



# Information for Our Clients and Parents and Guardians

***PCA offers pathways to wholeness, healing,  
and hope, through caring and effective  
mental health services.  
We Can Help You Help Yourself.***

**Office/Clinic Hours 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.,  
Monday through Friday** (Some clinics have  
extended hours one evening a week)

**Day Services Program Hours  
8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.  
Monday, Wednesday, & Thursday**  
<http://www.pca-ar.org/>

**12/2016**

## ***YOU ARE WELCOME HERE***

We are glad you have come to PCA. We want you to find hope and healing. We believe that every person deserves to be treated with respect, dignity, and kindness. We believe that with the right tools, you can manage your symptoms, achieve your treatment goals, and overcome some of the barriers that may hinder your recovery. We want to help you find and use those tools.

PCA's staff is diverse, and we respect the diversity of our clients and families. PCA does not discriminate based on race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, or genetic information.

We work to fit our services to each person's unique needs, abilities, and strengths.

PCA is a strong advocate for client rights and family rights. Our programs for youth are family-driven, child-centered, and youth-guided. Families are involved at all levels of PCA, including our Board of Directors.

## **ABOUT PROFESSIONAL COUNSELING ASSOCIATES**

PCA has five outpatient clinic locations serving Pulaski, Lonoke and Prairie counties. Four of these serve people of all ages, including small children. Our Springhill programs in North Little Rock serve adults who are 18 and older.

We provide 24-hour emergency services every day of the year (by phone and, if needed, face to face).

We are a not-for-profit organization, and have been in existence since we were founded in 1974. Our CEO is Jannie Cotton, LPC.

PCA offers clinic services like Individual Therapy, Family, and Group Therapy by Professionals; Medication Management; and interventions by Para-Professionals.

Springhill also has Day Service programs where adult clients may have several hours of treatment activities during a day.

The Family Resource Center at our Springhill building serves the public, as well as our clients and their families, by providing information, referrals, and support services without charge.

## **YOUR PRIVACY**

Your Personal Health Information is protected by HIPAA and by other laws. But it is important to understand that “confidential” and “protected” do not mean that your information can be kept completely secret in every situation.

***In many situations we can use or share some information about you, without needing you to sign a specific form. Here are some examples:***

- More than one person inside PCA will be involved in your care. The people who are working on your care will all use the same client chart with your information.
- We use your information to bill your insurance, Medicaid, or other payers. (Some payers ask for detailed information before they will approve a service.)
- If you have a legal guardian, that person has the legal right to your information. The guardian can also authorize us to release your information to others. For a client under 18, either parent has this right (unless a court has taken rights away from a parent).

- We can share your health record with another provider who is treating you, or who is about to treat you. We only share the “minimum necessary” for your care. For example, we could ask your Primary Care doctor about your medical problems, or we could give information to your pharmacist, or the laboratory you use. We would not share private information that is not needed for that office or to provide your care.
- If you are admitted to a hospital, or to another facility (like a nursing home), we can share the “minimum necessary” information they need to begin caring for you, and to coordinate your care.

***Other situations are rare, but they can happen. In situations like these, we can share the “minimum necessary” amount of your confidential information, without a specific written permission form from you.***

- If a judge signs a Court Order for us to release your information.
- If you are in immediate, serious danger, and emergency information is needed to help care for you, or keep you safe. (For example, information about your medication, or to get help if you are in danger of harming yourself).
- If you commit a crime at PCA or against PCA staff, we will report the crime.

- If we learn of child abuse, or abuse of certain adults, Arkansas law requires us to report that, and to release some information from your records.
- If we believe you are a serious danger to another person, we may be required to take steps to protect the other person.

***PCA’s Privacy Officer is  
Chevera Blakemore at (501) 221-1843.  
To learn more, talk with your Therapist,  
and read PCA’s “Notice of  
Privacy Practices.”***

***PAYING FOR SERVICES and INSURANCE COVERAGE***

***Will my medical coverage pay for PCA  
services? How can I use it?***

PCA accepts most kinds of coverage for mental health treatment, but every type has its own requirements. You must provide us with all information we need to submit a bill or to qualify you for any assistance or discounts. We will verify your benefits before your first visit, and explain how they affect your charges and responsibilities.

If you have any coverage to use, you must let PCA copy your insurance cards and/or other proof of coverage. By doing this, you give PCA “direct assignment” of your rights and benefits under those policies. The insurance or government program holds you responsible to pay all deductibles and co-pays listed in the Explanation of Benefits for those policies.

You agree to immediately give PCA any new or changed information that will help PCA bill correctly for your services. Examples are changes in insurance plan, or change of address.

We will ask you to update your financial and coverage information at least once every year.

## ***What if I have Medicaid or Medicare?***

***Medicaid*** and ***ArKids*** have several requirements for mental health care that you need to help PCA meet. The sheet called “***Important Facts about Medicaid RSPMI***” explains these.

***Medicare*** only allows a few staff at PCA to provide services, so we do not always have openings for new Medicare patients. We accept many kinds of ***Insurance***, including ***Private Option*** plans. We will confirm whether your insurance recognizes PCA and covers your therapist.

## ***Can I get a discount, or pay lower fees?***

Before your first session, you will complete a “Financial Agreement.” Our staff will explain how you can use your coverage, whether you qualify for a discount, and any programs that could help with your costs. Taken together, this will determine what fee you will be charged for services. Everyone pays the “full fee,” unless they agree to use any coverage they have, prove they qualify for a discount, and/or qualify for special assistance programs.

A few state programs provide help for people who qualify. “CASSP” is for people under 21. “Title XX” is available during part of the year for people with very low income. PCA staff will tell you if you qualify for these kinds of help, based on the information you give us.

To apply for a discount price that is lower than PCA’s standard fee, **both** these things must be true:

- 1) You must ***live in PCA’s catchment area.***
- 2) You must give us ***proof of income.***  
(Your latest tax return is best.)

Several other rules look at your situation and what kind of services you need. Our staff will explain the details. If you qualify, the size of this “sliding scale discount” will depend on your income.

If your coverage requires “Deductibles” and/or “Co-Pays,” you are legally responsible to pay those out of your own pocket. PCA is forbidden to apply our sliding-scale discount to a deductible or co-pay. If you have coverage but do not want to use it, you may not be eligible for discounts or other help.

To be awarded a discount or payment assistance at PCA, you must complete applications for medical coverage that you seem to be eligible for, such as the Arkansas “Private Option,” Medicare or Medicaid, ARKids, etc. If you do not follow through on your application process for a recommended program, any discount you’ve been given at PCA can be cancelled.

## ***When do I have to make payments? How much?***

The day before each appointment, our staff will call the phone number you give us. They will remind you of the appointment time, and let you know how much to bring. (That amount is always an estimate. It looks at the full price of the service, how much any coverage should pay, and whether you have a discount for the remainder. The final total you owe will be calculated by our accounting department, after your service, and after we get payments from all other payment sources.)

Each time you come to PCA, we expect you to pay your estimated portion of the cost. We accept debit and credit cards, checks, and cash.

Your first visit at PCA (called an “Intake”) costs \$230.40 at full fee. This amount includes the time you spend with a Therapist, as well as work our staff do before and after your meeting. This fee does not cover a visit with a medical doctor, which will be scheduled for a later date, if needed.

## ***I heard that mental health services are free...***

PCA does not have any “free clinics.” Almost every client pays at least part of the cost of their care. For example, services by PROMOTE are paid in full by a contract, not billed to clients. But there are only a few contracts that excuse the client from all charges.

## ***MEDICATIONS AND SEEING A DOCTOR OR NURSE***

***Most PCA staff are not medical. But many clients do see a PCA Physician and/or an APN at least once.*** (An APN is an “Advanced Practice” specialized nurse, who can Prescribe medications.)

At an evaluation you would get advice about whether medical issues could be part of your problem, whether medications may be helpful, and the pros and cons of using them.

Many of our clients get their ongoing medications from their family doctor.

***When a person wants only medication, PCA is usually not right for you. To use PCA's medical services, you must be actively working with at least one other PCA professional.***

(We can give you a list of other doctors in the area who accept different kinds of payment for psychiatric medication services.)

***If you have trouble paying for medications, tell your doctor or nurse right away, so they can work with you to find the most affordable choices, or suggest resources to help you pay.***

***PCA does not provide free medications.***

***If you are not keeping appointments, or not participating in therapy, we do not provide refills by phone.*** We do not have a lot of open appointments for doctors or APNs. If you miss an appointment, you will probably have to wait for another appointment before you can get a refill prescription.

## ***I NEED A SERVICE FOR COURT, OR MY JOB, OR MY SURGERY...***

PCA is not equipped to provide some services. Examples of those we do not offer are ***evaluation or proof of completion for a court; a safety clearance***

***or recommendation for your job; proof of disability; or clearance for medical procedures*** such as pain treatment, transplants, weight loss surgery, or being a surrogate. ***Seeing a PCA therapist would not satisfy those requirements.***

In addition, insurance and Medicaid do not pay for that kind of service. So it is not any more expensive to have a private expert provide them. We have Fact Sheets to help people find some special services outside PCA, like psychological testing, court requirements, or evaluations related to your job.

## ***YOUR TREATMENT: STARTING, ADJUSTING, ENDING***

***Your first session will be with a professional, who will assess your needs, see what you are willing to try, and recommend what services fit you best. You can do this by appointment, or you can come to our Tuesday Walk-In Clinic and wait to be seen that day. Before your first session, you will fill out medical and financial forms. You can also do the forms earlier than the Intake visit.***

***If a client is not yet 18, at least one parent must participate.***

We believe you need to be part of your child's treatment, and be involved in decisions. A parent – or an adult who helps care for the child – must come with your child to every evaluation and every medical visit. ***Medicaid*** has additional requirements for ways that a parent must participate.

***We will work with you to plan treatment***, based on your needs and wishes, building on your strengths, abilities, and supports. Our staff will advise you about what kinds of treatment are most likely to help in your situation. One professional will be your “Primary Therapist” and coordinate your care.

***How often you get services, and which services you use***, will change depending on how severe your symptoms are, and what is working for you at that time. For example, sometimes a person may need treatment more than once a week. When you are doing well, you might need only one visit a month. Medicaid, Medicare, and insurance all ask us to base treatment plans on what is “medically necessary” for you at this time. (For example, even though you might enjoy Day Treatment, and think that coming every day is good for you, Medicaid will only pay for the “intensity of treatment” that they believe you need for your current symptoms.)

***If a crisis ever gets very severe***, we work with clients and families to try to help manage the crisis without having to go to a hospital. If someone does need to use a hospital, we work with hospital staff to help them keep their stay as short as possible.

## ***YOUR RIGHTS AT PCA***

*(When a client is a **minor**, a parent or guardian has these rights.) (If your treatment is **court-ordered**, that puts limits on some of your rights.)*

**1) You have the right to be treated with dignity and respect.**

**2) You have the right to be safe from any kind of abuse, threats, violence, harassment, or retaliation.**

Please tell a staff person right away if you ever feel in danger, or if you ever see any abuse, threats, or harassment. Tell us if you ever notice weapons, threats, or suspicious people at PCA. For your part, please respect the rights of others. Do not abuse, threaten, or harass anyone -- staff, clients, or visitors.

**3) You have the right to have your information kept confidential, following HIPAA, as explained in our Notice of Privacy Practices.**

Please keep other people’s information confidential, too, if you learn things about them (in group therapy, Day Treatment, or so forth).

**4) You have the right to have your diagnosis and your choices explained so they make sense to you.**

Any time you’re not sure what someone means, or what is happening, it’s very important to ask questions.

**5) You have the right to know what is in your record, and to get copies.**

Our staff can explain what they are writing, and answer questions. You can always get a free copy when you sign any document. If you want copies of your record, we charge 25¢ per page, following HIPAA rules.

**6) You have the right to be involved in your treatment planning, and to expect good outcomes from treatment.**

Choosing specific goals helps focus treatment and keep it on track. It is your responsibility to talk with your Therapist to help set your goals, and to evaluate your progress.

**7) You have the right to know any risks of treatment.**

If you have any problem with medication, or any other treatment, it is important to tell a staff person. Every medicine has both benefits and risks. Your doctor or nurse will talk these over when you get a new prescription, and explain how to use medicines safely and for the best effect.

**8) You have the right to involve other people in your care, as much as you want.**

Your family may need to understand your illness better, or you may want help talking with people who are being critical of your choices. If a person helps you take or remember your medications, we can make sure they understand the medication instructions. Talk with your Therapist about this, and help us work out how to help other people help you, while still respecting your privacy and your adult decisions. *(Of course, if a court has ordered your treatment, or if you have a guardian who makes decisions for you, they must be involved.)*

**9) You have the right to turn down treatment, or to get your treatment from someone other than PCA.**

If you choose to get care from PCA, you have the responsibility to participate in regular treatment, and in your Plans and Reviews. If you do not keep sessions with your Therapist, or do not meet requirements from Medicaid or other rulemakers, we will let you know this is a problem, and we may have to close your case. *(If a court has ordered you to PCA, but you want to stop or come less often, you will have to work that out with the court. If you break appointments, or leave PCA, we are required to tell the court.)*

**10) You have the right to expect to be seen on time.**

We want to honor all appointment times, except when there is an unavoidable emergency. If PCA staff waste your time, please tell us with a Client Feedback Form. ***To help us keep on schedule, it is your responsibility to use your appointment times.*** If you miss an appointment, and don't cancel in time for someone else to use it, you may have to use the walk-in clinic before you get another one. If you miss a doctor's evaluation, we may not be able to provide other services until you have seen the doctor. If you miss a medication appointment, you will probably have to wait for another appointment before you can get a refill.

***Every PCA building, program, and vehicle is tobacco-free.***

***No weapons are allowed in any PCA building, program, or vehicle.***

***Please, never bring alcohol or illegal drugs to PCA, and never give any of your medications to other people.***

***People at PCA do not use "restraint" or "seclusion."***

***What If I Disagree with a Rule?***

***What If I Have a Grievance?***

We want everybody at PCA to be fair and consistent. Support staff and treatment staff will work to arrange services so they work for you.

Our staff will do their best to help with problems and unexpected needs. But there are some policies that our staff are not able to change on their own authority, or that are required by Medicaid or by the law. If you want to ask for an exception or a change in policy, please call (501) 221-1843 to speak with our Client Advocate, or with any manager.

If you ever have a problem or conflict with anyone at PCA, we hope you will tell your own Therapist. If you don't feel comfortable doing that, or if you're not satisfied with that talk, please call PCA's Client Advocate, or send in a Client Feedback form. The Advocate will talk with you and everyone involved, and either work out a solution or make recommendations to our CEO for a decision.

If there is still a problem, you can contact **Disability Rights Arkansas** at 1-800-482-1171, or the **Arkansas Division of Behavioral Health** at (501) 686-9164.

***Please Tell Us What You Think***

We want to do "A-plus" work. In addition to their professional ethical codes, all our staff works within the PCA Code of Conduct and our Clinical Policies. Your Primary Therapist will ask you about your opinions, about how well services are working for you, and about how satisfied you are. We survey our clients anonymously at least once a year, and we may contact you after you leave PCA care. Every waiting room has a "Feedback Form" you can use at any time to give us your ideas and opinions.

*If you have questions about anything in this booklet,  
please talk with your Primary Therapist.*

**My Therapist:**

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**My Paraprofessional:**

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**My Doctor or Nurse:**

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**Appointments:**

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**Remember to ask:**

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***To help us protect your rights, it is very important to inform PCA if you have any worries about your privacy or safety, or if you are involved with any court or legal situation.***

**Tell your Primary Therapist as soon as you can, or talk with our Privacy Officer at (501) 221-1843.**

**If You Have a Mental Health Emergency...** Call any of these numbers to reach our mental health crisis team. Whenever PCA offices are closed, these numbers ring to a live operator.

**CABOT ..... 843-3503**  
**JACKSONVILLE ..... 982-7515**  
**LONOKE ..... 676-3151**  
**SHERWOOD ..... 835-4174**  
**SPRINGHILL / NLR ..... 955-7600**  
**ADMINISTRATION ..... 221-1843**

All numbers use Area Code (501)

**CALL 911 if anyone needs emergency medical help, or if anyone is in immediate physical danger.**