



HART TO HEART COUNSELING, PLLC

Miscellaneous Policies

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Hart to Heart Counseling is to provide quality outpatient 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 two weeks 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 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 outstanding balance can be viewed on and payments can be made on the Jituzu app/website.
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.
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.**

ACCESS TO ANCILLARY, INPATIENT, AND SPECIALITY CARE

When inpatient care is needed or requested, Hart to Heart Counseling will work with clients to points of access for inpatient care. Currently, Altru Psychiatric's point of access is its emergency room. There are inpatient options at Sanford in Thief River Falls, MN and Prairie St. John's in Fargo, ND. Admittance policies are specific to the inpatient facilities. Client's may always make a self-referral by visiting the Altru emergency room or calling 911.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Hart to Heart Counseling does not and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, 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.

APPOINTMENTS POLICY

1. Scheduling:

When calling for an appointment, please provide your name and chief complaint/reason for visit, and any updated contact information. We will contact you as soon as possible to work with you to schedule your first appointment. Initial appointment times will be available based on client and clinician availability. Recurring appointments will be made at the end of the last appointment or in an agreed upon manner between the clinician and the client (i.e. provider contacts client at the start of the week, provider contacts on a particular date, or wait for client to contact provider).

2. Same Day Appointments:

Urgent appointment requests will be filled at the start or end of the day, or within 24 hours of request. Urgent appointments will have an in-home option available upon request. On most days, an appointment slot is available for last minute appointments. If an appointment slot is not available, we will schedule you for the next available appointment. If you feel that you cannot wait, please inform the staff and appropriate measures will be taken.

3. Cancellations or Missing Appointments:

Life happens. If you are unable to make an appointment or need to reschedule a date/time, please contact your provider as soon as you know. You can text, call, or email. There are no penalties for cancellations or missing appointments. Serving mental health needs is our priority.

EMEGENCY SERVICES POLICY

Hart to Heart Counseling clinician will conduct the following crisis/emergency steps for each individual served.

- 1) Post crisis or emergency options at <http://www.hart2heart.org/crisis-or-emergency.html>
- 2) Review emergency services policy with each individual at intake and document the review and any questions on the initial intake case note.
- 3) Staff phone 866.427.8370 24/7/365 and have instructions for the mental health crisis line as part of the answering system when unable to answer.
- 4) Determine if crisis plan is needed at intake and develop crisis plan as needed. Document if needed and developed in the initial progress note.
- 5) Review ancillary services and procedures as part of the miscellaneous policies at intake for each individual and document in the initial progress note.
- 6) Make referrals to ancillary providers for in-patient services evaluation when deemed necessary.



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 218.779.0134, 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 218.779.0134, 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 218.779.0134, 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 218.779.0134, 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.