

University of Massachusetts Boston
University Health Services Counseling Center Referral Guide

The Counseling Center supports students in taking care of their emotional well-being so that they can take full advantage of their education. Sometimes, students' needs are best addressed by off-campus services. Examples include:

- The student is interested in being seen off campus or closer to home in a separate space from their university
- The student is interested in ongoing weekly, long-term, or open-ended therapy
- For a greater range of options in terms of therapists or scheduling
- More specialized or intensive care is indicated (e.g. substance use or eating disorder treatment, partial hospital)
- The student is interested in services that we do not provide (e.g. neuropsychological testing)

Step 1: Learn About Your Insurance

Most insurances (with the exception of public insurances like MBHP) require a co-payment for therapy sessions (UMB's SHIP Blue Cross is \$30). There are 2 types of insurance benefits: in-network (the most common choice) and out-of-network (for those with the SHIP or PPO a person can see any therapist with some reimbursement).

You can always contact your insurance company (by calling the 800-phone number on the back of the insurance card, or visiting your insurance company's website) to obtain more information or for referral ideas. Good questions to ask:

1. What is my copayment? Do I have a deductible?
2. How many sessions are covered?
3. Does my insurance cover telehealth?
4. Do I need a referral from a Primary Care Physician (PCP)?
5. Can you send me a list of covered therapists in my zip code? Do I have any out of network benefits?

Step 2: Find and Contact Potential Therapists

There are a few ways to search for a potential therapist:

- I. www.psychologytoday.com offers a searchable database for students who are seeking a longer-term therapy option to enter information for more individualized suggestions.
 - a. Filter by location, insurance type, language, issues and/or types of therapy.
 - b. Review your options; you will notice many different types of licensed therapists who can offer counseling
 - c. Call or email therapists through Psychology Today. Include your name, insurance, why you are seeking services, any identities that feel important to you, and availabilities if you have a limited schedule.

Hi, my name is Sara and I'm looking for a therapist. I have Aetna insurance. Im a 19 year old Asian American female and I am hoping to find a female therapist of color to help me cope with depression and difficulty in school. I have availability for appointments on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday afternoons and evenings, and weekends. Please let me know if you have any current or upcoming openings, and when you are available to meet. Thank you.

- II. There are additional searchable databases you can also try including:
 - <https://www.innopsych.com/> specializing in clinicians of color
 - www.therapymatcher.org or call (617) 720-2828 for Social Work therapy referrals
 - <http://locator.apa.org/> for a searchable database of psychologists near you

- www.openpathcollective.org therapists have agreed to provide treatment at a reduced rate after a lifetime membership fee (\$59)
- <https://www.medainc.org/treatment-providers/> for clinicians who treat eating disorders
- <https://iocdf.org/find-help/> for clinicians who specialize in the treatment of OCD

III. Consider contacting local group practices:

Below is a list of commonly referred to larger group practices. Most accept the SHIP BCBS, many accept some other insurances. A few accept Mass Health, and offer some prescribing services (indicated). Contact directly or many use online forms which students need to complete for more information.

Ally Integrated Healthcare (prescribing only)
 And Still We Rise (Boston, and prescribing, specializing in care for women, BIPoC, Queer and Trans communities)
 Arbour Counseling (Brookline, Boston) (Mass Health)
 Aspire Health Alliance (Quincy) (Mass Health) (Crisis services also)
 Aviva Psychology Services (Boston)
 Boston Behavioral Medicine (Brookline)
 Boston Evening Therapy Associates (Brookline)
 Boston Medical Center outpatient therapy services (Boston) (Mass Health) (requires primary care through BMC)
 Clinical Alliance Services (Cambridge)
 Elephant in the Room Counseling (Quincy, group practice of Asian American Clinical Social Workers)
 Kendall Psychological Associates (Cambridge) (and testing services)
 LifeStance Health (a large network of providers and testing services throughout the state also Boston, Cambridge, Somerville) (and testing services)
 Mass Bay Counseling (Quincy)
 Mass Mind Center (Boston) (and medication services)
 Northeast Health Services (Greater Boston Area) (and medication services)
 TCA Counseling (Brookline) (Mass Health)
 The Therapy Room (Boston)
 Trust Therapeutics (Boston) (Mass Health)

Some larger clinic-based practices are restricted to residents of certain areas, or existing patients, but are good to consider as they accept most insurances (including Mass Health) and can offer counseling and medication services:

Advocates Counseling (Metro-West area) (behavioral therapy and psychiatry)
 Beth Israel Lahey Health Behavioral Services (North Shore and Boston area)
 Brighton-Allston Mental Health
 North Suffolk Mental Health
 The Brookline Center (Brookline residents only) (Mass Health)
 Epiphany Wellness Centers (Milford, Newton, Norwood, Somerville, surrounding areas)

IV. Check your primary care setting (or consider enrolling at one) for mental health services since many offices (e.g. BMC, MGH, Atrius, etc) and community health centers (e.g. Geiger Gibson, Dimock, DotHouse, Fenway, etc.) also offer counseling. They typically accept a very wide range of insurance including Mass Health and uninsured persons. They sometimes offer more specialized services including programs for specific diagnoses or populations, or some may use shorter-term models of care similar to the Counseling Center.

Tips to consider:

- Finding the best fit takes time; contact at least 5-7 options and if you do not hear back, it is appropriate to reach out again, such as calling if you have already e-mailed. Providers may not get back if they have no current openings.
- If you don't hear from therapists within 1-2 weeks, you should reach out to additional options.
- Consider that many off-campus therapists are still using telehealth. If you are open to either modality and want to prioritize finding someone with sooner availability, you can consider expanding your search – practices outside of Boston metro (e.g. North Shore, South Shore, Metro West) may have more availability.
- Wait lists are common at periods of high demand. It can be useful to place your name on a wait list even if you think you may find someone sooner or may not need the services in the future – you can always cancel.

Step 3: Talking To a New Therapist

Congratulations! You have taken the steps to now schedule an appointment or screening with a new potential therapist.

We know that this takes courage and persistence, and hopefully you are on your way to finding a good fit. Some tips:

- You are getting to know the therapist as much as they are also getting to know you! Consider asking questions: How often can we meet? What is your experience helping people with my symptoms? Do you offer teletherapy? What is your cancellation policy?
- The first few appointments help you further assess the fit:
 - o Did you feel respected, heard, and understood?
 - o It is appropriate to give the therapist feedback or ask questions to assess the fit (“I like when therapists can be direct and active with teaching coping skills. Is that something you can do?”)
 - o If you aren't sure about the match, it is ok to meet with another therapist until you find someone who is the best fit for your needs.
 - o Great news if you found a good match! You can request that your UHS Counseling Center records be faxed to that new provider (contact the front desk at 617-287-5690 or email counseling.center@umb.edu to start this process)

If you need further assistance or are struggling to find services, contact the front desk at 617-287-5690 or by emailing counseling.center@umb.edu to schedule a consultation with a clinician.

If you are already working with a counseling center clinician on referring your care, contact that person directly with questions and for support with the process.

In a crisis or for a referral to a higher level of care such as a partial hospital: contact us at 617-287-5690, your local emergency room, or the MA Department of Mental Health's emergency services program at (877) 382-1609.
