



# **Counseling and Psychological Services (CPS)**

## **Student Information on Mental Health Services at University Health Services**

Welcome to CPS. We are a confidential mental health service committed to collaborating with you in order to support you in achieving your educational, personal, and life goals. We respect individual differences and strive to ensure a welcoming and healing environment for all members of our community.

This document contains important information about the services we offer and our policies and procedures related to those services, privacy, and consultation. Please read this information carefully and discuss any questions you have with your clinician.

### **Services Provided**

CPS offers a range of mental health services including clinical assessments, individual and group psychotherapy, psychopharmacological treatment, referrals to treatment providers in the community, urgent-care assessment and crisis intervention. In order for us to be available to the entire student body, we provide *time limited* psychotherapy and psychiatric services and are unable to routinely offer open-ended or extended mental health services. Some issues however, are more appropriately addressed in open-ended, extended, or specialized psychotherapy. When such services are recommended, your CPS clinician will provide referrals to several mental health professionals in the local community. If you think that your psychological condition may constitute a disability, please contact the Office of Disability Services at 609-258-8840 for a consultation. Please note that while CPS will provide clinical care for your psychological concerns, we do not perform disability assessments. However, we can provide referral information for these services in the community.

### **Nature and Anticipated Course of Mental Health Services**

The initial sessions with a CPS clinician are typically spent gaining an understanding of the issues that bring you to CPS in order to offer recommendations. We will collaborate with you on planning for services to help address your concerns and meet your goals. Mental health services can provide benefits as well as pose some risks. Psychotherapy often elicits uncomfortable thoughts, feelings, and memories, while medication can produce unwanted side effects. These treatments have also been shown to have significant benefits for people who make use of them. There are no guarantees of what you will experience, but it is the goal of CPS to support you through this process. Benefits of psychotherapy accrue in the context of the therapeutic relationship and you are encouraged to let your clinician(s) know what you believe will be the best ways to meet your needs and goals, including a change of therapist, if needed. If you wish to further discuss aspects of your care, please do not hesitate to contact the CPS Director.

### **Privacy of Information and Confidentiality**

It is CPS policy to respect your personal privacy and handle your information as confidentially as possible, in accordance with the law and our professional ethical standards. We do not release information to anyone outside of CPS (including parents, administrators, faculty, or potential employers), including the fact that you have received care, without your written permission. The exceptions to this rule are the following circumstances: under court order; as required by law (for instance, in the case of reports of child abuse); in emergent life-threatening situations; in the case of emergent hospitalization; and when consultation with other, non-CPS, treatment providers within UHS is warranted (see "Interdisciplinary Consultation" below for details). Further, to protect your privacy, should you wish to release records to any party outside of CPS and you are unable to sign a release in person, we may require a notarized release. If you have any specific questions about our policies on confidentiality, please feel free to discuss them with your clinician or the Director.

### **Interdisciplinary Consultation within UHS**

CPS is part of University Health Service (UHS), which adheres to a model of care that integrates physical, psychological, and emotional factors that contribute to the health and well-being of each individual. If your care requires multiple UHS providers within and outside CPS, relevant patient-related information will be shared only as needed to assure coordinated care. We expect that all information shared among these professionals is treated in a confidential manner. We encourage you to discuss the nature of these consultations with your CPS clinician(s).

### **Contacting your Treatment Provider and Use of E-mail or Fax**

If you need to contact your therapist or psychiatrist between scheduled appointments, you should do so by phoning the front desk of CPS (609-258-3285) and leaving a message with the administrative staff. E-mail and fax transmissions are not secure means to communicate confidential information. CPS does not fax confidential information such as records. Although e-mail is used for purposes of scheduling, we do not endorse the use of e-mail for confidential information.

### **Professional Fees**

There are no fees for services provided at CPS. If you are referred for specialized or on-going services outside of CPS, you will be responsible for paying any fees you incur that are not paid by your insurance company. Please see the *CPS Referral Guide for Off-Campus Psychological Services* (<http://uhs.princeton.edu/sites/uhs/files/CPS-Referral-Guide-for-Off-Campus-Psychological-Services.pdf>) for additional information related to using the Student Health Plan or another private insurance carrier, as well as for information on obtaining financial assistance to help pay for your initial deductible or for on-going services.

### **Professional Records**

The laws and standards of the mental health profession require that clinicians keep treatment records of all clinical contacts. These records are entered and stored electronically at UHS but only CPS clinicians have access to the contents of counseling records; medical records are maintained separately from CPS records. However, the record of psychiatric medications prescribed and medical labs ordered by a CPS psychiatrist can be accessed by medical staff within UHS. You have the right to review your records by contacting the CPS Director. It is our policy to meet with you and review the records, so that you can discuss the contents and any questions that arise. Please note that if you request your records, in most instances a summary will be prepared for you. You will be charged an administrative fee for this service.

### **Third-Party Referrals and/or Requests for Evaluation**

If you were referred to CPS by a third party (e.g., faculty, staff, family member), CPS will not notify the referring party about your attendance without your permission. If you would like us to communicate with the third party, you may complete the release of information form. Your decision to release information (or not) will in no way influence any care which you receive at CPS. In some instances, students are referred to CPS by a Dean or Director of Student Life for a formal Administrative Evaluation. In such instances, the referring party should clearly and explicitly explain to students, in advance of the evaluation, the reason for the referral. We also expect that students referred for Administrative Evaluations will be asked by the decanal staff to sign a release authorizing CPS to disclose information regarding safety concerns and general treatment recommendations. Specific, detailed, personal information (including, for example, background or diagnosis) will not be disclosed in such an evaluation.

### **Emergencies**

If you need to speak with a clinician urgently and you cannot wait for your regular therapist or psychiatrist to return your call, you may request the next available Urgent Care appointment during regular business hours by phoning the front desk (609-258-3285) or by coming directly to CPS. During the academic year, after hours (after 5pm), a member of the CPS clinical staff is available on-call, by phone, to triage emergency mental health concerns. If an after-hours contact is needed, please contact Inpatient Services either in-person or by phoning 609-258-3139, and the nurses will contact the on-call clinician. In the event that there are concerns regarding your imminent safety (or the imminent safety of another), please contact Public Safety at 609-258-3134 for immediate assistance on the scene. CPS does not offer psychiatric services after hours. In the case of an emergent psychiatric crisis after hours, you may be directed to an Emergency Room for an immediate evaluation.

*For questions, complaints, or suggestions please contact interim CPS Director, Calvin Chin, Ph.D. at 609-258-3285*

Your signature below indicates that you have read and that you understand all of the information in this document and that you accept CPS policies and procedures related to services, privacy, and consultation, as well as the risks to confidentiality inherent in the use of electronic mail for communications regarding scheduling, administrative, and other non-clinical matters.

Name of Student (printed) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Witness \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

*This document is available for your review on the UHS website: <http://uhs.princeton.edu/sites/uhs/files/CPS-Informed-Consent.pdf>*

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