

Informed Consent

Psychological counseling has been shown to be effective in treating a variety of mental health symptoms, and can also help you to reduce distress, solve problems, and improve interpersonal relationships. Outcome depends upon the particular problems you are experiencing, establishing a good therapist-client alliance, and your ability to play an active role in your counseling, among other things. Since counseling may involve discussing unpleasant aspects of your life, you may initially and/or periodically experience uncomfortable feelings and distress as a part of the counseling process. We are committed to providing you with optimal care, and asking you for regular feedback about your experience in counseling helps us to gauge progress, evaluate and improve our services.

Our clinical staff is comprised of psychologists, doctoral interns, and a behavioral health case manager. Periodically, advanced doctoral trainees also provide services. All non-licensed staff are supervised by licensed psychologists.

At any time, you may question or refuse assessment or counseling services. You are assured of confidentiality in accordance with ethical and legal standards governing the practice of psychology. Although we are required by law to keep a record of our contact with you, these records do not become part of any other University record.

There are, however, important legally mandated exceptions to confidentiality. These include:

- (1) When a client is in immediate danger of causing harm to self or someone else (as in the case of suicide), relevant others may be notified to secure safety. In addition, if such harm is likely, New York state law may require a report to the County Director of Community Services possibly impacting the client's current and future firearm ownership;
- (2) The clinician must report any incident of current child or elder abuse, neglect, or maltreatment in order to protect the individuals involved;
- (3) In the adjudication of legal matters, the court may subpoena your clinician or your clinical records. Otherwise, written authorization will be obtained from you before disclosing confidential information about you. We work in cooperation with Student Health Services practitioners and may share otherwise confidential information about you in order to make a referral or coordinate care.