

Wellstar MCG Department of Psychiatry and Health Behavior
Outpatient Clinic Guidelines

Nurse Line: 706-721-6591

Patient Message Line: 706-721-8812

Patient Service Center: 706-823-6377

After Hours/On-Call/ Emergency: 706-721-8400

We are committed to providing the highest level of service and support for our patients.

Some things you can expect from us:

1. Treat you with respect and dignity at all times
2. Listen carefully to fully understand your situation
3. Provide information about health issues in a way you can understand
4. Provide you with treatment options including the option of not pursuing treatment
5. Handle your communications promptly and protect your confidentiality within the boundaries of the law
6. We usually start and end your appointment in a timely manner. Nevertheless, there may be circumstances that this may not be possible, and we apologize for this. We understand that timeliness helps our clinic to improve access and availability to you and those who need our services. ***If you have checked in for your appointment and have not been escorted to the clinic within 15 minutes, alert the front desk and they will page the provider.***

Some things we expect from you:

1. Work collaboratively with your provider toward attaining your treatment and life goals.
2. Inform us if you have a legal guardian or have appointed someone to serve as your decision maker so that we can involve this individual in your care planning.
3. Provide feedback on whether the treatment is working (including completing symptom rating scales) and tell us when you see any problems with it.
4. Provide at least 24 hours advance notice before you cancel and/or reschedule an appointment.
5. Attend all scheduled appointments and arrive on time (at least **15 minutes before** appointment time, if you are **more than 15 minutes late**, you may be asked to reschedule.)
6. Be responsible for your medications. Take them only as prescribed, do not share them with others, and safeguard the supply.
7. Life situations can impact the way we cope with them. We understand that drug use, like alcohol, marijuana, narcotics, and others, are a way that some cope with life difficulties. Our clinicians are here to help in a non-judgmental way. All these substances can have significant impacts and negative consequences on your health and mental health, including interacting with the medicines used for treatment. For this reason, please inform us if you use, even sporadically, any alcohol or controlled substances, be that prescribed or without prescription.
8. As part of your health evaluation, we routinely order laboratory tests to evaluate your health, check side effects of your treatment, monitor the levels of some medications, and perform drug testing to avoid and address any potential harm from any substances.
9. As the law requires, clinicians check the online Prescription Drug Monitoring Program to verify controlled prescriptions. If there is suspicion of misuse, your provider may ask that you see an Addiction Medicine specialist as a condition for continued treatment.
10. Discuss ending treatment with your provider before terminating treatment.

How to get in touch with us:

For scheduling visits, or if you must cancel or reschedule, call the Patient Service Center: 706-721-6597 Please do so 24 hours in advance, in order to avoid a \$25 fee.

For all other clinical matters, please call 706-721-6591 or 706-721-8812 to leave a message for the nurse or provider. Our clinic staff will respond to messages in the order that they are received and will provide a return call within 72hrs. **If your situation is urgent, please state the urgency in your message. We will return all urgent calls within 24-48 hrs.**

If you need immediate assistance after hours, please call 706-721-8400. This is the on-call physician for Psychiatry for emergencies only, this does not include refills.

Providers require up to three business days to respond to all non-urgent calls.

Medication Policies:

If you wish to receive medication prescriptions from the clinic, attendance at appointments is required. Refill requests may be denied for any patient with frequent cancellations or "No Shows."

The front desk staff are engaged with checking in patients for their visits. For this reason, front desk staff are instructed not to accept any verbal or handwritten messages to the nurse or provider.

When requesting a medication refill, it is your responsibility to contact the clinic 7-10 business before your refill runs out. **We require five business days for the providers to authorize a refill.** Once a refill request has been approved, your pharmacy will contact you when that medication is ready for pickup.

To ensure that your provider is aware of your need for refills during the extended December holidays, please anticipate your refill request and inform us at least two weeks prior to the holiday.

Printed prescriptions are highly discouraged by the pharmacy. However, if your provider has agreed to a printed prescription, the office will contact you when it is ready for pick up.

Controlled medications:

- Adults on any controlled prescription will need to have an appointment every six months.
- Children on controlled prescriptions require an appointment every three months.
- If you have a controlled medication prescribed by this office that is lost or stolen, you will be required to obtain a police report before the provider authorizes another refill. Please be aware that insurance may not cover the lost or stolen medication which will require you to pay out of pocket.

Appointment Scheduling Policies:

We are here to serve you and we want to make the most of our availability. If you miss your appointment without advanced notice, it affects not only your treatment but also our availability to help others. Please be mindful of these policies:

Our business hours are from 8 AM to 6 PM Monday- Friday. **Please provide 24 hours' notice (by 6 PM on Friday for an appointment on the following Monday) if you cannot attend.**

1. If you miss your appointment or do not provide 24 hours' notice of a cancellation you will be charged a fee of **\$25***. **Your insurance company will not pay this fee.** Additional visits will not be scheduled until this debit has been cleared from your account.
2. If, within any 12-month period, you miss two or more appointments without having provided 24 hours' notice, we will schedule a telephone call with your provider to discuss a plan for adherence. (Please note that these missed appointments may occur at any time during a rolling 12-month period and need not be consecutive.)
3. If, within any 12-month period, you miss 3 or more appointments without having provided 24 hours' notice we may stop providing services to you.
4. Any patient that has not had an appointment in one year will need to contact scheduling to complete a new patient packet unless approved by your previous provider.

**** Subject to the requirements of specific insurance providers.***