

NEGC

NORTHEAST GEORGIA COUNSELING, LLC

LISA P. CAMPBELL
Owner & CEO

April 1st, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

In accordance with the most recent executive orders issued by Governor Kemp, Northeast Georgia Counseling, LLC is doing everything possible to aggressively comply with Georgia's orders. As a behavioral health medical practice, our services are *essential* to those in our community. As a practice, we have moved to telehealth for all of our sessions. We have indefinitely suspended in office appointments in order to slow the spread of the disease. But, our objectives remain clear:

- To support the continuation of quality, medically necessary services and supports for consumers during this period of great change and uncertainty, recognizing the need for providers and consumers to rapidly adapt to new methods of treatment.
- To stabilize, sustain, and adapt providers to deliver services and supports tailored to the needs of Georgians in the face of the present challenge, while also readying providers for the potential lasting impacts of this pandemic.

In order to achieve these goals, state officials have aided us in broadly expanding the allowable telehealth and telephonic services across service codes, types of providers, and methods of delivery. It is assumed that the U.S. HHS Office of Civil Rights will waive potential penalties for HIPPA violations against health care providers that serve patients through non-public facing communications technologies during the COVID-19 nationwide public health emergency. They have rapidly updated clinical coverage policies to waive, to the fullest extent possible, all face-to-face provider requirements and similarly waiving all LME/MCO contract requirements that require face-to-face care coordination interventions. They are waiving prior authorization requirements within existing LME/MCO authority to be less restrictive than DHB, for medically necessary services. Further, they are allowing for verbal agreements in lieu of written signatures in every instance when acting otherwise would prohibit continuation of service. Documentation shall include that the provider has received verbal consent and agreement from the member.

As a practice, we are striving to maintain our superb ethical integrity amongst these unprecedented times. But with that said, we will be adapting and utilizing the new guidelines when necessary to continue serving our community. This is a difficult time for many, and we understand the weight this pandemic is placing on individuals everywhere. We will do everything possible to continue to see patients, accept new patients, and serve our community in it's time of need.

We want to thank all of our clients their continued support of our practice during a financially straining time for many. We also want to thank our resilient staff who are working tirelessly to adjust daily. Lastly, Northeast Georgia Counseling, LLC wants to extend their largest thank you to the healthcare workers risking their lives to keep us safe, and our condolences to those affected by this pandemic.

Sincerely,

