



## Your Guide for Navigating Connecting with Mental Health Provider After Graduation

### Just a Few Things to Remember:

- Finding the best provider for you may take some time. Be patient with the process. It will all pay off in the end!
- Your insurance provider's list of in-network providers can be a GREAT place to start with finding providers in your area. Employers also offer an Employee Assistance Program that can also help you with getting connected with support.
- Utilize your resources and directories found on websites like Psychology Today, Anxiety and Depression Association of America, GoodTherapy.org, TherapyForLatinx.com, TherapyforBlackGirls.com, TherapyforBlackMen.com, InclusiveTherapists.com, the National Queer and Trans Therapist of Color Network, Local non-profit agencies in your area, and many more. You can also contact local university/college counseling centers as they may keep a list of community providers that they share with students looking for off-campus support.
- The UCC has a Case Manager who can help you find options in your area if needed.

### Making the First Contact

When you call a provider, it is likely that you will get a voicemail system or an answering machine; therefore, it is best to leave a brief message, including your name, number, information about who referred you, the purpose of your call, and the best times to return your call. If you feel comfortable, you can also share a little information about the concerns you would like to address. Providers may also list an email in their contact information. While this may be a convenient option for most, remember that email communication is not confidential. Calling is always the best option.

Once you are able to speak with a provider, be sure to ask questions that will help you determine if they are a good match and can meet your needs. Below are some examples of things to ask a provider during your first contact:

- What is your experience and training with concerns like mine (e.g. depression, anxiety, family issues, relationship conflicts)?
- What is your counseling style?
- What are your fees and payment policies?
- Where is your office located and what are your office hours?

## Selecting the Right Provider for You

You might feel comfortable with your new clinician right away or it could take a few meetings before you can determine if they are the right fit for you. Many providers now ask new clients to complete electronic forms to have a better understanding of how to help. Expect for your first session or two to feel different and give yourself time to attempt to establish rapport with the provider.

You may have to meet with a few therapists before you find the person who is the best match for you. That is perfectly fine! Look around until you find someone who feels comfortable to you. Be honest with yourself and trust your judgment. Taking the time to find the right provider is worth the effort because the treatment will be more effective.

## Insurance

It is imperative that you contact your insurance company directly to inquire about coverage for services with the provider you choose. This will help avoid any unexpected costs. This step may require you to speak with your parents about gaining access to your insurance information. Good ways to find out about your insurance policy include calling your insurance company on the phone, looking them up on the web, or reviewing your policy brochure.

Questions to ask when you call your insurance provider:

- Does my plan cover mental health outpatient visits?
- Where can I find a list for in-network providers?
- Do I have to fill out any paperwork or be pre-certified prior to seeing a provider?
- Is there anything I need to do to have my services covered by insurance?
- Is there a limit on how many times I can be seen? Is there an annual or total lifetime limit?
- What is the percentage and/or copay for sessions?
- Do I have a deductible that I must satisfy before receiving benefits? If yes, how much?