



Taking Care

A GUIDE TO MENTAL HEALTH
FOR EVERYBODY

Your Mind Matters

We all have highs and lows, moments of stress and feelings of uncertainty.

They can show up as sleepless nights, changes in appetite, tightness in the chest—or in so many other ways.

Mental health is a lot like physical health:
If you care for it, you can thrive.

**You're
not alone!**

1 in 5 American
adults experiences
a mental health
condition

We're here for you when...

You need help now.

The ACCESS helpline offers 24/7 support for allPAGE 2

You're looking for a community that cares.

Learn what NAMI Washtenaw offers.....PAGE 4

You're curious about therapy.

Where to start and what to ask a potential provider.....PAGE 6

You or someone you care about is in crisis.

Understand your options in case of an emergency.....PAGE 8

You want to understand your rights.

Facing mental health discrimination? Start here.....PAGE 10

You have questions.

FAQsPAGE 11

FREE, 24/7 PERSONALIZED SUPPORT

The ACCESS Helpline

If you or someone you care about has a mental health concern—no matter how big or small—you can find help right now.

Call ACCESS, Washtenaw County's confidential helpline, anytime, day or night. You'll reach a trusted mental health professional who can give advice, refer you to care providers or help in case of an emergency. If someone is in danger of hurting themselves or others, call 911.

ACCESS can help ...

- ✓ Coach you on how to talk with your doctor about mental health treatment
- ✓ Determine the severity of your situation and suggest the right level of care
- ✓ Provide referrals to mental health treatment providers—primary care physicians, counselors, psychiatrists, and more—whether or not you have health insurance

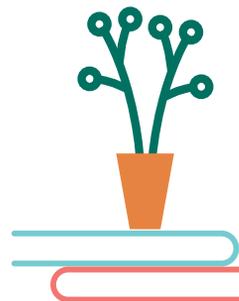
- ✓ Guide people to Washtenaw County Community Mental Health (WCCMH) for ongoing support
- ✓ Connect you with a crisis response team, in case of an emergency
- ✓ Arrange an in-patient stay in a psychiatric unit of a local hospital

**Call Washtenaw County's
ACCESS Helpline**

(734) 544-3050

You don't need insurance to get help.

(If you or your loved one has coverage,
you'll need that info handy.)





What to Expect

What You Can Ask For

Do you—or someone you know—need:

Immediate crisis intervention? Ask to speak to a member of the crisis response team.

A wellness check (also called a welfare check)? If you're concerned about the safety of a friend or family member with mental illness, ask for the mobile crisis response team. (Similar services are available in other counties.)

A therapist? Washtenaw County has a diverse network of licensed social workers, psychologists and many other providers. See page 6 to learn about choosing a therapist that fits your needs.

A psychiatrist? Psychiatrists are doctors who specialize in medication for moderate to severe mental health conditions. (Medication to treat mild anxiety and depression can be prescribed by your primary care physician.) Seeing a psychiatrist may be necessary if you or your loved one needs medication listed as a controlled substance.

A medication bridge? This is the term for a temporary prescription for someone who has already received treatment for a mental health condition, as they switch from one psychiatrist to another.

What ACCESS Might Ask

When you call ACCESS, you'll reach someone who can help. Depending on your concern, that person will either alert a crisis response team or talk you through your situation to determine a best next step.

They'll ask a series of questions, including:

- What kind of support do you/they need?
- What is your/their insurance status and/or type?
- Do you/they live or go to school in Washtenaw County?

They'll also ask questions about the seriousness of the situation.

Are you/they...

- Able to perform daily activities?
- Able to fix meals? Eating enough food? Gaining or losing weight?
- Able to shower and put on clean clothes?
- Spending a lot of time in bed? Having trouble sleeping?
- Not able to work? Have you/they lost a job because of mental health challenges?

Need More Help?

Ask to speak with a social worker on the ACCESS team who might better meet your needs.

If you can't get through to ACCESS, call the NAMI Washtenaw office at (734) 994-6611. We'll connect you with someone who can assist.

Turn the page to learn more about NAMI Washtenaw.

Connection and Community

NAMI Washtenaw is a local affiliate of NAMI, the National Alliance on Mental Illness. We're a grassroots organization dedicated to building better lives for people affected by mental health conditions and their families and friends.

Join us to experience the hope of recovery and the fellowship of people who have "been there and done that."

NAMI Washtenaw is a community of peers. Our knowledge of mental health and service systems comes from our own experience and our time supporting others.

We believe that there are many causes of mental health conditions, that no one is to blame, and that recovery is possible by learning coping skills and getting helpful support in place.

NAMI Washtenaw provides programming and resources in a therapeutic way, but we do not provide therapy or treatment.

Our volunteer-led classes and support groups are a much-needed complement to professional treatments; we emphasize physical, mental

and/or spiritual health for individuals, families, friends and communities. Through our advocacy work, we seek to lower barriers to mental health for all.

All programs and groups are provided at no cost to participants.



NAMI Washtenaw helps people with mental health conditions (and their loved ones) support each other.

OUR EDUCATION PROGRAMS

PEER-TO-PEER

For adults with mental health conditions.

This 8-week course is led by trained peers who live with mental health conditions themselves. We'll address coping and communication skills and discuss how to create a support network.

FAMILY-TO-FAMILY

For adults who support someone with a mental health condition.

In this 8-week course, families, friends and caregivers discover the important communication skills and resources that can help them and the person they care about.

ENDING THE SILENCE

For teens, young adults, parents and teachers.

This program for schools, churches and youth clubs addresses the stigma around mental health. Young adults share their experiences of living with mental health challenges, seeking help and moving forward with their lives.

Presentations on mental health are available for community groups upon request. Visit namiwc.org for more information.

OUR SUPPORT GROUPS

YOUNG ADULT AND ADULT CONNECTION RECOVERY SUPPORT GROUPS

A nurturing community for adults and young adults who live with a mental health diagnosis. Share challenges and find strategies, together.

FRIENDS AND FAMILY SUPPORT GROUPS

A group for adults who care for someone with a mental health diagnosis. Families and friends gather to help each other.

PARENTS TOGETHER SUPPORT GROUP

Parents with teens or young adults who struggle with suicidal ideation create a community of care.

FAITH SUPPORT GROUP

A group for adults living with, and in support of, people with mental health conditions who desire a faith-based system as part of their journey. The group combines faith and education lessons with sharing and support. All faiths are welcome.

Currently, our groups are primarily meeting on Zoom. To register and receive the Zoom link, visit our website.

namiwc.org

Finding a Therapist

One of the most important steps in addressing a mental health condition is connecting with a trustworthy, knowledgeable mental health professional. The search can take time and effort, but the right relationship can make a huge difference in your life.

STEP 1 Think About Your Needs

People living with mental health conditions often work with more than one provider—one focused on medication and another on emotional or behavioral therapies. Here's how to determine what kind of therapist is right for you:

- ✓ Schedule a physical exam with your primary care physician (PCP) first. They can rule out physical illness, make suggestions and referrals, and even prescribe medication for illnesses like depression or anxiety. (Many people on medication still meet with a therapist to work on emotions, behaviors and thinking patterns.)
- ✓ As you begin your search for a therapist, be honest about your needs. Therapists have specialties, and some have deep experience working with a specific age, gender or cultural group.
- ✓ If you think your condition requires the care of a psychiatrist, find one as soon as possible. There's a nationwide psychiatrist shortage. Try to get on a waiting list—or several.
- ✓ If you're concerned about the cost or not having insurance, call the ACCESS helpline to learn about your options at (734) 544-3050. (See page 2.)

STEP 2 Gather Referrals

If you have health insurance, begin by searching on your insurer's website for names and phone numbers of in-network professionals in your area. Try to find several names and numbers, just in case. This is also a good time to review your insurance benefits or reach out to your provider for clarification. Here are some questions you might ask:

- ✓ Can you make a direct appointment with a psychiatrist, or do you need to see a primary care physician first for a referral?
- ✓ How does your plan cover visits to therapists? Therapy coverage varies greatly among insurance plans.
- ✓ Does your plan cover doctors with the subspecialty you need?

If you do not have health insurance, call the ACCESS helpline at (734) 544-3050. (See page 2.)

Therapists have specialties, and some have deep experience working with a specific age, gender or cultural group.

STEP 3 Bring Questions

In your first visit with a doctor or therapist, be clear that you're looking for someone to work with. As you're still "shopping around," here are some questions you might want to consider:

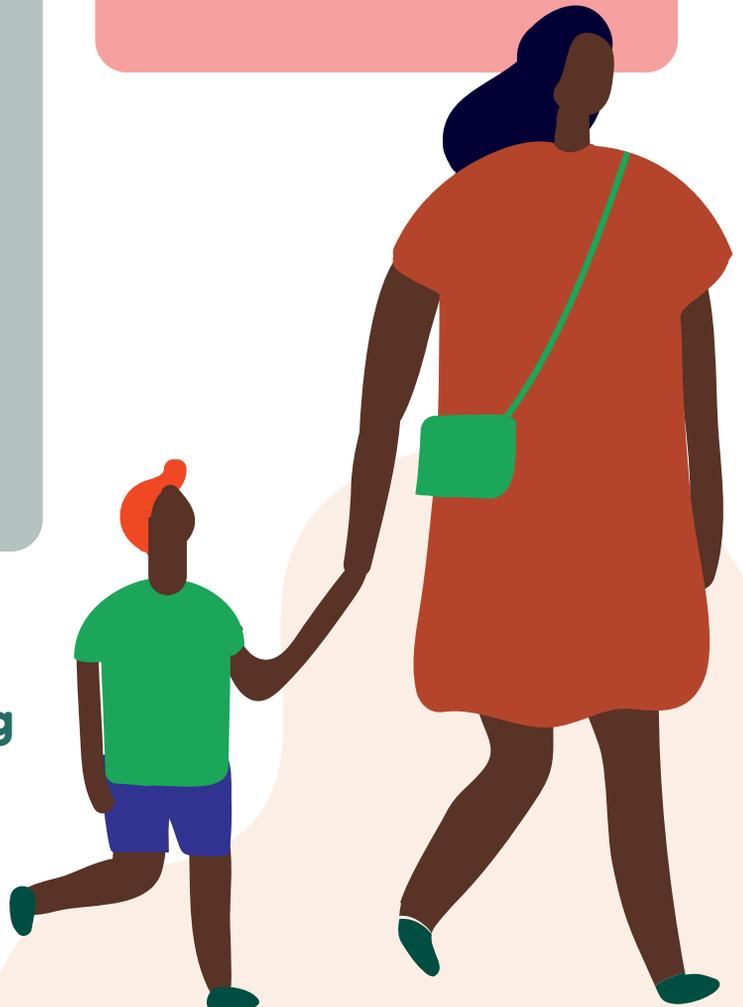
- ✓ Do you feel comfortable with this person? What "vibe" do you get? (The personal questions a mental health professional asks may make you feel uncomfortable, but the *person* shouldn't make you feel uncomfortable.)
- ✓ How much education and professional experience does this person have?
- ✓ Has this person worked with people similar to you? For how long?
- ✓ How will you work together to establish goals and evaluate your progress?
- ✓ How often will you meet, and how will you communicate about scheduling?
- ✓ Are you able to pay on a sliding scale, or is there a discount, if you are not able to meet insurance co-pays or deductibles?

STEP 4 Build a Relationship

Selecting the right care provider is a very personal choice. If the fit doesn't feel right, you can pursue other possibilities. It's common for people to try different therapists until they find one with whom they have a good connection. Your comfort level with your team is critical to your recovery and can make all the difference in your health.

You should feel a sense of trust with your therapist.

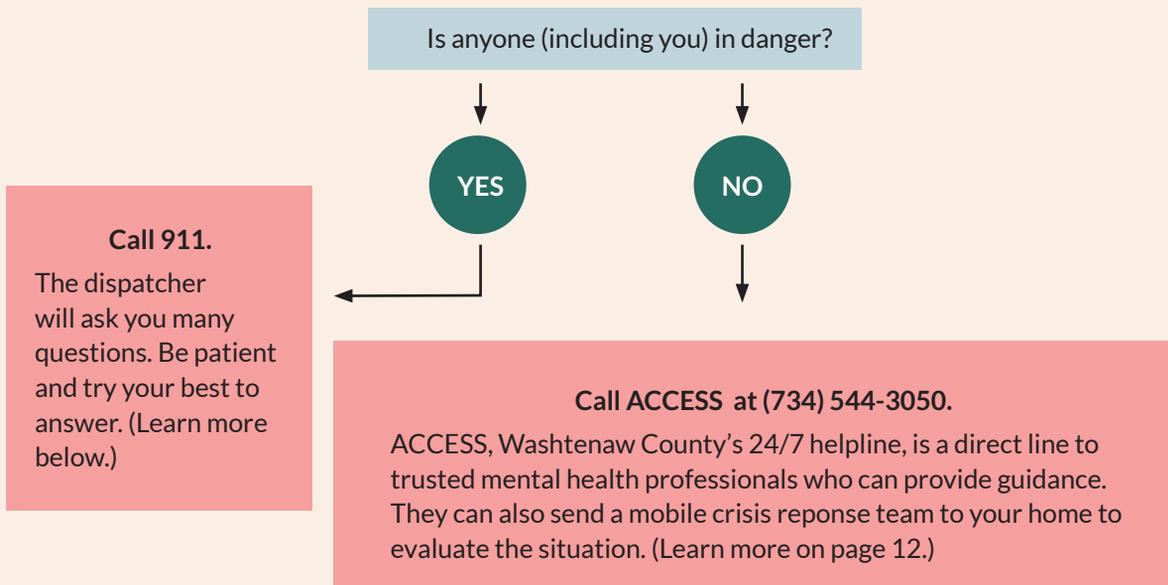
Visit our online directory of
mental health care resources.
takingcarewashtenaw.org



If You or Someone You Care About is in Crisis

It is essential to take action when there's a mental health emergency. Some signs that a person might need immediate help include:

- Seeing or hearing things that are not there
- Experiencing extreme shifts in mood or feeling paranoid
- Having thoughts or ideas about suicide
- Being unable to take care of daily needs (not showering or sleeping, etc.)
- Harming oneself— anorexia, bulimia, cutting or other forms
- Breaking off close relationships, or not being able to maintain them
- Starting to use, or to increase use of, substances (legal and illegal)



What To Say If You Call 911

- Share your exact location, especially if you live in a building with multiple units.
- State that the person has a mental health condition and request an individual trained in mental health crisis.
- Let the dispatcher know the type and location of any weapons in the house.
- Describe the person, including their clothing.
- Offer details of what led to the day's events.
- Give advice about how to approach the person and any known triggers (sirens, lights or a specific gender, for example).

Hospital Care

Sometimes people experiencing psychosis or other extreme conditions require hospitalization. As you talk with hospital staff, share as much information as you can about the person and their mental health history.

- **Voluntary Hospitalization**

Ideally, the person in need of treatment agrees to be admitted to the hospital for treatment. (Note: When a person in crisis is younger than 18, a parent or guardian must agree to hospitalization.)

- **Involuntary Hospitalization**

Sometimes a person in need of hospitalization is unwilling to go. In some cases, a person can be hospitalized to get the care they need, whether or not they agree to it. This is called involuntary hospitalization.

In order for someone to be hospitalized against their will, a mental health professional must examine the person and certify that hospital care is needed.

The following forms are required for involuntary hospitalization:

- **Petition/Application for Admission**

This form—and help completing it—is available through the Washtenaw County Probate Court, Washtenaw County Community Mental Health or the emergency departments of local hospitals.

- **Clinical Certificate**

This form, completed by a physician, certifies that the person qualifies for involuntary treatment.

Local Psychiatric Emergency Services

University of Michigan Hospital Psychiatric Emergency Services

(734) 936-5900

UM has a separate psychiatric emergency room.

St. Joseph Mercy Ann Arbor Hospital

(734) 712-2762

St. Joseph Mercy Chelsea Hospital

(734) 593-5251

Partial Care Programs

If you or someone you care about are experiencing symptoms that are significant but not extreme enough to warrant in-patient care, consider looking into a partial program.

Partial programs provide similarly intensive treatment, but people receive treatment on an outpatient basis.

Visit takecarewashtenaw.org for providers.

Protecting Your Rights

A mental health diagnosis can change your life. Understanding your rights, and how to protect them, is important. These resources can help.

Your right to privacy

For people living with mental illness, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, or HIPAA, is an important federal law. It requires providers to get a patient's consent before sharing the patient's mental health records.

While the law's intent is to protect people's privacy, it can cause complications when the families of people experiencing mental illness are unable to communicate with their health care providers.

Health care providers *can* share information without a patient's written consent in some important exceptions. These include emergencies, threat of harm, incapacitation and other considerations.

To learn more, visit hipaaforcaregivers.com

Your right to equal treatment and opportunity

While mental illness among American adults is very common, discrimination can happen. When it does, it can hurt a person's ability to find housing, get a job or even access the health care they need. Here are some organizations that can help.

FOR LEGAL ASSISTANCE CONCERNING CIVIL RIGHTS ISSUES

ACLU of Michigan
(313) 578-6800, www.aclumich.org

FOR HELP WITH HOUSING DISCRIMINATION

Fair Housing Center of Southeastern Michigan
(877) 979-FAIR, info@fhcmichigan.org,
www.fhcmichigan.org

FOR LEGAL ADVICE REGARDING SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY BENEFITS

Law Center for Social Security Rights
Contact: Clifford L. Weisberg
(248) 350-1000, www.ssrights.com

FOR FREE LEGAL SERVICES AVAILABLE TO LOW-INCOME RESIDENTS

University of Michigan Clinical Law Program Civil-Criminal Litigation
(734) 763-4319, mclp@umich.edu
www.law.umich.edu/clinical/generalclinic

Legal Services of South Central Michigan
(734) 665-6181, www.lsscm.org

NAMI Washtenaw does not endorse any specific lawyers.

Frequently Asked Questions

What if I need mental health care but don't have health insurance?

The CARES program (funded by the Washtenaw County's Public Safety and Mental Health Millage) supports people who need mental health help, even when they are not insured. Call the ACCESS helpline to connect to CARES (734) 544-3050.

I'm worried about a loved one. How do I start a conversation about treatment?

It's important to know that one symptom of mental illness can be a person's lack of understanding that they have a mental illness.

Approach your loved one with empathy and compassion, using nonconfrontational language like, "I feel worried when you aren't sleeping."

Avoid arguments about whether or not what they are seeing or feeling is real.

Talk to them about treatment options in a way that allows them to feel a sense of choice in the outcome.

This approach can take time, but keeping your loved one's trust is incredibly important. If you're still not able to get through to them, reach out to a therapist to strategize new ways to talk about treatment.

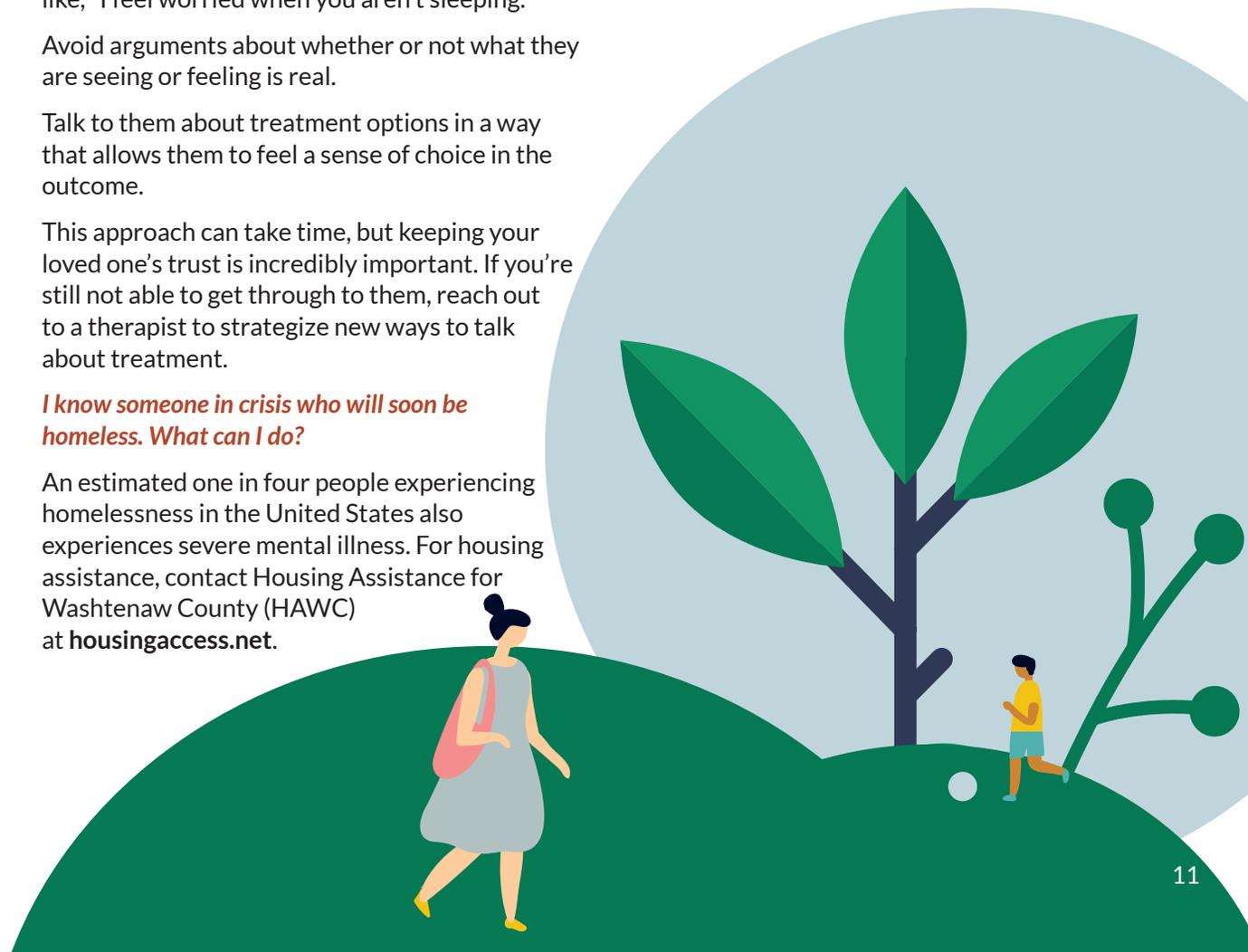
I know someone in crisis who will soon be homeless. What can I do?

An estimated one in four people experiencing homelessness in the United States also experiences severe mental illness. For housing assistance, contact Housing Assistance for Washtenaw County (HAWC) at housingaccess.net.

What kind of mental health treatment can a primary care physician (PCP) provide?

If you have mental health concerns, it's wise to let your primary care physician know. Some mental health symptoms can actually be a sign of physical illness. After physical problems have been ruled out, your doctor can determine whether they can treat you or if you should see a mental health specialist.

Serious symptoms, such as thoughts of wanting to harm yourself or someone else, should be considered a medical emergency, needing medical attention right away. Call the ACCESS line at (734) 544-3050. If you feel you're in immediate danger, call 911.



What is the mobile crisis response team?

(If you're seeking help for someone who is suicidal or threatening harm to others, it's important that you call 911 directly.)

The mobile crisis response team, part of Washtenaw County Community Mental Health, is a group of mental health professionals who can make home visits to respond to psychiatric emergencies, assess the person in crisis and recommend appropriate treatment.

This service is available to anyone in the county, and no insurance is required. You can request the team by calling ACCESS at (734) 544-3050. Tell the person who answers the phone that you are calling about a mental health crisis and need to speak to a social worker with the crisis response team.

If the person in crisis is not a danger to themselves or others, you can request that the mobile crisis response team come without the police.

If you run into any issues, please call NAMI Washtenaw at (734) 994-6611, and one of our advocates will guide you through the process.

For more information on what to do in a crisis, see page 8.

What if I need mental health care but don't have a doctor?

Ideally, a patient's mental health care is overseen by one primary care physician (PCP)—particularly if the person has been prescribed medication that requires monitoring and management. This doctor can work with other mental health care providers to note changes in their patient's mood or behavior, which can help them see patterns and provide better treatment.

If cost or insurance is a concern, we recommend calling the ACCESS helpline. Their staff can help you find a PCP who fits with your budget and insurance type—even if you don't have insurance.

What are inpatient, partial and outpatient care?

Inpatient care involves a person's admittance to a hospital, where they stay 24 hours a day, until they are safe to take care of themselves.

Outpatient care is any care received outside of a hospital. There are many types of outpatient care, depending on the seriousness of a person's condition. A common outpatient care plan is meeting with a therapist once or twice a week, for a 30- to 60-minute appointment.

Many people who receive outpatient care do so through a hospital. (St. Joseph Mercy, for example, has outpatient programs that offer appointments with psychiatrists and therapists.) Others work with providers not directly affiliated with a hospital system, such as a psychologist who runs their own private practice.

Partial care is one type of outpatient care for people with significant mental health challenges. People in partial care typically have treatment for several hours on weekdays (from 8 AM to 3 PM, for example), for a length of time determined by a mental health provider.

**Visit NAMI Washtenaw's
online directory of
mental health care resources.
takingcarewashtenaw.org**



WE'RE HERE TO HELP

NAMI Washtenaw nurtures a vibrant community centered around mental health support and shared resources.

COME LEARN WITH US

Our 8-week courses can help you navigate mental health diagnoses. We offer free programs for people who live with mental health conditions, as well as programs for family and caregivers.

FIND YOUR COMMUNITY

You're not alone! We've got support groups for adults who live with mental health conditions and their parents/caregivers, including some for people who prefer a faith-based approach.

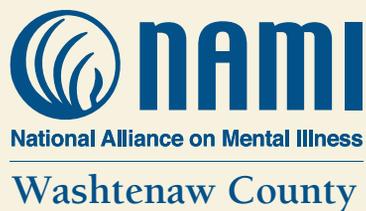
Learn more at
www.namiwc.org
or call (734) 994-6611

Interested in helping NAMI?

We welcome volunteers, donors and supporters.



Take the first step!
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takingcarewashtenaw.org



namiwc.org

This project was supported by the Washtenaw County Public Safety & Mental Health Preservation Millage.