

Contact a Behavioral Health or Substance Use Provider

Do you have health insurance that covers behavioral health care or substance use services?

IF NO

- Call for help. Dial 2-1-1 to connect with an operator who can refer you to mental health providers and free clinics in your area.
- Visit the Iowa Mental Health and Disability Resources website, iowamhdsregions.org.
- Search online. Try these search terms:
 - "Free mental health services in [your county name] county Iowa"
 - "Catholic Charities Iowa"
 - "Lutheran Services Iowa"

IF YES

- Contact your insurance carrier. Ask questions to understand your options:
 - What is my behavioral health or substance use treatment coverage?
 - What is the coverage amount per therapy session? How much might I have to pay?
 - Is there a co-payment? How much?
 - How many therapy sessions or what type of treatment options does my plan cover?
 - How do I know which providers are in-network?
 - How much does my insurance pay for an out-of-network provider?
 - Is approval required from my primary care physician?
- Identify a potential behavioral health or substance use provider. Ask your primary care provider for a local recommendation, or search online. Try these websites:
 - Your Life Iowa, yourlifeiowa.org
 - Psychology Today, psychologytoday.com/us/therapists/iowa
 - Iowa Psychological Association, iowapsychology.org/find-a-psychologist

1

SCHEDULE your first meeting with a provider. Ask these questions:

- Do you accept my insurance?
- Are you taking new clients?
- Do you offer a sliding scale for payment, or is there a reduced cost if I pay out of pocket?
- Do you offer in-person care, telehealth, or both?
- How long will I have to wait for an initial appointment?

2

ATTEND your first appointment. You likely will be asked to complete forms before or at the first appointment such as:

- Detailed medical, behavioral health, and substance use history
- Informed consent statement (information on how services work with your provider)
- Confidential release of information forms if you want your treatment information shared with anyone, such as your primary care provider (Note: you can choose to have no information shared if you wish.)
- Financial status form, if seeking financial assistance or a reduced fee

Meet with your provider. Usually, the first meeting is a chance for you and your provider to discuss the things that are motivating you to seek care. The provider will likely ask you about many different parts of your life (sleep, work, support system, significant stressors, substance use, etc.) to better understand your experience. This also helps the provider to better join with you in addressing your concerns.