

Informed Consent for Assessment

This document contains important information about our services in conjunction with information about the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). The law requires your signature to acknowledge that you were provided with information about the disclosure of your Protected Health Information. It is very important that you read this document carefully. You are encouraged to ask any questions you have about this document at any time.

The Staff

The clinical staff consists of Dr. Holly Nikels, PhD, LCPC, ACS; Dr. Haley Wikoff, PhD, LCPC, NCC; Dr. Leslie O'Ryan, EdD, NCC, LCPC; Dr. Rebecca McLean, PhD, LCPC, NCC, ACS; Dr. Matthew Beck, PhD, LCPC, NCC, ACS; Dr. Carrie Alexander-Albritton, PhD, LCPC, NCC, CADC, and internship students from the Western Illinois University Counselor Education program. Drs. Nikels, Wikoff, O'Ryan, McLean, Beck, and Alexander-Albritton provide clinical supervision of the internship students.

WIU LGBTQ+ Clinic Services

The staff of the WIU LGBTQ+ Clinic provide comprehensive clinical and consultation services for individuals.

Assessment

Clients are typically referred by the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Questioning Clinic at the University of Iowa Hospitals, and Clinics, Clock Inc., or other health care providers.

Overview of Policies

Duration of Services

Assessment appointments are scheduled for 90 minutes, but generally take approximately 60-75 minutes. Assessments are typically completed in one session but your provider may ask for an additional session if more information is needed.

Changing or Missed Appointments

If it is necessary to change or cancel your appointment, please email or call the Counselor Education office. The email address is lgbtqclinic@wiu.edu. The phone number is 309-762-3999 ext. 68011. At least a 24-hour notification of rescheduling or cancellation is required. If you miss or cancel a scheduled appointment and do not call or email within ten business days, we will

assume you are no longer interested in receiving services and your file may be closed. In case of an emergency, go to your local emergency room; we do not have on-call emergency services.

Professional Fees

Services at the WIU LGBTQ+ Clinic are free of charge.

Confidentiality

The law protects the privacy of all communications between you and your service provider. In most situations, the WIU LGBTQ+ in CNED can only release information about your treatment to others if you sign a written authorization form (Consent to Release Information).

In the following situations, no authorization is required to share information:

- Your service provider will need to share information with other staff at the clinic, for both administrative and clinical purposes. These services include scheduling, supervision, and quality assurance. All of the staff at the WIU LGBTQ+ Clinic in CNED are bound by the same rules of confidentiality.
- If a lawsuit or complaint has been filed, disclosure of relevant information will be provided in order to ensure an adequate defense.

There are some situations in which the WIU LGBTQ+ Clinic is legally obligated to suspend confidentiality without consent. While these situations are unusual, it is important that you are informed:

- If you or your child communicate an imminent threat of serious physical harm to yourself or themselves, the staff may be required to disclose information to take protective actions. These actions may include contacting law enforcement agents or security personnel, initiating hospitalization, or contacting family members or others who can assist in providing protection.
- If you or your child communicates an imminent threat of serious physical harm to an identifiable victim, the staff may be required to disclose information in order to take protective actions. These actions may include notifying the potential victim, contacting the police, and/or seeking hospitalization.
- If a counselor has reasonable cause to believe that a child or a dependent adult has been neglected or abused, the law requires that the service provider file a report with the Department of Children and Family Services in Illinois.
- If you are involved in a court proceeding and an evaluation is court ordered or clinical records have been subpoenaed, your counselor may be required to release some information about you and/or your child.

While this written summary of exceptions of confidentiality should provide useful information, it is important that we discuss any questions or concerns you may have now or in the future.

Professional Records

You should be aware that, pursuant to HIPAA, Protected Health Information (PHI) about you and/or your child is kept in a locked file in a locked space within the WIU LGBTQ+ Clinic.

A clinical record includes information about the reasons for services, diagnosis, goals, and progress toward these goals. It also includes you and your child's medical and social history, treatment history, and any reports sent to anyone else. You may request to review these records anytime, or request in writing a copy of the Clinical Record. If you need to copy your Clinical Record, it is recommended that you first review these records in the presence of our Clinic faculty before requesting a copy, or have them forwarded to another mental health professional for proper interpretation of the records.

HIPAA provides you with several new or expanded rights with regard to your clinical record and disclosures of protected health information. These rights include requesting that your records be amended; requesting an accounting disclosure of protected health information; determining the location to which protected health information disclosures are sent; having complaints you make about policies and procedures recorded in your records; and the right to a paper copy of this Agreement.

Minors and Parents

Clients under 18 years of age who are not emancipated, and their parents, should be aware that the law may allow parents to examine their child's treatment records. Parents of minors may decline this right in order to give their child an opportunity for a confidential relationship.

When you sign this document, it will represent an agreement between yourself and the WIU LGBTQ+ Clinic. You may revoke this agreement in writing at any time. That revocation is binding unless action has been taken in reliance on it or if there are any unfulfilled financial obligations.