

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Table of Contents

Warning Signs.....4

Benefits.....5

Getting to the Hospital6

What to Expect

How the Emergency Department Process Works7

Treatment Team8

What Questions do You Have and Feelings You are Experiencing9

Policies and Procedures10

Meeting with the Emergency Department Psychiatrists11

Inpatient Care

First Steps to Prepare for Inpatient Care12

Organizing Your Thoughts and Information13

Different Treatment Units14

Discharge Plans15

Outpatient Care

Warning Signs

Reasons You May Want to Visit the Hospital

You may want to go to the emergency room if you are experiencing any of these symptoms:

- Thoughts of hurting yourself or others
- Not eaten or slept for several days
- Thinking or talking too fast, or jumping from topic to topic and not making sense
- Bizarre or paranoid ideas
- Seeing or hearing things
- Too exhausted or depressed to get out of bed or take care of yourself or your family
- Problems with alcohol or substances that is impairing your daily life
- Feelings of being disconnected with oneself or one's surroundings

Note what feelings/thoughts you are experiencing or are concerned about:

Benefits

How a Hospital Visit Can Help

A Safe Environment

Being at the hospital allows for a low stress environment that can allow you to fully immerse in treatment.

Trained Professionals

You can work with hospital staff to stabilize your symptoms and learn new coping mechanisms.

**A hospital
treatment
setting can
provide...**

A Supportive Environment

You can safely explore your thoughts and feelings as well as learn more about your triggers.

An Ability to Explore

You can explore new treatment options to find the treatment that best helps you.

Getting to the Hospital

Taking Steps to Get Help

Who you decide to notify about your desire to go to the hospital is in your control. If you do not think you can drive yourself to the hospital or do not have a means of transportation there are other options.

First start by listing people (friends, family members, etc) who you feel comfortable reaching out to and would have a way to get you to the hospital:

Name: _____ Phone #: _____

Name: _____ Phone #: _____

Name: _____ Phone #: _____

Try calling these individuals. If they do not answer or are not as receptive as you would have hoped DO NOT GIVE UP there are other options. For example, the Birmingham Crisis Center is an anonymous crisis line whose phone counselors can give you ideas for transport services. Another option is to call 911 to request an ambulance for a “mental health emergency.”

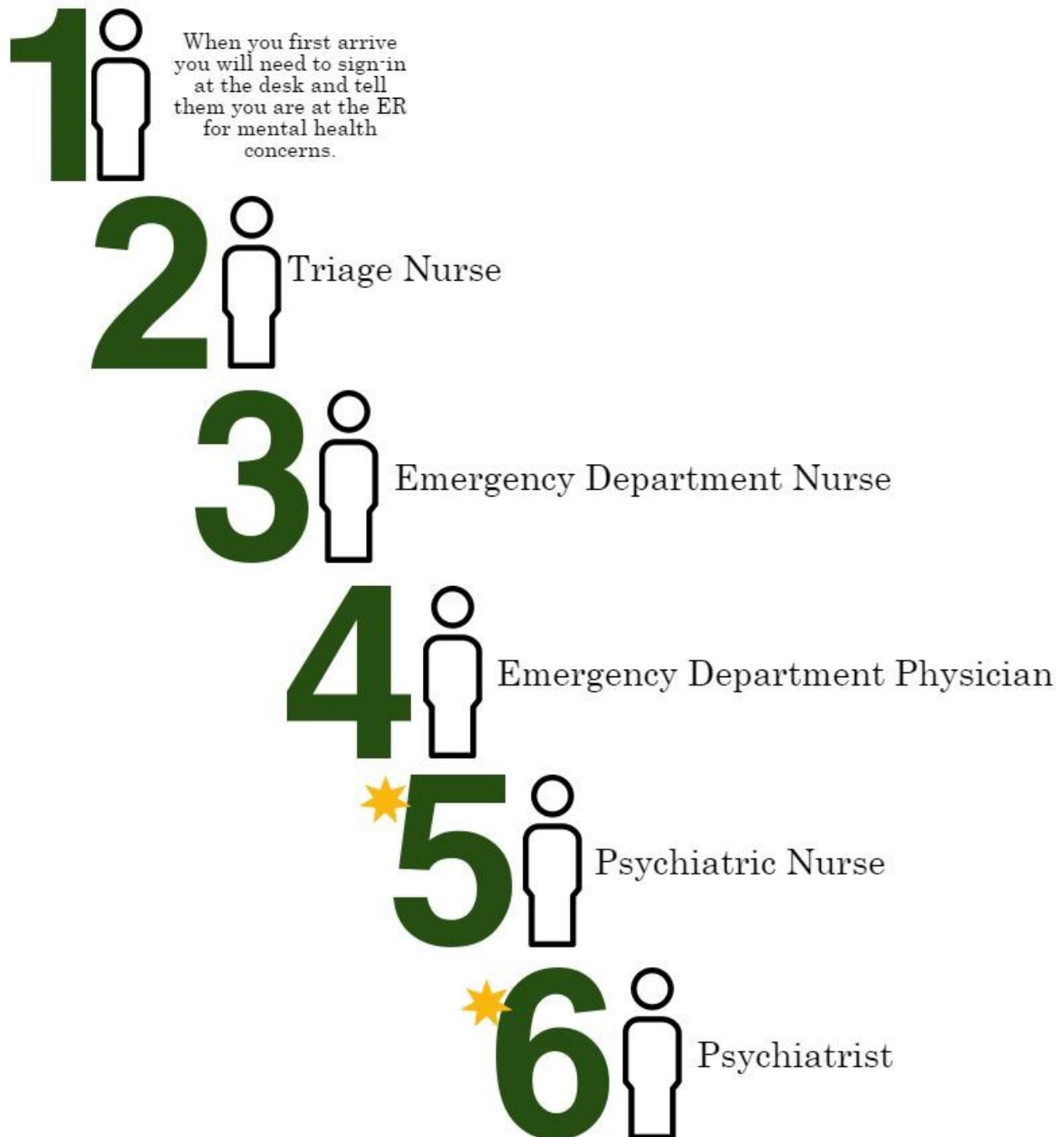
Overnight Bag Checklist

You may want to go ahead and pack an overnight bag just in case you and the psychiatrist decide inpatient care is the best option. Things to include in your overnight bag are:

- Change of clothes (PJs, slippers, etc)
- Toothbrush/toothpaste, shampoo/conditioner, & soap
- Loose leaf paper, pencils

What to Expect

How the ER process works



Every professional that you talk to during your emergency room visit have some training in mental health crises. However mental health concerns are areas of specialization for psychiatric nurses and psychiatrists. Make sure that you share with them your feelings, beliefs and concerns for coming to the hospital. They will be the ones helping you decide the next steps.

What to Expect

Treatment Team

- **Triage Nurse:** after checking in this will be the first medical professional you will come in contact with. Their role is to assess your condition and then determine the priority status for admission into the emergency room. Be sure to identify your primary concern as mental health concerns.
- **Emergency Department (ED) Nurse:** the next medical professional you will come in contact with is the ED nurse. Their role is to gain further information about how you are feeling and take vitals.
- **Emergency Department Physician:** the ED physician's role is to screen for any physical problems and rule out that any physical conditions may be affecting your mental health. They will decide if a psychological consult is necessary.
- **Psychiatric Nurse:** the next medical professional you will meet with is the Psychiatric ER nurse. Their role is to take your psychological history and assess your current condition.
- **Psychiatrist:** the final medical professional you will come in contact with while in the ED will be the psychiatrist. Their role is to talk with you and to work with you to decide what the best option for your next step is. This could be inpatient care or it could be a follow-up with outpatient care.

What to Expect

Write Down Questions You Have & Feelings You Are Experiencing

Because you will repeat your story many times throughout the ER visit. It may be helpful to write down your concerns, questions, feelings, and thoughts you are having.

Reason(s) for going to the hospital:

Previous mental health issues:

Questions you have:

Goal for ER visit:

What to Expect

Policies & Procedures

Everyone's ER experience differs slightly, but below are some things that may happen while you are in the ER. We want you to be aware of these events so it does not surprise you, but also so you know these are procedural steps.

- You may have your blood drawn, urine sample taken, or have an EKG done
- You may switch rooms in the ER department
- Before seeing the psychiatrist you may be asked to change into a gown and have your belongings secured by the nurses
- You do have the ability to make phone calls. You just need to ask the staff to have access to the ER phone at the nurses station
- If you have expressed suicidal ideation and are not accompanied by a loved one you may have a hospital staff member come sit with you while you are in the ER
- You have the right to be involved in your plan of care from admission to discharge

If something happens during your visit that alarms you, is confusing, or doesn't feel comfortable express those concerns to your treatment team. They will be able to either provide an explanation or change the situation.

What to Expect

Meeting with the ER Psychiatrist

Meeting with the Psychiatrist will be the final step in the ER. There are two general possible outcomes from your discussion with the Psychiatrist: inpatient care or outpatient care/follow-up.

It is important during your conversation with the psychiatrist that you express your concerns and goals for going to the ER. Together you both will decide what treatment plan is best for both your current situation and long-term success.

We recognize that by this point you may feel very strongly about one of the two outcomes, but know that many factors play a role in deciding the best treatment path and that there are benefits to both types of care. The remainder of this guide is broken up into inpatient care and outpatient care overviews. Once you know which treatment plan you will be on you can move to that section in the guide.

NOTES FROM CONSULTATION WITH PSYCHIATRIST:

Inpatient Care

First Steps to Prepare for Inpatient Care

Proceeding with inpatient care is an important step towards recovery. Inpatient care may make you feel overwhelmed or anxious; this is normal. There are steps you can take to help organize your thoughts, feelings, and information that can help with those feelings.

First you may want to get some of your personal items from home. Have a loved one bring your things to the hospital or have them stop by a store to pick up things.

Here are the things you will be able to have in inpatient care:

- Clothes/Shoes (**important: none of these items can have strings or metal**)
 - Three outfits
 - Two pairs of pajamas
 - Pair of regular shoes
 - Pair of house slippers
- Toiletry Items
 - One bottle of shampoo
 - One bottle of conditioner
 - One bar of soap
 - One bottle of lotion
- Things to have during downtime
 - Loose leaf paper or note pad without wire
 - Photos
 - Pencils
 - Card Games
- **ITEMS THAT ARE NOT ALLOWED:**
 - Electronic devices, razors, stuffed animals, or items that may interfere with your treatment plans. If you have a question about an item reach out to your nurse

Inpatient Care

Organizing Your Thoughts & Information

Important Reminders:

- Your treatment is private and confidential. None of your information will be given out without your consent
- Members of your treatment team are there to help YOU. Without your input the treatment team cannot provide you with the best treatment. Be sure to ask questions and be an active participant in your treatment

Who is on your treatment team?

- **Physician's name:** _____

- **Nurses:**

- **Social worker:**_____

Inpatient Care

Different Treatment Units

- **C5 South, Adolescent Unit, Phone: (205) 934-4000**

Adolescent Psychiatry provides comprehensive care for adolescent patients.

- **C6 North, Adult Psychiatry ICU, Phone : (205) 934-5115**

The Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit provides care for adult patients with acute mental illness. Care is provided in a secure unit designed for the safety and security of the patients and staff. Treatment is provided in a therapeutic community and patients receive recreational, occupational, and group therapy.

- **C6 South, Adult Psychiatry, Phone: (205) 934-5116**

The Adult Psychiatric Unit provides a safe, comfortable environment for patients with primary mental disorders, including chemical dependence, as well as, mood disorders, PTSD, and adjustment disorder. Treatment is provided in a therapeutic community, and patients receive recreational, occupational, and group therapy.

- **C7 South, Adult Psychiatry, Phone: (205) 934-5111**

The Adult Psychiatric Unit provides a safe, comfortable environment for patients with primary mental disorders. Treatment is provided in a therapeutic community, and patients receive recreational, occupational, and group therapy.

- **C7 South, Geriatric Psychiatry, Phone: (205) 934-5111**

The Geriatric Psychiatry unit cares for geriatric patients with various mental illnesses, including dementia, in a safe and secure environment. Treatment is provided in a therapeutic community, and patients receive recreational, occupational, and group Therapy.

- **JT North 5, Adult Psychiatry Continued Stay, Phone: (205) 934-7615**

The unit serves the psychiatric patient who requires additional treatment for more than 7 days of psychiatric stabilization. Treatment is provided in a therapeutic community, and patients receive recreational, occupational, and group therapy.

- **Recovery Stabilization Unit, C5N, Phone: (205) 975-7350**

This unit provides care for adult patients with chemical dependency, including detoxification, residential stabilization, partial hospitalization, and intensive outpatient and aftercare for the general public

Inpatient Care

Discharge Plans

You can use this page to keep all your discharge notes in one place.

- Get a medical note to excuse your absence
You may need a medical note for school or work. The note is general and you can work with your psychiatrist, therapist, or social worker to get it

Psychiatrist

- My outpatient psychiatrist's name is: _____
- I have an appointment on: _____
- The location of their office is: _____
- The phone number for their office is: _____

Therapist

- My outpatient therapist's name is: _____
- I have an appointment on: _____
- The location of their office is: _____
- The phone number for their office is: _____

Outpatient Care

First Steps to Prepare

Outpatient care is an important step in helping to take care of yourself and to provide you with tools to assist with future life stressors. Because of this it is important that you make an appointment as soon as possible with your outpatient provider and keep the appointment to continue your treatment plans.

General Psychiatric Resources

Choices of Alabama-Behavioral Health Center

Accepts Medicaid
1900 Crestwood Boulevard
Irondale, AL
205-639-1334

M-Power

Free
4022 4th Ave S
Birmingham, AL
205-595-5959

Equal Access Birmingham

Free
112 14th St N
Birmingham, AL
205-259-8839

UAB Community Psychiatry Program

Low cost/no insurance for serious mental illness
908 20th St S
Birmingham, AL
205-934-4108

Eastside Mental Health Center

Low cost/no insurance for serious mental illness
129 East Park Circle
Birmingham, AL
205-836-7283

Cheaha Regional Mental Health Center

Low cost/no insurance for serious mental illness
1661 Old Birmingham Hwy
Sylacauga, AL
256-245-2201

Chilton-Shelby Mental Health Center

Low cost/no insurance for serious mental illness
2100 County Services Drive
Pelham, AL
205-663-1252

JBS Urgent Care Clinic

Low cost/no insurance for any mental illness
1230 3rd Ave S
Birmingham, AL
205-545-8420

Birmingham Veterans Mental Health Clinic

Low cost/no insurance for any mental illness
700 19th St S
Birmingham, AL
205-933-8101

JBS Mental Health Authority

Low cost/no insurance for serious mental illness
940 Montclair Road
Birmingham, AL
205-595-4555

Western Mental Health Center

For serious mental illness
1701 Avenue D
Birmingham, AL
205-788-7770

Gateway

Low cost/no insurance for any mental illness
1401 20th St S
Birmingham, AL
205-510-2600

Capital Care South

Medicaid/Medicare for any mental illness
2618 Commerce Boulevard
Irondale, AL
205-956-2000

JBS Services-Dr. Parker

Service for homeless individuals
2230 4th Ave N
Birmingham, AL
205-323-4277

General Psychiatric Resources