

ALAMO MENTAL HEALTH GROUP

OFFICE PRACTICES AND POLICIES

Welcome to Alamo Mental Health Group. To better serve our patients, we have developed the following guidelines. If you have any questions regarding office practices or policies, please ask your provider. If they are unable to answer your questions, they will refer you to the appropriate Alamo resource.

Business Hours: General office hours are Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Early evening and Saturday appointments are available with some providers. Please check with your provider for his/her specific schedule.

Payment: Payment is expected at the time of arrival. Our contracts and agreements with insurance companies and health plans **require** us to collect all co-payments and deductible amounts at the time of service. If payment is not made at the time of the scheduled appointment, a **\$10.00** administrative fee will be assessed. A **\$30.00** fee will be assessed for all NSF checks.

Services: Alamo Mental Health Group offers a variety of services including individual psychotherapy, family therapy, group therapy, medication evaluations and medication management/follow-up appointments. Your provider will share with you a treatment plan with the recommended services for you and the recommended frequencies. Some of our providers also offer specialized services. Many health plans and insurance companies may not cover some services and do not provide benefits for the services. Services which may not be covered by your insurance company included, but are not limited to:

- disability evaluations
- custody evaluations
- pain management
- smoking cessation
- marriage counseling
- sex therapy
- treatment mandated by the court, or other third party
- educational/academic assessments
- court appearances/depositions

Please check with your insurance carrier regarding specific information on your particular health plan coverage.

Providers: Alamo Mental Health Group is staffed by a group of **independent contractors** who are licensed, qualified mental health professionals, providing a variety of services. You may see only one or several different mental health providers at Alamo Mental Health Group.

Psychiatrists are medical doctors and are available to prescribe medications. If you need to be evaluated for medications, a psychiatrist will see you for the evaluation. Psychiatrists may also work with other providers in evaluating the need and effects of medications. Psychiatrists do not typically provide psychotherapy or counseling.

Psychologists are Ph.D. and Psy.D. level practitioners who are not medical doctors. Psychologists provide individual, couples, group, and family therapy. Psychologists also perform psychological evaluations and testing.

Therapists are master level practitioners who are not medical doctors. Therapists provide group, individual, and family therapy.

Appointment Length: Services may be of varying lengths, depending on the service and nature of your problem. The following are guidelines:

Individual psychotherapy is generally 45 to 50 minutes, although some appointments may be 25 to 30 minutes

Group therapy is generally from 50 to 80 minutes

Family therapy is generally 45 to 50 minutes

Medication evaluations are generally 20 minutes to 50 minutes

Medication follow-up appointments are generally 15 minutes

Missed Appointments ("No Shows")/Cancellations: Scheduled appointment times are reserved especially for you. If an appointment is missed or canceled with less than **24-BUSINESS-hours** notice, you will be billed according to the scheduled fee and instructions of your benefit plan. It is the policy of Alamo Mental Health Group to charge a fee of **\$150.00** for missed or canceled initial appointments with a psychiatrist and **\$100.00** for any missed or late-canceled follow-up appointments with a psychiatrist with less than a **24-BUSINESS-hour** notice. There will also be charge of **\$100.00** for any missed or late-canceled appointments with a psychologist or therapist. Your insurance company will not be billed for fees associated with missed or last minute canceled appointments.

You may cancel a scheduled appointment prior to **24-BUSINESS-hours** of your scheduled appointment by calling the office and speaking to a member of our administrative staff or by e-mailing us at cancelmyappointment@alamomentalhealth.com.

Patient Tardiness A patient arriving late for their scheduled appointment may not be able to be seen by their provider and may be considered a "no show."

Provider Cancellations: Occasionally your provider may need to change his/her schedule, cancel, and reschedule appointments with you. You will be informed of this as far in advance as possible and/or rescheduled. In the event of illness of your provider, we may unfortunately be forced to give you little or no notice regarding the absence and the need to reschedule your appointment.

Copies of Records: If you would like your physician or other professional to obtain a copy of your record, a release of information **must** be signed. The requesting party will be responsible for any fees. When applicable, the charge for records is **\$25.00** for the first **20** pages and **.50** cents for each additional page after the first twenty. All fees must be paid in advance. It may take up to 15 business days to obtain a copy of your medical records once all fees are paid.

Court Appearances/ARD Meetings: A subpoena is required for **all** court appearances. The individual requesting the court appearance will be responsible for any fees charged. This also applies to depositions, other court related matters, and attendance at ARD meetings. Our charges for court/school related activities are generally greater than our typical charges for mental health services. The business office can provide more detail on this subject.

Disability Forms/Reports: There will be a **\$25.00** charge for the first page and **\$5.00** for each additional page for the completion of forms or reports for someone other than your health insurance. This charge must be paid in advance. If the form can be completed as part of your visit, there may be no charge. The business office can provide more information.

Emergencies: Alamo Mental Health Group has night and weekend coverage for **emergencies only**. We expect calls after 5:00 p.m. and on weekends to be for **emergencies only**. In the event of an emergency, you may call 614-8400 and have the on-call provider return your call and address your emergency.

Prescriptions: Prescriptions are generally written in a quantity to last until the next scheduled appointment. It is our policy not to refill prescriptions outside of scheduled appointments. If it does become necessary for a refill to be written or called in to your pharmacy due to you not keeping a scheduled appointment, a charge of **\$20.00** may be assessed. A **\$15.00** charge will be assessed on prescriptions of triplicate medications (such as Ritalin, Vyvanse, Adderall, and Concerta) that are written between scheduled appointments. A **\$25.00** charge will be applied if a prescription must be rewritten due to the loss or expiration of that prescription. Requests for prescription refills are to be called in by your pharmacist from 9:00 a.m. through 3:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday for approval. A minimum of **five** business days is typically required for the prescription refill to be approved. Urgent prescription refills (less than five business days) can be issued for a **\$25.00** fee. In general, prescription refills cannot be ordered or approved after business hours because your physician and chart may not be available.

Treatment Philosophy-Explanation of Treatment: Treatment at Alamo Mental Health Group is goal-directed and problem-focused. This means that your treatment goal or goals are established after a thorough assessment. All treatment is then planned with the goal(s) in mind and progress is made toward accomplishment of the goal(s) in a time efficient manner. You are asked to take an active role in setting and achieving your treatment goals. Your commitment to this approach is necessary for you to experience a successful outcome. If you have any questions about the nature of your treatment or care, please do not hesitate to ask your provider.

Your Rights and Responsibilities:

1. You have the right to receive information about Alamo Mental Health Group's services and practitioners, clinical guidelines, and patients' rights and responsibilities.
2. You have the right to be treated with respect and recognition of your dignity and need for privacy.
3. You have the right to participate fully with your provider in decision-making regarding your treatment planning.
4. You have the right to voice complaints or appeals about Alamo Mental Health Group or the care provided to you.
5. You have the responsibility to provide, to the extent possible, information that AMHG and its providers need in order to care for you.
6. You have the responsibility to follow the plans and instructions for care that you have agreed upon with your provider.
7. You have the responsibility to participate, to the degree possible, in understanding your behavioral health problem(s) and developing mutually agreed upon treatment goals.

Patient Advocate: Should you have a complaint or comment about any Alamo Mental Health staff or your provider, please contact Michael Castillo, Ph.D., at 614-8400, ext 302.