

Mental Illness in the Family Part 2: Finding the Right Care

If you or someone you know may benefit from mental health services, here are some questions and guidelines to help you find the right care.

Where do you go for help?

Where you go for help will depend on who has the problem (an adult or child) and the nature of the problem and/or symptoms. Often, the best place to start is to call Mental Health America at 414-276-3122 for referrals or other mental health services.

Which mental health professional is right for you?

There are many types of mental health professionals. Finding the right one for you may require some research. Often it's a good idea to first describe the symptoms and/or problems to your family, personal physician or religious leader. He or she may be able to suggest what type of mental health professional you should call.

Types of mental health professionals

Psychiatrist – medical doctor with special training in the diagnosis and treatment of mental and emotional illnesses. Like other doctors, psychiatrists are qualified to prescribe medication.

Qualifications: state license and be board eligible or certified by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology.

Psychologist – counselor with an advanced degree from an accredited graduate program in psychology, and 2 or more years of supervised work experience. Trained to make diagnoses and provide individual and group therapy.

Qualifications: state license

Clinical Social Worker – counselor with a master's degree in social work from an accredited graduate program. Trained to make diagnoses and provide individual and group counseling.

Qualifications: state license, may be member of the Academy of Certified Social Workers

Professional Counselor – counselor with a master's degree in psychology, counseling or related field. Trained to diagnose and provide individual and group counseling.

Qualifications: state license

Mental Health Counselor – counselor with a master's degree and several years of supervised clinical work experience. Trained to diagnose and provide individual and group counseling.

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What You Need to Know...



Qualifications: certification by the National Academy of Certified Clinical Mental Health Counselors

Marital and Family Therapist – counselor with a master’s degree with special education and training in marital and family therapy. Trained to diagnose and provide individual and group counseling.

Qualifications: state license

If you don’t feel comfortable with the mental health professional after the first or even several visits, talk about your feelings at your next meeting. Don’t be afraid to contact someone else. Feeling comfortable with the professional you choose is very important to the success of your treatment.

Types of Care

Psychotherapy is a method of talking face-to-face with a therapist. The following are a few of the types of available therapy:

- **Behavioral Therapy** includes stress management, biofeedback and relaxation training to change thinking patterns and behavior.
- **Psychoanalysis** is long-term therapy meant to “uncover” unconscious motivations and early patterns to resolve issues and to become aware of how those motivations influence present actions and feelings.
- **Cognitive Therapy** seeks to identify and correct thinking patterns that can lead to troublesome feelings and behavior.
- **Family Therapy** includes discussion and problem-solving sessions with every member of the family.
- **Movement/art/music Therapy** includes the use of movement, art or music to express emotions. This approach is effective for persons who cannot otherwise express feelings.
- **Group Therapy** includes a small group of people who, with the guidance of a trained therapist, discuss individual issues and help each other with problems.

For more information, contact Mental Health America of Wisconsin at 414.276.3122, or via Email: info@mhawisconsin.org.

Mental Health America is a United Way of Greater Milwaukee Agency.



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