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d/b/a MERIDIAN MENTAL HEALTH
&
TMS CENTER OF OMAHA
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Welcome to Meridian Mental Health. We are grateful for the opportunity to help you and/or your family maximize your mental health. We believe your mental well-being is as important as all other aspects of your health. We strive to provide you with the highest quality preventative, diagnostic and therapeutic care, including psychotherapy and medication management. We value you as an essential partner in your care and look forward to our working relationship.

In this packet, you will find enclosed information regarding our office procedures/policies, your patient rights and other valuable mental health resources. Please review this information and ask any of our staff questions you might have. You can be assured that we are open to all your questions and concerns, and we will make every effort to handle them privately and professionally.

MMH Staff

Dr. Mary Jo Hanigan, MD, MN, PC
Dr. Natalie Baker, MD
Bob Lundholm, APRN-NP
Sara Mason, PA-C
Mary London, PA-C
Steve Elzey, LPN
Jennifer Gegzna, MBA
Travis Mettenbrink, BSBA
Collin Healy
Alexis Bradford

Board-Certified Psychiatrist
Board-Certified Psychiatrist
Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner
Physician Assistant
Physician Assistant
TMS Technician
TMS & Spravato Coordinator
Director of Clinical Operations
Medication Tech/NCPT
Medication Tech

MMH is a group of mental health practitioners providing up-to-date, patient-centered, and comprehensive psychiatric care including evaluation, medication management, psychotherapy for individuals and groups, TMS, and Spravato (Esketamine).

TMS – Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation is a non-medication approach to treating certain mental health issues. MMH is proud to offer this growing treatment, which consists of approximately 30 treatments over 6 weeks. Ask your provider if TMS is an appropriate treatment option for you.

Spravato (Esketamine) – Ketamine is a novel neurochemical modulator used to treat patients with treatment-resistant depression. This medication is administered using a nasal spray. Ask your provider if Ketamine is an appropriate option for you.

Office Procedures

Office Hours – Meridian Mental Health is open Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm and Friday 8:00 am to 3:00 pm.

Emergencies – In the event of a mental health emergency immediately call **911** or go to the nearest Emergency Room. Do not leave messages for your provider by phone, email or with the office staff. **Proceed directly to the nearest emergency department or call 911.** Mental health emergencies might include thoughts of harming yourself or someone else, a severe medical side effect to your medication (such as difficulty breathing) or having disturbing or new symptoms (such as hallucinations or severe paranoia) to name a few. If you are uncertain if your concern is an emergency, you should proceed to the nearest emergency department.

After-Hours Calls – MMH has an after-hours number for **URGENT patient problems**. The phone number is **(402) 490-5400**. It will only be answered when the office is closed after 5:00 pm Monday – Thursday and after 3:00 pm on Fridays, in addition to weekends, and on holidays. Appropriate instructions will be given to you about how to reach one of our providers. We encourage you to phone after-hours for **serious** medical issues only. We kindly request that all other important issues be handled during normal business hours with your own provider. Life threatening or emergent issues should be directed immediately to an emergency department. Psychotherapy concerns should be directed to your therapist.

Refill Requests – Generally, you will be given a prescription at your appointment with the medications and number of refills necessary until your **next** appointment. If for some reason you are low on medications and/or have no refills, **please ask your pharmacist to contact us** during business hours for a refill request. Refills will not be filled on weekends or holidays.

It is our policy that patients receiving certain controlled substances must be evaluated on a more frequent basis in order to continue treatment on those medications. These include stimulants, certain anxiety drugs and sleep medications. For patient safety and compliance with the federal PDMP, refills of these medications will require an office visit before the refill.

Psychostimulants	every 3 months
Benzodiazepines	every 6 months
Sleep medications	every 6 months

At the discretion of your prescriber, it may be necessary to see you more frequently if clinically indicated. It is **not** our policy to prescribe narcotics in light of other medications typically used in our patient population. You will need to be evaluated by a pain specialist or your PCP for pain management.

Certain medications cannot be refilled over the telephone and/or require a written prescription. You may be required to schedule an appointment with your provider before some refills are renewed, depending on your medication profile. Be careful to administer your medications exactly as your provider prescribed or **you will be short** before the next refill is due. Many insurance companies will not pay for your refill until it is due. If you have concerns about your prescriptions, please talk to your provider or the Medication Tech so that necessary changes can be made.

If you utilize a mail-order pharmacy, please bring their necessary prescription paperwork with you to your appointment to facilitate the order. No routine medication refills will be made after hours, on weekends, or holidays so please plan accordingly. **Medication refill requests will NOT be handled after-hours, on weekends or on holidays.** After hour calls that are not emergent can be left on our answering machine at (402) 504-3707, option 2. You may leave your provider a detailed message with the answering machine for attention the next business day.

IMPORTANT: Medication refills requested after 4:00 pm on Monday-Thursday, and 12:00pm on Friday, may not be returned until the next business day. Please allow 48 hours for standard refill requests and plan accordingly.

PDMP – The Federal National Drug Monitoring Program was established in Nebraska in January 2017. MMH complies with all aspects of this program. We are required by law to submit information about the medications prescribed to our patients to the DEA. We also receive information from PDMP about medications prescribed to our patients from other providers.

Insurances – MMH files insurance for you as a standard courtesy to our patients, but payment for services is **the patient responsibility**. Meridian Mental Health accepts most insurance plans but are not necessarily “preferred-providers” with everyone. We will ask about your insurance coverage at the time you call for an initial appointment. If you are uncertain about your coverage, it is **your** responsibility to know your own insurance coverage. We always recommend that you personally call your insurance carrier regarding benefits. MMH is not able to know all the various insurance plans on the market. **Please bring your insurance card with you to each appointment.** Advise staff of any change in insurance coverage. If you choose to see one of our providers “out-of-network” as many of our patients do, you will be responsible for the uncovered portion of your bill including the co-pay. We will kindly assist you in maximizing your insurance coverage of our services if we have the appropriate information.

Cash Pay – Some patients are “cash basis” which is prearranged with your provider. In these rare cases, your staff will review your financial obligations with you at your first appointment. “Cash basis” patients receive a discounted rate and **MUST** pay the entire amount at the time of each visit. If your insurance carrier is “in-network”, self-pay is not an option due to federal legalities.

Co-pays – All co-pays **MUST** be paid **at the time of service**. For your convenience, we accept cash, major credit cards, and checks. According to insurance laws, we cannot bill you for a co-pay. We do not take post-dated checks for co-pays.

Outstanding Bills – If you have an extraordinary balance due, you will be asked to render a payment or reschedule your appointment. We certainly understand the constraints of difficult economic times. Please talk to your provider or our staff about all options available to you to insure on-going mental health care. We do not accept post-dated checks for payments on accounts. We have instituted a payment plan option that can be negotiated as a financial contract and arranged with our Billing Specialist.

Collection Agency – MMH works with a medical billing specialist to provide you billing information. Our system allows our own office staff to access your account on site. We will attempt to notify you if your medical bill is extraordinarily high or past due. By contract with our billing service, past due bills are transferred to a medical collection agency after 90-120 days. Once your account has been referred, our office staff is no longer able to assist you or negotiate payments. All further communication will be transferred to the collection agency. You may be unable to continue care at MMH. Any cash pay discounts will be voided. We encourage you to discuss your billing issues with us prior to involving the collection agency. Under certain circumstances, we can arrange payment schedules.

Returned Checks – All returned checks will be assessed a \$45 (FORTY-FIVE dollar) charge. We do not take post-dated checks for co-pays or balances on your account.

Record – Your medical records are confidential and are protected within the practice of Meridian Mental Health. You will be asked to sign a waiver upon your first appointment so that your insurer has access to the records they need on your behalf. If you wish to have a copy of your medical record for other purposes, you must ask your provider. There will be a charge for record duplication to be determined and paid for in advance. We will try to respond to your request as soon as possible but ask that you allow five (5) working days for making the appropriate copies. All duplicated records are paper copies and are not available in electronic format. Federal law requires that all providers review HIPPA regulations with their patients. Upon your first visit, you will be given information regarding HIPPA and will be asked to sign a document attesting to this federal regulation.

Photo Identification – Governmental regulations now require us to have a photo ID of you in your chart for billing purposes. Acceptable forms include a driver's license, work ID or a valid passport.

Practitioner Students – From time to time, the providers at MMH may have senior medical students, Physician Assistant or Advanced Practice Nursing students working with them. These students are under the supervision of the providers and act only on their directives. We believe these advanced level students need a conducive and safe environment to learn mental health skills, and we appreciate your willingness to work with them. If, however, you have any reservations about working with students, please do not hesitate to let us know and we will understand.

No-Show – MMH provides a text message or a phone call for a friendly “reminder” of your upcoming appointment unless you advise us otherwise. **Because the demand for our appointment times is so critical, all no-show or same day cancelled appointments will be handled according to a strict policy which is included in this packet. According to the policy, you will be charged for excessive no - show appointments.** We will review this with you and require you to sign it at your first appointment. Insurance companies will not cover missed appointment charges, and you will be responsible for those charges. It is important that you notify us if you are unable to keep a scheduled appointment at least 24 hours in advance.

Late Arrival – If you are more than fifteen (15) minutes late, your provider may need to proceed to the next scheduled appointment in order to remain on time with the clinic schedule. Your provider may try to work you back into the schedule at the first available time or you may be asked to reschedule your appointment.

Delayed Appointments – If you have been waiting more than fifteen (15) minutes for your scheduled appointment, **please** check with the office staff, we make every attempt to stay on schedule out of respect for your busy time, but we ask for your understanding in those occasions where your provider may be managing a crisis with another patient. This may delay your appointment unexpectedly. Our staff will do their best to provide you a different provider or different time under these circumstances. We work very carefully to ensure that all patients are shown the necessary courtesy to meet their mental health needs.

Release of Information – In mental health, we are very careful to provide strict patient confidentiality. If anyone, including a spouse, wishes to talk with your provider about your case, you must sign a release of information allowing us to do so. The only exceptions are in the case of an imminent psychiatric emergency or when the patient is either a minor or has a legally appointed guardian, in which case your provider can speak with the guardian.

In some cases, your provider will ask for a release of information from the provider who referred you. This is so that essential information about your care can be shared, providing the most comprehensive and up-to-date care possible. In the case of marital or partner counseling, your provider may ask that each party sign a release of information to include each other in their care. All releases of information can be revoked at any time. The patient only needs to notify the provider.

Office Closure – In the case of inclement weather, please call ahead before coming to the office. If your appointment was cancelled due to inclement weather, every attempt will be made to reschedule you at your first convenience. Your safety during weather emergencies is a priority to us. Please leave a message if you need an immediate refill of medications.

Medications/Bottles – It is very helpful for you to bring all of your pill bottles to each appointment. Your provider can then determine which psychotropic medications are best used with your other prescribed medications. It also helps us know if new medications, including those prescribed by another provider, have been added or generic substitutes have been given. Please provide your provider of such changes.

We strongly recommend that you dispose all previously prescribed medications if they are not continued after your first appointment. This avoids any mistakes or misunderstandings on your part with the current treatment plan determined with your provider.

Samples – We are very fortunate to have available many medication samples provided free-of-charge from local pharmaceutical representatives. Generally, these are used when first starting a new medication or when the pharmacy cost would otherwise prohibit you from using the medication. We will also assist you in applying for medication assistance directly from the pharmaceutical company. Many of their assistance plans are quite generous. Please do not hesitate to ask about availability of samples. Sample medications **cannot** be mailed out from MMH. If you have a designated person pick up your samples, you will need to provide us with their name in advance. They will need to show their identification and sign out your samples.

From time to time, the pharmaceutical representatives will visit our office to update us on their products and to deliver samples. We try to minimize any disruption or delays to MMH patients. We ask for your patience as these meetings are highly informative and enable us to offer you the free samples.

Referrals – At MMH we are glad to review all referrals from other providers (for example, physicians, other therapists, employee assistance programs, etc.) We may also recommend that you see another provider, such as a medical specialist or specialized therapist, if it is felt that a more comprehensive consult is warranted.

Psychotherapists – Meridian Mental Health is pleased to work with a variety of psychotherapists in the community who refer patients here. We also have good working relationships with a variety of psychotherapists in practice. We have extensive experience in referring patients to the appropriate therapists when indicated, thereby guiding you to the best match of patient and therapist. If you specifically wish to see a therapist, please advise your provider.

Lab – Your provider is likely to order laboratory tests from time to time to investigate medical problems interfering with your mental health and/or to monitor medication side effects. Your provider might try to obtain recent lab results from your other doctors if available. If necessary, you may obtain the ordered lab at your primary care doctor’s office or at any other facility available with your insurance carrier. Your provider will assist you in arranging for laboratory tests. If you have not heard back about the results of labs ordered by your MMH provider in two weeks, please call our office for results. MMH does not charge for any laboratory or collection services.

Legal – In some cases, your mental health needs may have a legal or forensic implication, for instance if you had a recent legal charge of “driving under the influence.” If you need your provider to talk with your attorney, you will need to sign a release of information form. In some cases, the court may subpoena your provider for information, with which we must comply. If your provider needs to communicate with your attorney or testify in any capacity, you will be assessed a fee based upon the time spent in the forensic activity, which may or may not be covered by your insurance. Please ask your provider about the specific policy if necessary.

Worker’s Compensation – Meridian Mental Health does not routinely accept new patients involved in a Worker’s Compensation case due to the complexity of their legal process. If a current patient becomes involved in a Workers’ Compensation case, they may be referred to a mental health forensic specialist to better adhere those needs. Several board-certified forensic psychiatrist in the local area accept those referrals.

Disputes – If you have any disputes about your care, we encourage you to approach your provider about your concerns, being assured that you will be heard in a professional and understanding way. If your concern is not addressed to your satisfaction, we invite you to contact Dr. Hanigan so that a resolution can be made. They will consult with the other providers to work toward a satisfactory resolution for everyone involved.

Letters/FMLA Paperwork – Some patients may request a letter or healthcare related documents completed by their provider, (i.e., FMLA documents). Completion of these letters or documents is at the discretion of the provider but there is a standardized charge. Most insurance companies will not cover these charges and are the responsibility of the patient. Please allow at least five (5) business days for completion of these requests.

Meridian Mental Health does not provide letters to allow for companion or service animals. Please refer to your therapist or primary care physician for this request.

CRISIS HOTLINES

National Suicide Prevention Hotline

(800) 273-8255

CHI Health Behavioral Crisis Hotline

(402) 717-HOPE (4673)

Nebraska Family Hotline

1-800-866-8660

Safe Harbor – Peer Services

415 South 25th Avenue/Lasting Hope Annex

Omaha, Nebraska 68131

(402) 715-4226 (warm line)

Safe Harbor is an extra resource, free of charge, if you are experiencing a crisis. Please call the “warm line” above if needed.

NAMI – National Alliance on Mentally Illness

415 South 25th Avenue/Lasting Hope Annex

Omaha, Nebraska 68131

(402) 345-8101

Boys Town National Hotline

(800) 448-3000

Questions – We encourage you to ask ANY questions you might have about your care or our office procedures. In managing your mental health needs, we believe that an open and trusting partnership with you will always lead to the best results!

*Meridian – “Every man is destined to meet his meridian, his highest point of development in his own time.”
Cardinal John Henry Newman, c.1873*