

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

CONTACT

If you have any questions or would like to schedule an appointment, please contact the Behavioral Health office at 218-894-8852.

Behavioral and mental disorders are more common than we might think; they affect about one in five persons in the United States. Fortunately, disorders such as depression, bipolar, and phobias are often highly treatable. Medicines and therapy can improve the lives of most people with behavioral disorders.

Just as there are different types of physical health providers who specialize in various areas of medicine, there are also different types of behavioral and mental health providers.

Psychiatry

A psychiatrist is a medical doctor who specializes in diagnosing and treating mental disorders. Following four years of medical school, a psychiatry student must also complete a one-year internship and at least three years of specialized training as a psychiatric resident. After completing their residency, these physicians can be licensed to practice psychiatry, and will have the title of medical doctor (MD). Because they are a medical doctor, psychiatrists can prescribe medication, whereas psychologists and social workers cannot. Many mental disorders, like depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder and ADHD, can be effectively treated with prescribed medication. Often times, a combination of medication and therapy is needed, in which case a psychiatrist may provide the therapy, or refer a patient to another behavioral health professional.

Psychology

A psychologist is a doctoral level provider in psychology, which is the scientific study of the brain and behavior. Psychologists have completed five to seven years of graduate school after college, which includes a one year internship or residency, and one to two years of postdoctoral supervised experience. After all their schooling and interning, a psychologist will have earned a doctoral degree (PhD, PsyD or EdD) in psychology. Though not able to prescribe medication, psychologists are trained to conduct evaluations, administer and interpret tests and assessments, and perform psychotherapy. All these services and techniques are chosen by the psychologist to best address each individual's needs. If medication might be beneficial, the psychologist works closely with a psychiatrist and the patient's medical providers to determine the best course of action. Psychotherapy, or talk therapy, is used by most behavioral health professionals to help treat symptoms of depression, anger or anxiety. These feelings may be chronic (long-term) or short-term. Patients may need help coping with stress, addictions and breaking down barriers that may prohibit them from reaching their goals.

LCSW

A licensed clinical social worker (LCSW) is a mental health professional who has a master's degree in social work, and is licensed to practice psychotherapy after having completed two or more years of clinical training. Using the principles of social work, combined with counseling and psychotherapy, clinical social workers help patients achieve better, more satisfying and productive social adjustments to their daily life. Along with providing other services, clinical social workers can also provide case management and work as an advocate for patients and their family. Like psychologists, clinical social workers cannot prescribe medication, so they also work closely with psychiatrists and medical providers regarding medication if deemed necessary.

LPCC

A licensed professional clinical counselor (LPCC) has earned a master's or doctoral degree in counseling. They have also completed an internship and a minimum of 3,000 hours of post-master's supervised clinical experience. A professional counselor must also pass either the National Counselor Examination or the National Clinical Mental Health Counselor Examination. These counselors are trained to help patients deal with mental, behavioral and emotional problems and disorders. Professional counselors, along with psychologists, clinical social workers, marriage and family therapists and other non-physician behavioral health professionals, provide the large majority of behavioral health services in the United States.

PMHNP

A psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner (PMHNP) is very similar to a psychiatrist in that they diagnose and treat mental disorders, which can mean prescribing medication, if allowed by the state. A psychiatric nurse practitioner must earn a four year degree in nursing, and then complete either a Master's of Science in Nursing or Doctor of Nursing Practice program, which includes a minimum of 600 clinical hours. Trained in both the physical and psychological aspects of behavioral health, psychiatric nurse practitioners are able to use their psychological skills to help treat patients with various types of therapy. Using their background in medicine, they can also prescribe medications when it is in the best interest of the patient's treatment.

Coordinating Care

One of the many benefits of working with a behavioral health professional at Lakewood Health System is the close working relationship they have with our staff of medical providers. They work in the same clinic and communicate as necessary about patients' diagnoses and treatments while ensuring careful attention to confidentiality. This allows all our patients a continuity of care with an emphasis on best practices throughout their time here at Lakewood.



Your Choice.
For a lifetime of care.

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