



Brenda Knierim, MSW, LCSW

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**SECTION 1: CLIENT INFORMATION**

Name .....  
(Last) (First) (Middle)

Date of Birth ..... Social Security # .....

Mailing Address.....  
( Number/Street)

.....  
(City) (State) (Zip)

Telephone .....  
(Home) (Cell) (Work/Other)

Status:  Single  Married  Other  
 Employed  Student  Other

**HOW WERE YOU REFERRED TO INTEGRATED THERAPY ASSOCIATES:**

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**PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIAN/GROUP PRACTICE**

.....

**SECTION 2: PRIMARY INSURED'S INFORMATION - Complete if you are using insurance and you are NOT the primary on the policy. If you are the primary insured then it is not necessary to complete this section; however, we do require your signature on both lines at the bottom of the page.**

Insurance .....

Insured's I.D. # ..... Insured's Policy Group or FECA # .....

Insured's Name .....  
(Last) (First) (Middle Initial)

Insured's Date of Birth ..... Sex ..... Insured's Telephone .....

Insured's Address .....

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**SECTION 6: AUTHORIZATION – INSURANCE REQUIRES CLIENT’S SIGNATURE ON BOTH LINES**

**PATIENT’S OR AUTHORIZED PERSON’S SIGNATURE:** I authorize the release of any medical or other information necessary to process this claim. I also request payment of government benefits either to myself or to the party who accepts assignment below.

▶ **SIGNED** ..... **DATE** .....

**INSURED’S OR AUTHORIZED PERSON’S SIGNATURE:** I authorize payment of medical benefits to the therapist for services rendered.

▶ **SIGNED** ..... **DATE** .....



BRENDA KNIERIM, LCSW

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Please place a check beside any of the following issues that you are concerned about:

- |                 |                       |                          |                          |
|-----------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| depression      | anxiety               | social discomfort        | frequent crying          |
| drug use        | alcohol use           | anger                    | frequent arguments       |
| eating concerns | difficulty sleeping   | relationship problems    | perfectionism            |
| self esteem     | suicidal thoughts     | family concerns          | panic attacks            |
| stress          | worry                 | obsessions/compulsions   | disturbing thoughts      |
| childhood abuse | physical assault      | sexual assault           | sexual concerns          |
| loneliness      | sadness               | cigarette smoking        | sexual orientation       |
| discrimination  | harassment            | gambling                 | overeating               |
| racial concerns | weight concerns       | dieting                  | spiritual concerns       |
| assertiveness   | self injury (cutting) | problems communicating   | parenting concerns       |
| career concerns | financial problems    | academic difficulties    | legal problems           |
| phobias         | social isolation      | loss/grief               | low energy               |
| restlessness    | body image            | difficulty concentrating | ADHD                     |
| mood swings     | chronic pain          | post-traumatic stress    | delusions/hallucinations |

What is your main reason for coming in today?

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Have you ever been involved in any form of mental health treatment in the past? If so, please describe:

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Is there any history of mental health issues in your family? If so, please describe:

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Please list any medical conditions and/or physical symptoms that you have:

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Please list all medications that you are currently taking:

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Please describe your use of alcohol and/or drugs:

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## **PSYCHOTHERAPIST-PATIENT SERVICES AGREEMENT NORTH CAROLINA**

Welcome to Integrated Therapy Associates and my independent practice as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. This document (the Agreement) contains important information about my professional services and business policies. It also contains summary information about the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), a federal law that provides new privacy protections and new patient rights with regard to the use and disclosure of your Protected Health Information (PHI) used for the purpose of treatment, payment, and health care operations. HIPAA requires that I provide you with a Notice of Privacy Practices (the Notice) for use and disclosure of PHI for treatment, payment and health care operations. The Notice, which is attached to this Agreement, explains HIPAA and its application to your personal health information in greater detail. The law requires that I obtain your signature acknowledging that I have provided you with this information at the end of this session. Although these documents are long and sometimes complex, it is very important that you read them carefully before our next session. We can discuss any questions you have about the procedures at that time. When you sign this document, it will also represent an agreement between us. You may revoke this Agreement in writing at any time. That revocation will be binding on me unless I have taken action in reliance on it; if there are obligations imposed on me by your health insurer in order to process or substantiate claims made under your policy; or if you have not satisfied any financial obligations you have incurred.

### **ABOUT INTEGRATED THERAPY ASSOCIATES**

I work with a group of independent health and wellness professionals under the name Integrated Therapy Associates. This group is an association of independently practicing professionals who share certain expenses and administrative functions. While the members share a name and office space, I am completely independent in providing you with clinical services and am fully responsible for those services. My professional records are separately maintained and no member of the group can have access to them without your specific, written permission.

### **OUTPATIENT THERAPY SESSIONS**

Psychotherapy is not easily described in general statements. It varies depending on the personalities of the therapist and patient, and the particular problems you are experiencing. There are many different methods I may use to deal with the problems that you hope to address. I am trained to address concerns related to issues associated with behavioral problems, anxiety, depression, adjustment and a variety of other individual concerns or those related to family problems. I work with individuals and families in a collaborative process. This calls for an active effort on your part. In order for the therapy to be most successful, you will have to work on things we talk about both during our sessions and at home.

Psychotherapy can have benefits and risks. Since therapy often involves discussing unpleasant aspects of your life, you may experience uncomfortable feelings like sadness, guilt, anger, frustration, loneliness, and helplessness. On the other hand, psychotherapy has also been shown to have many benefits. Therapy often leads to better relationships, solutions to specific problems, and significant reductions in feelings of distress. But there are no guarantees of what you will experience.

**3907-110 Wrightsville Ave Wilmington NC 28403 • Phone 910-799-6162 • Fax 910-799-6171**

Our first few sessions will involve an evaluation of your needs. By the end of the evaluation, I will be able to offer you some first impressions of what our work will include and a treatment plan to follow, if you decide to continue with therapy. You should evaluate this information along with your own opinions of whether you feel comfortable working with me. Therapy involves a large commitment of time, money, and energy, so you should be very careful about the therapist you select. If you have questions about my procedures, we should discuss them whenever they arise. If your doubts persist, I will be happy to help you set up a meeting with another mental health professional for a second opinion.

## **MEETINGS**

I normally conduct an initial assessment at our first session. During this time, we can both decide if I am the best person to provide the services you need in order to meet your treatment goals. If psychotherapy is begun, I will usually schedule one 45- 50 minute session (one appointment hour of 45- 50 minutes in duration) weekly or bi-weekly - at a time we agree on, although some sessions may be longer or more frequent. **Once an appointment hour is scheduled, you will be expected to pay for it unless you provide 24 hours advance notice of cancellation [unless we both agree that you were unable to attend due to circumstances beyond your control]. It is important to note that insurance companies do not provide reimbursement for cancelled sessions.** [If it is possible, I will try to find another time to reschedule the appointment.]

## **PROFESSIONAL FEES**

My hourly fee is \$90.00. For the initial assessment (first appointment), my fee is \$130.00. In addition to scheduled appointments, I charge this amount for other professional services you may need, though I will break down the hourly cost if I work for periods of less than one hour. Other services include report writing, telephone conversations lasting longer than 15 minutes, consulting with other professionals with your permission, preparation of records or treatment summaries, and the time spent performing any other service you may request of me. If you become involved in legal proceedings that require my participation, you will be expected to pay for all of my professional time, including preparation and transportation costs, even if I am called to testify by another party.

## **CONTACTING ME**

Due to my work schedule, I am often not immediately available by telephone. While I am usually in my office between 9 AM and 5 PM, I probably will not answer the phone when I am with a patient. When I am unavailable, my telephone is answered by voice mail, or by my secretary. I will make every effort to return your call on the same day you make it, with the exception of weekends and holidays. If you are difficult to reach, please inform me of some times when you will be available. If you are unable to reach me and feel that you can't wait for me to return your call, contact your family physician or the nearest emergency room and ask for the psychologist on call. If I will be unavailable for an extended time, I will provide you with the name of a colleague to contact, if necessary.

## **LIMITS ON CONFIDENTIALITY**

The law protects the privacy of all communications between a patient and a psychologist. In most situations, I can only release information about your treatment to others if you sign a written Authorization form that meets certain legal requirements imposed by HIPAA. There are other situations that require only that you provide written, advance consent. Your signature on this Agreement provides consent for those activities, as follows:

- I may occasionally find it helpful to consult other health and mental health professionals about a case. During a consultation, I make every effort to avoid revealing the identity of my patient. The other professionals are also legally bound to keep the information confidential. If you don't object, I will not tell you about these consultations unless I feel that it is important to our work together. I will note all consultations in your Clinical Record (which is called "PHI" in my NC NASW Policies and Practices to Protect the Privacy of Your Health Information).
- You should be aware that I employ administrative staff. In most cases, I need to share protected information with these individuals for administrative purposes, such as scheduling, billing and

quality assurance. All staff members have been given training about protecting your privacy and have agreed not to release any information outside of the practice without the permission of a professional staff member.

- Disclosures required by health insurers or to collect overdue fees are discussed elsewhere in this Agreement.
- If I believe that a patient presents an imminent danger to his/her health or safety, I may be obligated to seek hospitalization for him/her or to contact family members or others who can help provide protection.

There are some situations where I am permitted or required to disclose information without either your consent or Authorization:

- If you are involved in a court proceeding and a request is made for information concerning the professional services that I provided you, such information is protected by the therapist-patient privilege law. I cannot provide any information without your written authorization, or a court order. If you are involved in or contemplating litigation, you should consult with your attorney to determine whether a court would be likely to order me to disclose information.
- If a government agency is requesting the information for health oversight activities, I may be required to provide it for them.
- If a patient files a complaint or lawsuit against me, I may disclose relevant information regarding that patient in order to defend myself.
- If a patient files a worker's compensation claim, and my services are being compensated through workers compensation benefits, I must, upon appropriate request, provide a copy of the patient's record to the patient's employer or the North Carolina Industrial Commission.

There are some situations in which I am legally obligated to take actions, which I believe are necessary to attempt to protect others from harm and I may have to reveal some information about a patient's treatment. These situations are unusual in my practice.

- If I have cause to suspect that a child under 18 is abused or neglected, or if I have reasonable cause to believe that a disabled adult is in need of protective services, the law requires that I file a report with the County Director of Social Services. Once such a report is filed, I may be required to provide additional information.
- If I believe that a patient presents an imminent danger to the health and safety of another, I may be required to disclose information in order to take protective actions, including initiating hospitalization, warning the potential victim, if identifiable, and/or calling the police.

If such a situation arises, I will make every effort to fully discuss it with you before taking any action and I will limit my disclosure to what is necessary.

While this written summary of exceptions to confidentiality should prove helpful in informing you about potential problems, it is important that we discuss any questions or concerns that you may have now or in the future. The laws governing confidentiality can be quite complex, and I am not an attorney. In situations where specific advice is required, formal legal advice may be needed.

## **PROFESSIONAL RECORDS**

The laws and standards of my profession require that I keep Protected Health Information about you in your Clinical Record. Except in unusual circumstances that involve danger to yourself and/or others or the record makes reference to another person (unless such other person is a health care provider) and I

believe that access is reasonably likely to cause substantial harm to such other person, you may examine and/or receive a copy of your Clinical Record, if you request it in writing. Because these are professional records, they can be misinterpreted and/or upsetting to untrained readers. For this reason, I recommend that you initially review them in my presence, or have them forwarded to another mental health professional so you can discuss the contents. In most circumstances, I am allowed to charge a copying fee of \$0.10 per page (and for certain other expenses). If I refuse your request for access to your records, you have a right of review, which I will discuss with you upon request.

### **PATIENT RIGHTS**

HIPAA provides you with several new or expanded rights with regard to your Clinical Records and disclosures of protected health information. These rights include requesting that I amend your record; requesting restrictions on what information from your Clinical Records is disclosed to others; requesting an accounting of most disclosures of protected health information that you have neither consented to nor authorized; determining the location to which protected information disclosures are sent; having any complaints you make about my policies and procedures recorded in your records; and the right to a paper copy of this Agreement, the attached Notice form, and my privacy policies and procedures. I am happy to discuss any of these rights with you.

### **MINORS & PARENTS**

Patients under 18 years of age who are not emancipated and their parents should be aware that the law may allow parents to examine their child's treatment records. Because privacy in psychotherapy is often crucial to successful progress, particularly with teenagers, it is usually my policy to request an agreement from parents that they consent to give up their access to your records. If they agree, during treatment, I will provide them only with general information about the progress of the child's treatment, and his/her attendance at scheduled sessions. I will also provide parents with a summary of their child's treatment when it is complete. Any other communication will require the child's Authorization, unless I feel that the child is in danger or is a danger to someone else, in which case, I will notify the parents of my concern. Before giving parents any information, I will discuss the matter with the child, if possible, and do my best to handle any objections he/she may have.

### **BILLING AND PAYMENTS**

You will be expected to pay for each session at the time it is held, unless we agree otherwise or unless you have insurance coverage that requires another arrangement. Payment schedules for other professional services will be agreed to when they are requested. In circumstances of unusual financial hardship, I may be willing to negotiate a fee adjustment or payment installment plan.

If your account has not been paid for more than 60 days and arrangements for payment have not been agreed upon, I have the option of using legal means to secure the payment. This may involve hiring a collection agency or going through small claims court which will require me to disclose otherwise confidential information. In most collection situations, the only information I release regarding a patient's treatment is his/her name, the nature of services provided, and the amount due.

### **INSURANCE REIMBURSEMENT**

In order for us to set realistic treatment goals and priorities, it is important to evaluate what resources you have available to pay for your treatment. If you have a health insurance policy, it will usually provide some coverage for mental health treatment. I will fill out forms and provide you with whatever assistance I can in helping you receive the benefits to which you are entitled; however, you (not your insurance company) are responsible for full payment of my fees. It is very important that you find out exactly what mental health services your insurance policy covers.

You should carefully read the section in your insurance coverage booklet that describes mental health services. If you have questions about the coverage, call your plan administrator. Of course, I will provide you with whatever information I can based on my experience and will be happy to help you in understanding the information you receive from your insurance company. If it is necessary to clear confusion, I will be willing to call the company on your behalf.



Due to the rising costs of health care, insurance benefits have increasingly become more complex. It is sometimes difficult to determine exactly how much mental health coverage is available. "Managed Health Care" plans such as HMOs and PPOs often require authorization before they provide reimbursement for mental health services. These plans are often limited to short-term treatment approaches designed to work out specific problems that interfere with a person's usual level of functioning. It may be necessary to seek approval for more therapy after a certain number of sessions. While much can be accomplished in short-term therapy, some patients feel that they need more services after insurance benefits end.

You should also be aware that your contract with your health insurance company requires that I provide it with information relevant to the services that I provide to you. I am required to provide a clinical diagnosis. Sometimes I am required to provide additional clinical information such as treatment plans or summaries, or copies of your entire Clinical Record. In such situations, I will make every effort to release only the minimum information about you that is necessary for the purpose requested. This information will become part of the insurance company files and will probably be stored in a computer. Though all insurance companies claim to keep such information confidential, I have no control over what they do with it once it is in their hands. In some cases, they may share the information with a national medical information databank. I will provide you with a copy of any report I submit, if you request it. By signing this Agreement, you agree that I can provide requested information to your carrier.

Once we have all of the information about your insurance coverage, we will discuss what we can expect to accomplish with the benefits that are available and what will happen if they run out before you feel ready to end your sessions. It is important to remember that you always have the right to pay for my services yourself to avoid the problems described above.

**YOUR SIGNATURE BELOW INDICATES THAT YOU HAVE READ THIS AGREEMENT AND AGREE TO ITS TERMS AND ALSO SERVES AS AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT THAT YOU HAVE RECEIVED THE HIPAA NOTICE FORM DESCRIBED ABOVE.**

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_