

## **Questions and Answers Billing for Counseling Appointments**

### **Why are you starting to bill for counseling?**

This change has come about to help the department create revenue to support the increasing demands for service and the need for more resources. A number of university counseling centers bill for their services as demand for university mental health services has increased over the last decade.

### **How does billing for counseling work?**

We will ask you for your health insurance card when you come in for your appointment. We will make a copy of this card at this time. If you do this over the phone we will ask you to take a screenshot of both sides of your insurance card and send it to us in the event that you are engaging in teletherapy. We would ask that you send the screenshots to our university health and counseling general mailbox ([usmhealthcounseling@maine.edu](mailto:usmhealthcounseling@maine.edu)).

### **When does Counseling Services start billing ?**

We begin to bill on your second visit with us.

### **Will my parents be notified if I use their insurance?**

They are likely to have access to your records and account if the insurance is in their name. However, HIPAA regulations prohibit the release of your private health information so diagnosis would not be on the bill. If this is going to prevent you from pursuing services please give us a call to discuss. Frequently the explanation on the bill says something like “psychotherapy 50- 60 minutes”. Many students simply tell their parents they are receiving counseling for “adjustment to college” issues.

### **If I see an intern will I be billed?**

No, you will not be billed if you see an intern. They are in training and supervised by a senior staff clinician.



PORTLAND • GORHAM • LEWISTON • ONLINE

**Will there be a deductible and copays for me to pay?**

That depends on your insurance plan. The best way to find out is to call your insurance plan and ask them what your deductible and copays would be for psychotherapy appointments. We will begin billing for copays on your second visit.

**Will copays be billed to my university account?**

No, they will be billed to you.

**Will there still be a Health & Counseling fee added to my tuition each year?**

Yes, this revenue is important for helping pay for some of the costs of running Health and Counseling Services. This revenue alone does not cover all of the departmental expenses.

**What if I don't have health insurance or choose not to use it?**

If you don't have insurance or choose not to use your insurance then you have an option to either see an intern in training (subject to their clinical supervisors's approval), or to fill out a USM sliding fee form to see if you qualify for a reduced fee or free care.

**Will there still be a 12 session limit in counseling services now that Counseling Services is billing?**

Counseling staff work hard to address the individual needs of each student they see. The majority of students who utilize counseling services use about 5 sessions a semester. In some cases we have extended treatment beyond 12 sessions. Going forward, we will continue to address and evaluate the center and the clinicians capacity to meet all of the clinical needs of the student and when longer term or more intensive work with a community therapist makes clinical sense, referrals will be made to the community,