



PSYCHOTHERAPIST-PATIENT SERVICES DOCUMENT

Welcome to the practice – we are pleased to have the opportunity to work with you! **While this is a lengthy document, it is highly recommended that you read through it entirely.** If you have any questions or concerns about these policies or any other aspect of the practice, please feel free to discuss them with your therapist at any time.

DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

THERAPIST NAME: Dr. Jeremy Sharp

DEGREE: Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), Counseling Psychology – Colorado State University (2008)

LICENSURE: Licensed Psychologist – Colorado PSY-3349

Explanation of degree and licensure: A Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Counseling Psychology requires completion of a five-year graduate program during which doctoral candidates complete relevant coursework, a doctoral dissertation, supervised clinical work, and oral and written comprehensive examinations. Prior to graduation, candidates must complete a 2000-hour internship/residency to fulfill degree requirements. After receiving the doctoral degree, individuals must complete an additional 2000 hours of supervised clinical work before being allowed to take the licensure examination. Successful passing of the licensure examination indicates that an individual has fulfilled both practical and academic requirements to become a Licensed Psychologist.

THERAPIST NAME: Dr. Molly McLaren

DEGREE: Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), Counseling Psychology – Colorado State University (2013)

LICENSURE: Licensed Psychologist – CO PSY-4339

Explanation of degree and licensure: A Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Counseling Psychology requires completion of a five-year graduate program during which doctoral candidates complete relevant coursework, a doctoral dissertation, supervised clinical work, and oral and written comprehensive examinations. Prior to graduation, candidates must complete a 2000-hour internship/residency to fulfill degree requirements. After receiving the doctoral degree, individuals must complete an additional 1500 hours of supervised clinical work and successfully complete a licensure examination. Successful passing of the licensure examination indicates that an individual has fulfilled both practical and academic requirements to become a Licensed Psychologist. Dr. McLaren has passed the National Licensing examination and is currently in the process of accruing the additional clinical hours required for her to become licensed in the state of Colorado. Her title is currently Registered Psychologist Candidate in the state of Colorado.

The practice of both licensed and unlicensed persons in the field of psychotherapy is regulated by the Department of Regulatory Agencies. Questions or complaints may be addressed to: Department of Regulatory Agencies-Mental Health Section, 1560 Broadway, Suite 1350, Denver, CO 80202. Phone: (303) 894-7766.

As to the regulatory requirements applicable to mental health professionals: a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, and a Licensed Professional Counselor must hold a masters degree in their profession and have two years of post-masters supervision. A Licensed Psychologist must hold a doctorate degree in psychology and have one year of post-doctoral supervision. A Licensed Social Worker must hold a masters degree in social work. A Psychologist Candidate, a Marriage and Family Therapist Candidate, and a Licensed Professional Counselor Candidate must hold the necessary licensing degree and be in the process of completing the required supervision for licensure. A Certified Addiction Counselor I (CAC I) must be a high school graduate, and complete required training hours and 1000 hours of supervised experience. A CAC II must complete additional required training hours and 2,000 hours of supervised experience. A CAC III must have a Bachelors degree in behavioral health, and complete additional required training hours and 2,000 hours of supervised experience. A Licensed Addiction Counselor must have a clinical masters degree and meet

the CAC III requirements. A Registered Psychotherapist is registered with the State Board of Registered Psychotherapists, is not licensed or certified, and no degree, training or experience is required.

You are entitled to receive information from your therapist about the methods of therapy, the techniques used, the duration of your therapy, if known, and the fee structure. You can seek a second opinion from another therapist or terminate therapy at any time.

In a professional relationship, sexual intimacy is never appropriate and should be reported to the board that licenses, registers, or certifies the licensee, registrant or certificate holder.

PRIVILEGED COMMUNICATION: Generally speaking, the information provided by and to the client during therapy sessions is legally confidential and cannot be released without the client's consent. There are exceptions to this confidentiality, some of which are listed in section 12-43-218 of the Colorado Revised Statutes, and the Notice of Privacy Rights you were provided, as well as other exceptions in Colorado and Federal law. For example, mental health professionals are required to report child abuse to authorities. If a legal exception arises during therapy, if feasible, you will be informed accordingly.

A client is entitled to information, upon request, concerning any psychotherapist who is providing psychotherapy services to that client. Such information includes: the therapist's name, educational degrees, licenses and credentials.

FEES

Fees for services are as follows unless we have discussed alternative arrangements:

- Diagnostic Interview: \$150
- Individual therapy: \$130/50-minute session (Dr. Sharp); \$115/50-minute session (Dr. McLaren)
- Couples therapy: \$130/50-minute session (Dr. Sharp); \$115/50-minute session (Dr. McLaren)
- Group therapy: \$45/90-minute session or \$180/calendar month
- Psychological Assessment: \$130/hour (a comprehensive assessment usually totals 12-18 hours, or \$1500-2000)
- Preparation, travel time, and testimony during court proceedings: \$275/hour
- Administrative tasks: \$100/hour, prorated to 15-minute (.25 hour) increments – includes email, telephone conversations with you or professionals whom you have authorized us to speak with on your behalf, and/or any other tasks that you ask for outside of scheduled therapy sessions.
- If sessions or other services are shorter or longer than the defined payment schedule, fees will be prorated accordingly.

PAYMENT FOR SERVICE: Payment may be made by check, cash, or credit/debit card. Payment for psychotherapy sessions is due at the time of service unless other arrangements have been discussed.

Payment for psychological assessment is due in two parts. When we schedule your initial appointment, we will provide you with an estimated total cost for the evaluation (including insurance coverage if you choose to use insurance). Half of the estimate is due on the day of testing. The remaining balance is due when your insurance claim is processed, or if you are not using insurance, at the feedback session.

INSURANCE REIMBURSEMENT: In order for us to set realistic treatment goals and priorities, it is important to evaluate what resources you have available to pay for services. If you have a health insurance policy, it may provide some coverage for mental health treatment. We will provide you with whatever assistance we can in helping you receive the benefits to which you are entitled; however, you (not your insurance company) are responsible for full payment of fees. It is very important that you find out exactly what mental health services your insurance policy covers. You should carefully read the section in your insurance company booklet that describes mental health services. If you have questions about the coverage, call your plan administrator. Of course, we will provide you with whatever information we can based on experience and will be happy to help you in understanding the information you receive from your insurance company. If necessary, we are willing to call the company on your behalf.

Due to the rising costs of health care, insurance benefits have increasingly become more complex. It is sometimes difficult to determine exactly how much mental health coverage is available. "Managed Health Care" plans such as HMOs and PPOs often require authorization before they provide reimbursement for mental health services. Some plans may require you to receive treatment from a therapist who is on their provider panel. These plans are often limited to short-term treatment approaches designed to work out specific problems that interfere with a person's usual level of functioning. It may be necessary to seek approval for more therapy after a certain number of sessions. While a lot can be accomplished in short-term therapy, some clients feel that they need more services after insurance benefits end. You should also be aware that most insurance companies require you to authorize me to provide them with a clinical diagnosis. Sometime we have to provide additional information such as treatment plans or summaries, or copies of the entire record (in rare cases). This information will become part of the insurance company files and will probably be stored in a computer. Though all insurance companies claim to keep such information confidential, we have no control over what they do with once it is in their hands. In some cases, they may share the information with a national medical information data bank.

Once we have all of the information about your insurance coverage, we will discuss what we can expect to accomplish with the benefits that are available and what will happen if they run out before you feel ready to end our sessions. It is important to remember that you always have the right to pay for services yourself to avoid the problems described above (unless prohibited by the contract with the insurance company).

INSURANCE REIMBURSEMENT FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTING: At times, insurance companies do not fully reimburse psychological testing services, *whether we are an in-network or out-of-network provider*. There are two main situations when this occurs: 1) the insurance company does not consider psychological testing "medically necessary" for "experimental" or "investigational" diagnoses. Diagnoses considered "experimental" or "investigational" vary depending on the insurance carrier. Another situation is 2) when insurance companies reimburse fewer hours than billed. For example, some insurance companies only reimburse up to 12 hours of psychological testing, whereas 12-18 hours are typically billed for a full evaluation.

It is your responsibility to verify coverage with your insurance company prior to consenting to services. While we will do everything we can to provide you with an accurate estimate of coverage and benefits, you are ultimately responsible for all charges incurred from services through this practice.

CANCELLATIONS:

- **Psychotherapy sessions:** A **minimum of 24 hours notice is required** for rescheduling or cancellation of a psychotherapy appointment. Without such notification, fees will be charged as follows:
 - Cancellations (within 24 hours of appointment): \$75
 - No-shows (no communication prior to missing appointment): Full fee (\$100-130 depending on your therapist)
- **Assessment appointments:** We typically schedule a FULL DAY for each client to complete testing. Given that we dedicate this much time to each person, and appointments are usually booked weeks in advance, cancellations or no-shows are quite costly and are unlikely to be rescheduled quickly. A **minimum of 48 hours notice is required** for rescheduling or cancellation of an assessment appointment to allow us plenty of time to find someone else to take the appointment. Without such notification, fees will be charged as follows unless alternative arrangements are discussed:
 - **Cancellations (within 48 hours of appointment) OR no-shows (no communication prior to missing the appointment): \$500**

You may avoid a cancellation or no show fee if we are able to reschedule within the same week **as dictated by staff schedule**. Please note that many insurance companies will NOT provide payment for missed sessions.

UNPAID ACCOUNTS: If you experience difficulties in meeting your payment obligations, please discuss this with us so we can establish a reasonable payment agreement. **Overdue accounts (i.e., which remain unpaid for 90 days or for which an agreed-upon payment plan has not been followed) will be turned over to a collection agency as a final resort for non-payment.**

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

The law protects the privacy of all communications between a patient and a psychologist. In most situations, we can only release information about your treatment to others if you sign a written Authorization form that meets certain legal requirements imposed by HIPAA. There are other situations that require only that you provide written, advance consent. Your signature on the Informed Consent form (given separately) provides consent for those activities. You should also know that:

- We occasionally find it helpful to consult other health and mental health professionals about a case. During a consultation, we make every effort to avoid revealing the identity of the client(s). The other professionals are also legally bound to keep the information confidential. If you don't object, we will not tell you about these consultations unless we feel that it is important to our work together. We will note all consultations in your clinical record.

There are some situations when we are permitted or required to disclose information without either your consent or Authorization. They are:

- If you are involved in a court proceeding and a request is made for information concerning our professional services, such information is protected by the psychologist-client privilege law. We cannot provide any information without your written authorization, or a court order. If you are involved in or contemplating litigation, you should consult with your attorney to determine whether a court would be likely to order us to disclose information.
- If a government agency is requesting the information for health oversight activities, we are required to provide it for them.
- If a client files a complaint or lawsuit against us, we may disclose relevant information regarding that patient in order to defend the practice.
- If a client files a worker's compensation claim, we are required to submit a report to the Workers' Compensation Division.

There are some situations in which we are legally obligated to take actions, which we believe are necessary to attempt to protect you or others from harm, and we may have to reveal some information about your treatment. They are:

- If you communicate intent to harm or kill yourself, we may be obligated to seek hospitalization for you, or to contact family members or others who can provide protection and necessary support.
- If we have reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect or if we have observed a child being subjected to circumstances or conditions which would reasonably result in abuse or neglect, the law requires that we file a report with the appropriate governmental agency. Once such a report is filed, we may be required to provide additional information.
- If we have reasonable cause to believe that an at-risk adult has been or is at imminent risk of being mistreated, self-neglected, or financially exploited, the law requires that we file a report with the appropriate governmental agency. Once such a report is filed, we may be required to provide additional information.
- If you communicate a serious threat of imminent physical violence against a specific person or persons, we must make an effort to notify such person; and/or notify an appropriate law enforcement agency; and/or take other appropriate action including seeking hospitalization of the client.
- If you communicate a serious threat to national security, we must make an effort to notify an appropriate law enforcement agency.
- If you tell us of the behavior of another named health or mental health care provider that informs us that this person has either a) engaged in sexual contact with a patient, including yourself or b) is impaired from practice in some manner by cognitive, emotional, behavioral, or health problems, then the law requires us to report this to their licensing board at the Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies. We would inform you before taking this step. *If you are our client AND a health care provider, however, your confidentiality remains protected under the law from this kind of reporting.*

The next is not a legal exception to your confidentiality; however, it is a policy you should be aware of if you are in couples therapy.

- If you and your partner meet with your therapist individually as part of the couples therapy, what you say in those individual sessions will be considered to be a part of the couples therapy, and can and probably will be discussed in

joint sessions. *Do not disclose anything you wish kept secret from your partner.* Your therapist will remind you of this policy before beginning such individual sessions.

While this written summary of exceptions to confidentiality should prove helpful in informing you of potential problems, it is important that we discuss any questions or concerns that you may have now or in the future. The laws governing confidentiality can be quite complex, and our therapists are not attorneys. In situations where specific advice is required, formal legal advice may be needed.

CONTACTING US

- Administrative (to cancel or reschedule appointments): (970) 889-8204 or contact@coloradocac.com
- Dr. Sharp: (970) 420-7919 or dr.sharp@coloradocac.com
- Dr. McLaren: (970) 599-1087 or dr.mclaren@coloradocac.com

We do not provide 24-hour or emergency therapy services. Although we will make every effort to be available to you if crises arise, you cannot depend on our staff to be available in emergency situations. If your therapist is out of town or unavailable for an extended period of time, he or she will provide you with contact information for a colleague so that you may have interim support, if necessary. If you anticipate needing more than very occasional crisis contact outside of sessions, please talk with about this prior to beginning our work together. In the event that you have an urgent need and cannot reach us, please go to the nearest emergency room or call one of the following resources that provide emergency support:

- Our main practice number: (970) 889-8204. Administrative staff will connect you with another Colorado CAC therapist if possible.
- SummitStone Health Partners: (970) 494-4200
- Walk-in Crisis Services center: 1217 Riverside Ave., Fort Collins, CO
- Mountain Crest Hospital: (970) 207-4800
- 911

LITIGATION/COURT PROCEEDINGS

If you are in a divorce or custody litigation, or involved in the court system in any other manner, you need to understand that the role of a therapist is not to make recommendations for the court concerning custody or parenting issues or to testify in court concerning opinions on issues involved in the litigation. By signing this disclosure statement, you agree not to call your therapist as a witness in any such litigation. Experience has shown that testimony by therapists and domestic cases causes damage to the clinical relationship between a therapist and a client. Only court-appointed experts, investigators, or evaluators can make recommendations to the court on disputed issues concerning parental responsibilities and parenting plans. Our staff is always happy to write letters to jurisdictions regarding a person's attendance in psychotherapy when requested by the client.

PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

Psychotherapy is not easily described in general statements. It varies depending on the personalities of the psychologist and the client, and the particular problems that you bring forward. Psychotherapy is not like a medical doctor visit. Instead, it calls for very active effort on your part. In order for the therapy to be most successful, you will have to work on things we talk about both during our sessions and at home.

There are many different methods used as we work toward your hopes and goals for therapy. The techniques used most often include, but are not limited to: dialogue (talk therapy), emotional exploration, interpersonal feedback, awareness-building, and physical exercises (i.e., relaxation training or progressive muscle relaxation). Your therapist may recommend that you consult with other health care providers or suggest other approaches as an adjunct to our therapy (i.e., group therapy or psychiatric consultation). You have the right to refuse anything that is suggested without being penalized in any way.

Psychotherapy can have benefits and risks. Since therapy often involves discussing unpleasant aspects of your life, you may experience uncomfortable feelings like sadness, guilt, anger, frustration, loneliness, and helplessness. Making changes in your beliefs or behaviors can be difficult, and can sometimes be disruptive to the relationships you already have. You may find your relationship with your therapist to be a source of strong feelings. At times you may feel that you are not making enough progress. We urge you to discuss any feelings that may arise during these difficult times.

On the other hand, psychotherapy has also been shown to have benefits for people who go through it. Therapy often leads to better relationships, solutions to specific problems, and significant reductions in feelings of distress. Most people who take these risks find that therapy is helpful, and your therapist will do everything he or she can to help you minimize risks and maximize positive outcomes. That said, there are no guarantees of what you will experience or the outcome of therapy.

The first few sessions will involve an evaluation of your needs. By the end of these sessions, your therapist will be able to offer some first impressions of what your work will include and a treatment plan to follow, if you decide to continue therapy. You should evaluate this information along with your own opinions of whether you feel comfortable working with your therapist. Therapy involves a large commitment of time, energy, and money, so you should be very careful about the therapist you select. If you have questions about procedures, we should discuss them whenever they arise. If your doubts persist, we will be happy to help you get connected with another mental health professional for a second opinion.

The duration of therapy is something that is very difficult to predict in advance. Some clients may get the help they need in only a few sessions, while others may choose to continue therapy for several months or years. Please feel free to discuss this with your therapist if you have any questions or concerns.

You have the right to ask questions about anything that happens in therapy. Your therapist is always willing to discuss the rationale for therapeutic approaches and to consider alternatives that might work better. You may feel free to ask your therapist to try something that you think will be helpful. You can ask about your therapist's training for working with your concerns, and you can request that we refer you to someone else if you decide that your therapist is not the right therapist for you. You are free to leave therapy at any time.

HIPAA

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) is a federal law that provides new privacy protections and new patient rights with regard to the use and disclosure of your Protected Health information (PHI) used for the purpose of treatment, payment, and health care operations, HIPAA requires that I provide you with a "Notice of Policies and Practices to Protect the Privacy of Your health Information" (the Notice) for use and disclosure of PHI for treatment, payment and health care operations. The Notice, which accompanies these Office Policies, explains HIPAA and its application to your personal health information in greater detail. The law requires that I obtain your signature acknowledging that I have provided you with this information. Although these documents are long and sometimes complex, it is very important that you read them carefully. I am always willing to discuss any question you have about the procedures at any time.

HIPAA provides you with several new or expanded rights with regard to your Clinical Record and disclosures of PHI. These rights include requesting that I amend your record; requesting restrictions on what information from your Clinical Record is disclosed to others; requesting an accounting of most disclosures of PHI that you have neither consented to nor authorized; determining the location to which protected information disclosures are sent; having any complaints you make about my policies and procedures recorded in your records; and the right to a paper copy of these Office Policies, the accompanying Notice of Privacy Practices, and my privacy policies and procedures.