make aurally delivered materials available to individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing.

(iv) Some persons who are deaf or hard of hearing may prefer or request to use a family member or friend as an interpreter. However, family members or friends of the person will not be used as interpreters unless specifically requested by that individual and after an offer of an interpreter at no charge to the person has been made by the facility. Such an offer and the response will be documented in the person's file. If the person chooses to use a family member or friend as an interpreter, issues of competency of interpretation, confidentiality, privacy and conflict of interest will be considered. If the family member or friend is not competent or appropriate for any of these reasons, competent interpreter services will be provided.

NOTE: Children and other residents will not be used to interpret, in order to ensure confidentiality of information and accurate communication.

B. For Persons Who are Blind or Who Have Low Vision

(i) Staff will communicate information contained in written materials concerning treatment, benefits, services, waivers of rights, and consent to treatment forms by reading out loud and explaining these forms to persons who are blind or who have low vision.

(ii) For the following auxiliary aids and services, staff will contact Privacy Official at 218.230.8619, is responsible to provide the aids and services in a timely manner:

Qualified readers; reformatting into large print; taping or recording of print materials not available in alternate format; or other effective methods that help make visually delivered materials available to individuals who are blind or who have low vision. In addition, staff is available to assist persons who

are blind or who have low vision in filling out forms and in otherwise providing information in a written format.

C. For Persons with Speech Impairments

To ensure effective communication with persons with speech impairments, staff will contact Privacy Official at 218.230.8619, who is responsible to provide the aids and services in a timely manner:

Writing materials; typewriters; TDDs; computers; flashcards; alphabet boards; communication boards; and other communication aids.

D. For Persons with Manual Impairments

Staff will assist those who have difficulty in manipulating print materials by holding the materials and turning pages as needed, or by providing one or more of the following:

Note-takers; computer-aided transcription services; speaker phones; or other effective methods that help to ensure effective communication by individuals with manual impairments. For these and other auxiliary aids and services, staff will contact Privacy Official at 218.230.8619, who is responsible to provide the aids and services in a timely manner.



Section 504 Notice of Program Accessibility

The regulation implementing Section 504 requires that an agency/facility "...adopt and implement procedures to ensure that interested persons, including persons with impaired vision or hearing, can obtain information as to the existence and location of services, activities, and facilities that are accessible to and usable by disabled persons." (45 C.F.R. §84.22(f))

Hart to Heart Counseling and all of its programs and activities are accessible to and useable by disabled persons, including persons who are deaf, hard of hearing, or blind, or who have other sensory impairments. Access features include:

- Convenient off-street parking designated specifically for disabled persons.
- Curb cuts and ramps between parking areas and buildings.
- Level access into first floor level with elevator access to all other floors.
- Fully accessible offices, meeting rooms, bathrooms, public waiting areas, cafeteria, patient treatment areas, including examining rooms and patient wards.
- A full range of assistive and communication aids provided to persons who are deaf, hard of hearing, or blind, or with other sensory impairments. There is no additional charge for such aids. Some of these aids include:
 - Access to qualified sign language interpreters for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing.
 - A twenty-four hour (24) telecommunication device (TTY/TDD) which can connect the caller to all extensions within the facility and/or portable (TTY/TDD) units, for use by persons who are deaf, hard of hearing, or speech impaired.
 - Readers for the blind and large print materials for the visually impaired.
 - Flash cards, alphabet boards and other communication boards.
 - Assistive devices for persons with impaired manual skills.

If you require any of the aids listed above, please let your intake professional know.



Hart to Heart Counseling, PLLC

Sliding Fee Application Form

Chart # _____

Date : _____

It is the policy of Hart to Heart Counseling to provide essential services regardless of the patient's ability to pay. Discounts are offered based on family size and annual income. Please complete the following information and return to your provider to determine if you or members of your family are eligible for a discount. The discount will apply to all services received by Hart to Heart Counseling. This form must be completed every 12 months or if your financial situation changes.

NAME OF HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD			PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT	
STREET	CITY	STATE	ZIP	PHONE

Please list spouse and dependents under age 18.

Name	Date of Birth	Name	Date of Birth
SELF		DEPENDENT	
SPOUSE		DEPENDENT	
DEPENDENT		DEPENDENT	
DEPENDENT		DEPENDENT	

Annual Household Income

Source	Self	Spouse	Other	Total
Gross wages, salaries, tips, etc.				
Income from business, self-employment, and dependents				
Unemployment compensation, workers' compensation, Social Security, Supplemental Security Income, public assistance, veterans' payments, survivor benefits, pension or retirement income				
Interest, dividends, rents, royalties, income from estates, trusts, educational assistance, alimony, child support, assistance from outside the household, and other miscellaneous sources				
Total Income				

NOTE: Copies of tax returns, pay stubs, or other information verifying income may be required before a discount is approved.

I certify that the family size and income information shown above is correct.

Name (Print)

Signature

Date

Office Use Only

Patient Name: _____

Approved Discount: _____

Approved by: _____

Date Approved: _____

Verification Checklist	Yes	No
Identification/Address: Driver's license, utility bill, employment ID, or other		
Income: Prior year tax return, three most recent pay stubs, or other		
Insurance: Insurance Cards		