

COMMUNITY REFERRAL

BEFORE THE CONVERSATION:

Your AUCC clinician will provide you with a list of providers. Start by calling your insurance company to verify your outpatient behavioral health benefits and inquire if the providers are within your insurance network (i.e., “in-network”).

THE FIRST CONVERSATION:

There are so many ways to contact a community provider. If given an option between e-mail and calling, choose the option in which you feel most comfortable. However, most providers will ask that you contact them via telephone before meeting in-person. Often, therapists may be busy with clients when you call. This means you may have to leave a message.

When speaking with a provider or leaving a message you will want to share your name, what you are calling for, and your insurance provider (if applicable). For example:

“Hi, my name is (insert name), and I was referred to you by the American University Counseling Center. I am interested in scheduling an initial appointment with you. My insurance is (insert insurance). Could you please call me back at (insert your phone number) at your earliest convenience?”

Sometimes therapists are very busy and may not return your phone call for several days. It is important to start by calling a few therapists. If you do not hear back from a therapist within 2-3 business days, you may leave another message or ask your AUCC clinician for additional referrals.

WHAT QUESTIONS TO ASK:

When speaking with a potential therapists, there are a few questions you may want to ask before you book an appointment:

- Are you taking new clients?
- Do you accept (*insert your insurance here*)?
- What are your session fees? (*This is particularly important if you plan to be out-of-network*)
- What are your sliding scale options (*if applicable*)?
- Share your presenting concern and ask if it would be a good fit for their practice.

MAKING THE FIRST APPOINTMENT!

You may be tempted to take the first open appointment. Here are some things you may want to consider:

- Make sure you know how to get to their office
(e.g., is it near public transportation?)
- Make sure you have time to travel to and from your appointment
(e.g., Do you have obligations before or after that might conflict?)
- What do you have following the appointment and will you feel ready to do it?
- Make sure this therapist offer times that work better with my schedule
(e.g., evenings or weekends?)

**Note: if you have questions or concerns,
please know that your AUCC clinician is here to support you along the way!*

American University Counseling Center
4400 Massachusetts Ave., NW MGC 214, Washington, DC 20016
(202) 885-3500
www.american.edu/ocl.counseling/