

**PSYCHIATRIST-PATIENT SERVICES AGREEMENT**

**PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AND FEES**

Treatment needs vary, and Dr. Wheeler will work with you to set up the most appropriate schedule. It is important to adhere to the recommended schedule of treatment. Payment is expected at the time of service. The fee for a sixty minute initial diagnostic evaluation is \$500. A follow-up office visit of 25 minutes is \$250.00. A follow-up office visit of 50 minutes is \$500.00. If these rates should change in the future, you will be given a thirty day notice. A fee of \$25.00 will be assessed to your account for any checks returned by my bank because of insufficient funds. Balances over 30 days past due will accrue a \$5.00 processing fee for each month they are overdue.

Dr. Wheeler currently has office hours Monday through Thursday. For questions or concerns that cannot or should not wait until your next appointment, please call the office during regular business hours. Dr. Wheeler's office manager will take a detailed message, and you may expect a call back from either the office manager or Dr. Wheeler, depending upon the complexity level of the question and answer. Phone consultation with Dr. Wheeler is charged at the same rate as office visits.

We often recommend scheduling an appointment for complex questions or clinical situations. We endeavor to schedule patients as quickly as possible in these situations.

Written reports for schools, consulting with other professionals with your permission, preparation of treatment summaries, and the time spent performing any other service on your behalf will be prorated at the usual hourly rate.

**INSURANCE REIMBURSEMENT**

Dr. Wheeler does not accept medical insurance and is considered an out-of-network provider. Many insurers do provide out of network benefits. Please contact your insurance company to determine your benefits. Your insurance is a contract between you and your insurance carrier. You are responsible for the charges incurred, and for corresponding with your insurance carrier to obtain reimbursement.

Medicare patients: Dr. Wheeler is a Medicare "Opt-Out" physician, meaning that Medicare will not provide any reimbursement to you for her services. Medicare rules do require us to have a signed opt-out contract on file for all Medicare beneficiaries.

Medicaid patients: Under current Medicaid regulations, Medicaid recipients may not pay out of pocket for services provided by non-Medicaid providers. For this reason, Dr. Wheeler does not accept Medicaid patients.

We will provide you with a receipt at the time of each service. Your receipt contains all the pertinent information which your insurance company requires for you to submit a claim for reimbursement.

**COMMUNICATION**

The office is open Monday through Thursday except for holidays. We communicate via phone and fax. We do not use e-mail or text messaging. Please call us at 410-266-9181. If you reach the voicemail, it is because the office manager is either on the phone or with a patient. Please leave a message which includes your name and telephone number. We will make every effort to return your call within one business day.

Please be sure to check your voice mails from our office. If we are trying to contact a patient, we will leave two voice mails before sending a letter to the home. Failure to respond to these attempts to communicate could result in discharge from the practice. We often have important clinical information to convey to patients, and it is essential that patients respond to our attempts to contact them.

Unless we have specific written permission to do so, we will not speak with family members.

## **EMERGENCIES AND AFTER HOURS COMMUNICATION**

If you are experiencing an emergency that should not wait for a return call, you should call 911 or go directly to the nearest Emergency Department. This would likely be Dr. Wheeler's recommendation in these types of situations. Emergency clinical concerns are best addressed in person, in an environment where treatment is readily available. Examples of emergency clinical concerns are threats of harm to self or others, new or increased medical symptoms such as chest pain or shortness of breath, or a sudden change in a patient's mental status. You can certainly leave a message advising Dr. Wheeler that you are going to an Emergency Department. Dr. Wheeler can then coordinate care with the Emergency Department professionals.

For other urgent, non-life threatening, clinical concerns outside normal business hours, which cannot wait for the office to re-open, such as suspected serious side effects to medications which Dr. Wheeler has prescribed, psychotic symptoms, or thoughts of harm to one's self or others, you may leave a message for Dr. Wheeler on the emergency cell phone at 443-481-9887. Please do not text. Dr. Wheeler will not respond to text messages. Please limit the use of the emergency cell phone to truly urgent clinical matters and psychiatric emergencies. Misuse of the emergency cell phone or texting may result in discharge from the practice.

In order to provide the best possible care during the day for all of her patients, Dr. Wheeler will not accept calls between the hours of 9 pm and 5 am. For urgent clinical matters during these hours that cannot or should not wait until morning, please call 911 or go directly to the Emergency Room.

Please remember that all clinical work, either with you directly or on your behalf, will be billed at the usual hourly rate.

## **CANCELLATIONS AND MISSED APPOINTMENTS**

Dr. Wheeler's practice often has patients on a waiting list. Please call at least 24 hours in advance if you need to change an appointment, so that the appointment slot can be released to a patient on the waiting list. Appointments cancelled with less than 24 hours notice, or missed appointments without notice, will be billed at the regular rate if we are unable to fill the appointment slot with another patient. Given that we are often able to do this, please try to give us as much notice as possible.

In an effort to allow sufficient time for each patient's needs, and to avoid unnecessary wait times, appointments for follow-up medication management are scheduled for 25 minutes. If you feel you require additional time, please schedule a full 50-minute appointment. In the unusual situation where a patient's clinical presentation warrants additional time, please be aware that we do charge accordingly.

If you are more than ten minutes late for your appointment, we will need to reschedule it. Please allow sufficient time for travel and traffic.

If you miss two appointments without notice within one calendar year you will be discharged from the practice. We will, however, provide you with a referral to another clinician.

## **PRESCRIPTION REFILLS**

Prescription refills should be handled during appointments. A fee of \$15.00 will be assessed for any **non-emergency** prescriptions that have to be filled outside of regularly scheduled appointments. **Emergency** prescriptions called in after regular business hours will be billed at the usual hourly rate.

## **CONTROLLED MEDICATIONS**

Prescriptions for controlled medications, such as stimulants for ADD, benzodiazapines used for anxiety and to aid with sleep, narcotic pain medications, and some sleep medications are subject to prescribing guidelines and regulations by both the Federal and the State government. In addition, the State of Maryland has implemented an online system for keeping track of all prescriptions issued for certain controlled medications, which prescribers are required to check every three months.

Therefore, due to these prescribing requirements and mandates, as well as our own office policies and procedures, please be aware of the following:

- 1) Prescriptions for controlled medications will be written during an in-person appointment only. Prescriptions will be written for a maximum of a 90-day period, or more often if required. It is your responsibility to make sure that you schedule your follow-up appointment to occur within the recommended time to avoid any lapse in your treatment. Refills will not be authorized over the phone. Since it is potentially dangerous to abruptly stop certain controlled medications, it is possible that an Emergency Room visit might be required if you run out of them.
- 2) Please safeguard both your written prescription as well as your prescription medication once you have filled it at the pharmacy. Lost or stolen prescriptions and/or medications cannot be replaced.
- 3) Count your pills at the pharmacy counter as soon as you receive them.
- 4) If the pharmacy provides a partial fill of your prescription, it is possible that the rest of the quantity will be voided. A new prescription must be obtained.
- 5) If the above procedures are not adhered to, or if there is any evidence of abuse, misuse, or diversion, the medication will be discontinued and appropriate alternatives will be discussed, and could result in discharge from the practice.

## **MAINTENANCE MEDICATIONS**

As part of your treatment plan, follow-up appointments will be scheduled at intervals to be determined by the doctor based on several factors, which will be discussed with you. It is important to adhere to the recommended follow-up schedule. Prescription refills will be authorized during the interim period and not beyond it. It is your responsibility to schedule your follow-up appointments as recommended to occur before your prescription runs out. Refills will not be authorized if follow-up appointments are not kept. Please schedule your follow-up appointment for approximately two weeks prior to your prescription running out.

Many insurers are now requiring a 90-day supply of maintenance medications. When it is medically appropriate, a 90-day prescription will be authorized. It is important to note that refills will only be authorized if recommended follow-up appointments are kept.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

All spoken and written information related to your care is held in strictest confidence. I will not provide information to any third party without your written consent, except where required by law. Legal exceptions include potential harm to yourself or others, suspected child abuse, and some court subpoenas. Medical exceptions include communication with other medical professionals who are providing treatment to you, hospitals, laboratories, and your insurance company, should you choose to submit a claim for reimbursement. There is a more comprehensive list of exceptions to confidentiality in the written privacy policy, which is available on the website, [www.nancywheelermid.com](http://www.nancywheelermid.com). You can also ask the office manager if you need another copy. Should you wish for Dr. Wheeler to release information to a third party, please sign the "Release of PHI (Private Health Information)" form, which is available on the website or in the office.

**LEGAL ISSUES**

Dr. Wheeler does not get involved in work grievances, lawsuits, custody disputes, disability determinations, or other legal or administrative proceedings, including work excuses and requests for a change in job conditions. If you require a medical advocate for any of the above reasons, you will need to hire one elsewhere. We can help with a referral to a professional who can help you with these matters.

**MAINTENANCE OF TREATMENT**

Both Dr. Wheeler and her patients have responsibilities to maintain the doctor/patient treatment relationship. Dr. Wheeler has a responsibility to evaluate and treat patients’ symptoms appropriately. This may include referrals to other practitioners for treatment of conditions that are beyond the realm of her expertise. She has the responsibility to explain the treatments to patients. Dr. Wheeler will endeavor to recommend treatment that is effective and well-tolerated.

The patient has responsibilities as well. You have a responsibility to make every effort to adhere to Dr. Wheeler’s treatment recommendations. These include:

- attendance at recommended follow-up appointments
- adherence to your recommended medication regimen
- compliance with blood work and EKG orders
- follow-through with recommended consultations with other professionals
- keeping your account up-to-date
- following Dr. Wheeler’s instructions during urgent or emergency situations
- being forthcoming about symptoms you are experiencing as well as any alcohol and/or drug use
- appropriate use of the emergency cell phone

Occasionally, patients are discharged from the practice with a thirty day notice if they are unable to maintain their responsibilities in the treatment relationship.

*Your signature below indicates that you have read the information in this document, Psychiatrist-Patient Services Agreement and agree to abide by the terms described herein. Please feel free to ask any questions you may have about these policies and/or your responsibilities. If you do not believe that you can work with, or continue to work with, Dr. Wheeler under the terms of this Agreement, we can certainly provide referrals for you.*

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*Signature*

*Date*

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*Name*

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*Signature of Guardian  
(If patient is a minor)*

*Date*