



SHORELINE
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES
Changing Lives, Building Hope



welcome.

Client Handbook



2404 Wise Road, Conway, SC 29526 • (843) 365-8884 • www.shorelinebhs.org



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Changing Lives, Building Hope

Shoreline Behavioral Health Services

2404 Wise Road, Conway, SC 29526
 Mailing Address: P.O. Box 136, Conway, SC 29528
 843.365.8884 • www.shorelinebhs.org



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welcome

John Coffin
Executive Director
Shoreline Behavioral Health Services

The choice to seek treatment for problem substance use is a difficult one and many people come to us with mixed feelings. They worry about the treatment process, the financial difficulties and sometimes they are not even sure if they need help with substance use problems and its effects on them and their loved ones.

If these mixed feelings describe how you feel, then we want to assure you that you have come to the right place! We have been treating people from all walks of life for more than 30 years. We are licensed by the state Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services (DAODAS) and the Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC). We are also accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF).

What do all these licenses and accreditations mean? It is your assurance that our staff are highly competent and trained to help you sort out all the issues that are unique to you. We will help you come up with a plan of care that takes into account your severity of symptoms, individual personal preferences and your level of readiness in regards to changing your life and improving your situation.

We are glad that you are here and your needs, preferences and comfort are important to us; please advise our clinical, management or office staff of any concerns that you have and if it is within our means to resolve the issue we will promptly do so.

Many have come before you with similar concerns and here is a sample of what they say about the treatment process at Shoreline:

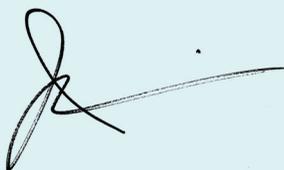
"Everyone made me feel better during a not so good point in my life! Thank You."

"The staff made this experience a lot better than I thought it would be. I really didn't want to do it, nor did I think I really needed it, but it turned out I did. I learned a lot about myself."

"I have learned so much and really have begun to trust in ways I never thought I ever would."

Once again, we are happy that you have made the decision to change your life and honored that you have chosen us to help you do it!

Sincerely,



John Coffin

CHANGING LIVES, BUILDING HOPE

Operating Hours

Monday - Thursday: 8am - 8:30pm
Friday: 8am - 5pm (Main Office)
Women's Recovery Center (WRC)
is open 24 hours

Location

2404 Wise Road, Conway, SC 29526
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 136
Conway, SC 29528
843.365.8884
www.shorelinebhs.org

Program Operations

Hours of operation and other details about each Shoreline program are posted in the main office lobby. If you have questions about the operations of any Shoreline program, you can also ask our Front Office staff at 843.365.8884 or your counselors.

Important

As a courtesy to our clients, we make every effort to finish sessions on time. If you do not have a driver's license or car, please make certain that your ride is here promptly in the evening. If minors are left without transportation when the office closes, we are forced to call the local police. We will not allow children/adolescents to wait on the premises after the office closes for safety purposes. We appreciate your cooperation.

Our Mission

Our mission at Shoreline Behavioral Health Services is to address the problem of alcohol and substance use disorders in Horry County by providing individualized, recovery based treatment and community prevention services.

Our Vision

Shoreline Behavioral Health envisions a system of care in which problems arising from the use of substances and addiction in our county are prevented using a combination of public education and early intervention strategies.

For those who develop problems with substances, often with co-occurring physical and mental health issues, timely treatment services are readily available and the different providers involved coordinate care with an array of community based, recovery oriented services. The goal of coordination is that the consumer experience is of a welcoming system that connects to community services and has a broad enough menu of assistance to accommodate multiple recovery pathways.





CONFIDENTIALITY

General information regarding your health care, including payment for health care, is protected by two Federal laws: the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), 42 U.S. C. 1320d et seq., 45 CFR, Parts 160 & 164 and the Confidentiality Law, 42 U.S.C. 290dd-2, 42 CFR, Part 2.

Under these laws, SBHS may not say to any person outside the agency that you received services through this agency, nor may this agency disclose any information identifying you as having a substance related problem, or disclose any other protected health information except as permitted by Federal laws. This agency must obtain your written consent before it can disclose information about you for payment purposes. Consents may be revoked at any time by your written signature and date on appropriate forms. For example, this agency must obtain

your written consent before we can disclose information to your health insurer in order to be paid for services. Generally, you must also sign a written consent before we can share information for treatment purposes or for healthcare operations. However, Federal law permits this program to disclose information without your written permission:

- Pursuant to an agreement with a business associate;
- For research, audit or evaluations;
- To report a crime committed on this agency's premises or against personnel of the agency;
- To medical personnel in a medical emergency;
- To appropriate authorities to report suspected child abuse or neglect;
- To appropriate authorities to anonymously, or by court order, report suspected abuse or neglect of an elderly person or a vulnerable adult; and/or as allowed by a court order

GENERAL INFORMATION

Our facilities are licensed by the SC Department of Health and Environmental Control and accredited by CARF, the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities. In order to meet the standards of these organizations, our facilities must abide by safety standards and provide a safe environment for treatment services.

During your time of treatment with SBHS, you may be involved in one or more safety drills requiring evacuation. During these drills, we ask that you follow the instructions given by the staff member in charge of your session, or Front Office staff (if you are waiting in common areas).

There are fire extinguishers and first aid kits available for emergencies; their locations are noted on our safety maps hung throughout the building. We also have an EMT kit available in our Front Office area in case of emergency. Please take time to familiarize yourself with the location of safety equipment or ask any staff member to assist you. Emergency Exits are clearly marked by lighted signs, including an exit accessed by an alarmed door in the group room treatment wing.

Our staff are trained in First Aid and CPR, and we will assist you in calling 911 should you feel the need for emergency medical assistance or are unable to call for assistance yourself.

At Shoreline Behavioral Health Services, we take the safety of our clients seriously. We are vigilant in our efforts to make sure our consumers are safe and taken care of. In addition, to protect the safety of everyone coming here, there are certain items that should not be brought into the facility. These include:

- *Weapons (including pocketknives, mace, stun guns)*
- *Drugs, alcohol or any illegal substance other than those prescribed by a physician*
- *Drug paraphernalia*

*“Ask for help, not because you are weak,
but because you want to remain strong.”*

-Les Brown



GENERAL INFORMATION CONTINUED

Conduct On Agency Premises

SBHS is a tobacco free facility. No smoking or tobacco products are allowed on any of the agency premises. When smoker's go off premises to smoke, they can create problems regarding littering on county or private property and create a hazard for motorists by wandering into the road. Horry County Police are aware of the circumstances and have been ticketing violators in the area. Please avoid this expense and legal trouble by being considerate of other's property and approaching vehicles.

Shoreline Behavioral Health does not use seclusion or restraint as part of our treatment program. Threatening behaviors, trespassing, destruction of agency property and similar behaviors are handled through 911 and/or the Horry County Police. Because of the need to ensure the safety of staff and clients, threatening behavior, including shouting and profanity, is not tolerated and may result in law enforcement intervention.

Casual dress is appropriate attire at Shoreline, but shoes and shirts should be worn at all times and the agency grounds are not to be slept on or used for sunbathing.

In order to provide you with the highest quality treatment, we ask that you not bring children to sessions unless this is prearranged with your clinician.

Please turn cell phones off prior to sessions to avoid unnecessary interruptions.

Local Transportation

Shoreline Behavioral Health Services does not provide transportation; however, we are happy to assist you in locating options available in our community. If you are referred by another agency/organization, please talk with your caseworker/agent about assistance with transportation.

If you receive Medicaid benefits, the Department of Social Services may be able to arrange transportation. Other information can be obtained by calling the Horry County Information Line (843-915-5005) and entering code 1912. This 24-hour hot line will provide callers with information related to the Public Transportation system in Horry County.

Bus service schedules and fare information are available by calling 843-488-0865 (Conway).

There are also several private taxi services that will provide transportation to our sites; please consult your local phone directory for these numbers.

Ethics

It is the policy of SBHS to ensure the protection of the rights and dignity of all clients served. A summary of the agency's Code of Ethics statement is posted in the lobby area for your review and a full copy can be obtained upon request from the front office staff or your counselor.

Phone Contact

Confidentiality is of extreme importance to our agency. Due to federal confidentiality regulations, we are unable to leave messages on any type of electronic devices for clients unless you give us permission to do so.

We ask that you keep your contact information current so that we may be able to reach you directly if there is a conflict with your scheduled session.

Community Support Groups

There are a wide range of community support groups available to help with problem substance use or addiction. Many are free of charge and our clients report to us that they are tremendously helpful. In many groups, members can be available to talk with you about issues that you may be struggling with. Talk to your counselor or ask front office staff for a list of support groups in our area..

Motor Voter Registration

Shoreline participates as a Motor Voter Registration facility. This means that if you are interested in registering to vote, all you have to do is ask your Case Manager for an application by mail. The Horry County Registration and Election Commission also require that you provide a form of identification along with your application. One of the following forms of identification must accompany your application for processing:

- *A current utility bill*
 - *Bank statement*
 - *Paycheck*
 - *Current valid photo ID*
 - *A government document showing your name and address in the county*
-

Medical Clearance

If you have certain health conditions (or as a requirement of certain insurance companies), you may be required to receive medical clearance prior to admission into a treatment program.

If medical clearance or authorization is required by your insurance carrier, please be certain to speak with a staff member in order to obtain appropriate forms. If you have not had a recent physical examination, or need low cost medical referral options, please contact your case manager.

Infectious Disease

One way that Shoreline works to protect the health and safety of our clients is to require that anyone, staff member or client, refrain from attending agency programs until the contagious stage of the illness has passed. Examples of such illnesses are common colds, flu, "stomach flu" and other viruses.

Tuberculosis is of special concern, due to the severity and long term complication of the disease and the ease of transmission. If you have symptoms that may be TB (Severe cough longer than two weeks, swollen glands, night sweats and fever), immediately get a TB Skin Test from your doctor or the local health department and notify your counselor. TB is treatable, especially when diagnosed early and proper precautions are taken to avoid infecting others.

HIV

The majority of people who are HIV positive are unaware they have been infected because they do not develop symptoms until years later. The only way to know your HIV status is to get tested. Shoreline offers free, confidential HIV testing (as well as the local health department). If you would like to receive more information or make an appointment for a test at Shoreline, please contact your counselor to make arrangements to be tested.

Hepatitis C

Hepatitis C is a liver disease that is largely transmitted through unprotected sexual activity or IV drug use. Most people have no symptoms until the virus causes liver damage, which can take 10 or more years to see visible symptoms of damage to the liver. If you have been engaged in any of the high risk activities mentioned, consider having a test for Hepatitis C done by your doctor or the local Health Department (DHEC). Again, all of these illnesses are treatable when identified early.

CLIENT RIGHTS

No client of SBHS shall be subjected to mistreatment of either a physical or psychological nature by any employee of the agency or by another client. All clients are to be treated with dignity and respect, and in accordance with the laws, both State and Federal, which may govern treatment of clients. As part of our POE paperwork, you will be asked to sign a form indicating that you have reviewed the client rights and responsibilities in this handbook. These rights will be discussed with you during your screening session.

Shoreline also welcomes client input in the form of suggestions or comments. We perform quarterly client satisfaction surveys and outcome surveys by telephone. Feel free to submit your suggestions or recommendations in our Suggestion Box (located in the lobby area) or to any staff member. We also offer focus group opportunities and working committees that involve our clients' input.



STATEMENT OF CLIENT RIGHTS

I understand I have the right to receive services in an environment that affords security, privacy, mutual respect and respect for my property.

I understand I have the right to receive services that are protected under the laws of confidentiality and to receive a Privacy Notice as well as other information concerning my rights in regard to the use, storage and disclosure of healthcare information.

I understand I have the right to receive services or referrals regardless of race, age, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, religion or creed, physical or mental handicap, marital status, pregnancy, degree of disability or personal ability to pay.

I understand I have the right to know the reasons for, or purpose of, the services provided and to consent to receiving these services.

I understand I have the right to treatment that incorporates my needs and preferences and to receive any information needed to make informed decisions concerning the services I receive.

I understand I have the right to be assessed fees that are consistent and fair and to consent in writing to such fees before services are rendered.

I understand I have the right to receive a competent and professional evaluation and treatment based on my needs, abilities and goals, including my active participation in the development of my individualized treatment plan.

I understand I have the right to express my preferences concerning the choice of case manager, counselor or other service provider and to have those preferences accommodated whenever possible.

I understand I have the right to review my clinical record on request, and to have others review it, only with my written consent, in accordance with SBHS policy and procedures.

I understand I have the right to refuse treatment or withdraw from services at any time without affecting re-entry at a later time.

I understand I have the right to be free from physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, harassment and physical punishment imposed by program employees.

I understand I have the right to be free from psychological abuse, including humiliating, threatening and exploitive action on the part of program employees.

I understand I have the right to be free from financial abuse associated with program employees holding in trust anything of value that belongs to me.

I understand I have the right to be informed of and treated in compliance with the agency's policy on seclusion, restraint, special treatment interventions and the restriction of rights. Shoreline does not engage in the practice of seclusion and restraint but may call law enforcement as necessary to intervene in situations that jeopardize the safety of clients or staff.

I understand I have the right to receive assistance from the program in facilitating access and referral to guardians, conservators, self-help groups, advocacy and legal services.

I understand I have the right to have privacy during visits unless contraindicated in the recovery and treatment process, or as ordered by a physician or other authorized healthcare provider.

I understand I have a right to be informed of the grievance/complaint procedures, and a provision prohibiting retaliation should the grievance right be exercised. 843-365-8884 / P.O. Box 136; Conway, SC 29528

I understand I have the right to have privacy during treatment and while receiving personal care.

I understand I have the right to receive respect and dignity in receiving care, treatment and services.

Withdrawal from participation in some programs prior to completion may have consequences that are beyond the control of the agency. If your participation in a program is the result of involvement with the criminal justice system, your legal status may be jeopardized by withdrawal without court, probation or parole permission. Please make certain of your individual situation before withdrawing.

No Client of SBHS will be required to participate in any research project or be filmed or photographed without their informed consent as defined by law.

CLIENT RESPONSIBILITIES

It is your responsibility to provide us with accurate and complete information. This information is vital in order to help us meet your needs appropriately. We ask that you be respectful to other clients and staff, as well as to agency property. We also ask that you participate fully in your treatment plan development and any services that are provided. Here are other client responsibilities:

I am responsible for notifying the Front Office of any changes in my address, phone number or any other changes that might affect my treatment.

I understand that I have a responsibility to treat staff and other clients in a respectful manner at all times.

I understand that if I am unable to attend a scheduled appointment that I will call at least 24 hours in advance to cancel. It is my responsibility to contact SBHS during business hours to reschedule my appointment. Messages regarding appointment cancellation can be left at Extension 210.

I understand that I will not be allowed to attend any session if I am under the influence of alcohol or any other substance (including prescription or over the counter medication) that may cause impairment. If I am prescribed new medication while participating in the program, I will immediately notify my counselor or case manager.

I understand that absences from a group for reason of illness or family death must be supported by written medical documentation or evidence. More than two absences during any group will delay my completion and may result in a reassignment to another group.

In the event of my absence from a scheduled appointment, my referral source (DSS, DJJ, Schools, PTI, PPS, etc.) will be notified if required under the circumstances of the original referral.





SERVICES

Intensive Outpatient Services - IOP

Group services are held four times per week, three hours per session. Our IOP program focuses on addiction, recovery, and skills to prevent return to use. Many individuals are decreased from four sessions per week to one session per week (called Aftercare) once the intensive phase of treatment is successfully completed.

Outpatient Counseling

Outpatient Counseling (also known as Level I services) can be delivered in many ways, including group, individual, or family sessions. Level I services are any services up to eight hours per week. Your counselor will help you develop a treatment plan that includes the number of sessions appropriate for you. Level I services focus on substance use concerns and patterns, provide knowledge on the addiction process, and expose clients to a variety of alcohol/drug related areas of concern (relationships, stress, coping, relapse prevention, anger management, parenting, and community support).

Department of Transportation (DOT) Assessments

SBHS offers evaluation, referral, and possible treatment to individuals referred due to violation of DOT Drug Policy. We have staff that are qualified as SAP (Substance Abuse Professionals) to provide this service.

Aftercare

Aftercare is a once weekly group service provided to individuals who have an existing knowledge of addiction and the skills needed for ongoing recovery. This group focuses on the recovery process, including advanced skill building strategies to promote long term abstinence from drugs or alcohol.

Women's Recovery Center

The Women's Recovery Center (WRC) is a residential treatment service operated by SBHS that provides comprehensive treatment services to women with a substance use disorder who are at risk of losing their children to foster care. The WRC's goal is to provide a healthy recovery environment, while giving residents the skills they need to remain alcohol and drug free and become better parents. Family involvement is a significant component of long term recovery, and WRC staff will encourage family involvement and support. Peer support services also are considered an integral part of the recovery process and will be provided to all residents.

WRC services include:

- *Seven days a week structured recovery living environment.*
- *Individualized treatment services with a focus on alcohol and drug education, treatment and long-term recovery.*
- *Family counseling services.*
- *Peer support and trauma recovery services.*
- *Assistance in creating a positive community support System.*
- *Referral services for work, career, education, medical, housing, social services, parenting and other services.*

COURT ORDERED SERVICES

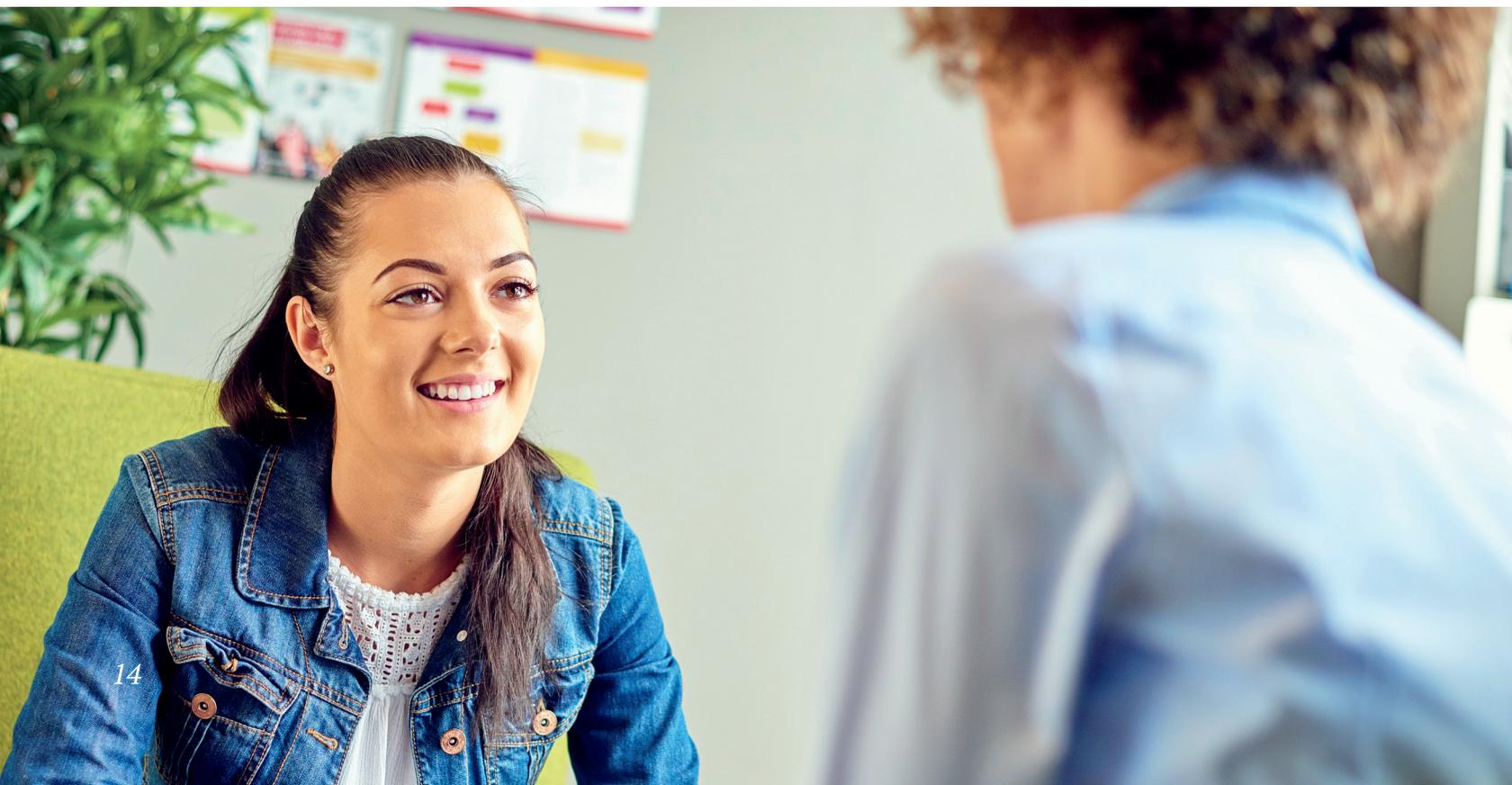
Even if you are court ordered to complete services, Federal Law requires that we obtain your written permission before we discuss your case with the legal authorities. If you are under specific requirements from a judge or program in another state, it is very important that you provide us with any court orders, drug screening requirements or special circumstances so that we may assist you in your situation. While you may experience consequences from others if you unsuccessfully complete or withdraw from our program, your involvement with SBHS remains voluntary throughout your admission. It is important that you discuss any decisions to withdraw from court ordered services with your counselor so that we may assist you in understanding the consequences that may be associated with your decision.

Prescription Medication

If your doctor has prescribed medications, please do not bring them to the agency unless you need to take your prescribed dosage during the time that you are here. Please notify your counselor if you are prescribed any of the following medications:

- Barbiturates (Phenobarbital, Seconal, etc.)
- Benzodiazepines ("Tranquilizers" such as Xanax, Valium, Klonopin)
- Amphetamines (Dexedrine, Ritalin, Adderall, etc.)
- Narcotics (Codeine, OxyContin, Vicodin, Etc.)

If you are not sure if a medication falls into one of these categories, provide the name of the medication and your counselor will be able to determine this for you. This is important because these medications will show up in drug testing results, and because these drugs have potential for addiction, we will need to verify the prescription. This can be done by providing the prescription physician, or by a note from the prescribing physician stating the medication and the dosage.





ADSAP

The South Carolina Alcohol and Drug Safety Action Program (ADSAP) is a state-wide education and treatment program designed for individuals who:

- Are convicted of Driving Under the Influence (DUI)
- Have licenses suspended due to the South Carolina Administrative License Revocation Law (ALR) - These offenses include BAC .15>, or Implied Consent (refusal to submit to breath analysis, or "Zero Tolerance" – persons under the age of 21 with a BAC .02>
- Have a Boating Under the Influence (BUI)

All persons convicted or suspended by the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) must Successfully Complete an ADSAP Program in order to regain your driving privileges. Each ADSAP client is assessed individually to determine the problem areas that contributed to the arrest. Because each ADSAP client receives individualized services, the time period for the ADSAP Program varies. While many people complete the program within a four to six-month time frame, the program may last up to one year depending on the assessed need. **(All fees must be paid prior to Successful Completion being reported to the DMV, and these fees must be paid within one year from the date of your enrollment (otherwise an Unsuccessful Completion will be rendered).**

- Out of state DUI offenders will be charged per-service, per-hour according to the Fee Agreement and services may exceed \$2,500.00.
- Out of state offenders should request that requirements from the state where the DUI occurred be forwarded to SBHS. These requirements will ensure that your services at SBHS are acceptable to another state and may expedite your placement into treatment.
- If you have been convicted of a first offense DUI, you may be eligible for a Provisional Drivers License. ADSAP staff can provide you with details as to how to apply at the Department of Motor Vehicles.

COMPLETING A PROGRAM

Prior to your discharge from services, we will assist you in the development of your Transition Plan. Should you discontinue before your services are completed, we will mail you a plan unique to your situation and needs. **When completing a program, please allow up to 10 working days for your paperwork to reach its final destination. (Remember that certain programs require payment in full before we can release your completion letter.)**



Consent for Outcome Evaluation

SBHS conducts an ongoing telephone survey within 70-110 days of discharge to improve treatment services. Your participation in this survey is strictly voluntary, however your participation may help others who are impacted by the use of alcohol and other drugs. The results of this survey are released in statistical form only and do not contain any names or other identifying information about clients. We gather client (and family, with permission) input at admission, during transition into a different level, at discharge, and after discharge (with permission). We also gather client satisfaction data at least quarterly.

Leaving the Program Before Completing Treatment

While other agencies may provide consequences for not completing treatment services, those consequences are not imposed by SBHS and voluntary withdrawal from treatment is available to any client at any time for

any reason. If you decide to withdraw from services, please notify a member of the staff for a transition plan. If you are required to complete our program and give us release to do so, we will notify your referral source of your decision to withdraw from services. In any case, we strongly suggest that you discuss your intentions to withdraw from services with your referral source.

After Hours Information

Please see information in this manual on telephone contact/services available for messages after business hours. **For emergency situations, please call 911 directly or go to the nearest hospital emergency room.** SBHS does not provide emergency hospitalization services; these requests are handled through Waccamaw Center for Mental Health and/or local hospitals. A 24-hour mental health line is available at 843-347-4888, through Waccamaw Center for Mental Health. In any emergency situation, we strongly advise using your physician or emergency trained personnel.

FEES

Fees for all services are listed on the SBHS Fee Schedule. Fees for service are due and payable in full when the service is received. Payment may be made by cash, check or credit/debit cards. Please notify the receptionist if you have Medicaid or health insurance coverage. If your Medicaid/Insurance benefits change or are discontinued while you are in treatment with us, please notify our office at once so that we can work with you on payment options.

If you are unable to pay your bill at the time of service, or if you desire to make payment arrangements, please notify the front desk staff or your counselor and we will arrange for a financial assessment of your ability to pay for services.

SBHS does not refuse services to clients who are unable pay for services. Clients who are unable to pay must provide documentation of household income by providing one of the following items:

- Most recent income tax return
- Wage statements from the Social Security Administration
- Statement from the Employment Security Commission
- Copy of paychecks with legally required information or other such information as required by Shoreline BHS

Information related to monthly expenses and monthly income from other sources are also considered. These include SSI, AFDC/Food/Housing Assistance, Child Support, Alimony, Legal Settlements and CDs/Trusts/Stocks and Bonds. Monthly expenses may be documented through receipts, cancelled checks or money order copies. A list of dependents, their ages, and others living in the household is also required.

If you are unable to meet the payment arrangement originally agreed upon, we will renegotiate with you a manageable payment plan based on your documented income. In our ADSAP program, payment in full is a legislative requirement prior to the return of your license, so extending the payment period will extend the delay in reinstatement of SC licensure. Statements are mailed monthly from SBHS to keep you informed of your total outstanding balance and you can also speak to one of our billing specialists anytime for balance information and any other questions regarding your bill.

In the event that outstanding fees are due (and no good faith effort has been made to pay for services rendered) SBHS contracts with the SC Department of Revenue to recover outstanding fees. SBHS currently participates in the Debt Setoff/ Governmental Enterprise Accounts Receivable (GEAR) Collections Programs, which are administered through the SC Department of Revenue. Failure to pay according to the established fee agreement may result in collection efforts such as setoff of state income tax refunds, garnishment of wages, levies against bank accounts and levies against savings and properties.

If you are unable to attend a scheduled appointment, we ask that you call within 24 hours to cancel your appointment. Twenty-four hours is requested in order to allow SBHS to schedule another person for the cancelled appointment time. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

COMPLAINTS, GRIEVANCES & APPEALS

If you believe that your privacy rights under HIPAA have been violated, you may complain to this agency's Privacy Officer or the Secretary of the United States Department of Health and Human Services. In this event, your complaint must be in writing and submitted to the HIPAA Privacy Officer for this agency.

Through the grievance process, you are allowed to reach all levels of management, including our Board of Officers. You will not be retaliated against for filing such a complaint. Violations of the Confidentiality law by a program are a crime. Suspected violations of the Confidentiality Law may be reported to the United States Attorney in the district in which the violation occurs.

For further information, contact the HIPAA Privacy Officer for this agency at (843) 365-8884. It is the policy of SBHS to have a process for reviewing client complaints, grievances and appeals. Any SBHS client has the right to file a complaint or grievance, and/or appeal decisions of SBHS staff utilizing the procedures in this handbook.

Complaints

There are two means of handling complaints at Shoreline BHS. One process is informal and immediate with the goal of resolving the complaint as quickly as possible. Shoreline BHS asks that clients address the complaint with their clinician or the clinician's supervisor, but, any client can access a representative of Executive Management or Board Member. At any point during the informal or formal complaint process, the client is entitled to bring an advocate or request one from Shoreline BHS.

Formal complaints/grievances are issues of a more serious and complex nature that require timelines and appropriate documentation. The agency or the client can decide at what point to begin the complaint procedure. Any client that has a complaint regarding services received at SBHS can discuss with his/her Counselor or Case Manager (Step One). Every effort will be made by staff members to be sensitive to the concerns of client's preferences, using professional judgment related to treatment issues (within legal and regulatory requirements).

If the complaint is not resolved with the counselor/case manager, the client can request a scheduled or immediate conference with the SBHS Treatment Director (Step Two). If the complaint is not resolved in Step Two, the client may make a formal request for resolution to the SBHS Executive Director. The request should include a description of the issue and what the complainant recommends as a fair course of action to resolve the concern. The Executive Director will respond in writing within 10 days. If the final resolution remains unsatisfactory see the appeals procedure on the next page.



Grievances

A grievance (defined as violations of client rights, allegations of fraud, waste or abuse, and/or allegations of staff misconduct/ethical violations), must be placed in writing and submitted to the Director of Treatment Services (Step One). The Treatment Director will acknowledge the grievance within five working days after receipt of the written request and schedule a hearing with the client in a timely fashion. If the matter is not settled to the client's satisfaction, the grievance may be forwarded to the Executive Director for resolution (Step Two). The Executive Director will schedule a conference with the client within ten working days. If the matter is not settled at this level, the original documentation will be presented by the Executive Director to the SBHS Board of Officers at the next regularly scheduled meeting of that governing body. The client will be given the opportunity to present the grievance to the Board Chairman or his/her designee. In all cases, the decision of the Board is final within the organization's internal grievance procedures. Clients who remain dissatisfied with the response of the agency will be provided with information on how to make a complaint to state or federal regulatory authorities.



Appeals

All appeals must be directed, in writing, to the appropriate staff person. Any staff supervisor will gladly assist clients who are uncertain about the staff in charge of their appeal. ADSAP appeal information is reviewed with all ADSAP clients during the intake process as a part of the ADSAP rules and regulation. For clients not participating in ADSAP services, or for clients wishing to appeal a complaint decision, the wish for appeal should be submitted in writing to the attention of the Treatment Director. In all cases, the appeal must be post-marked or hand delivered to the organization no later than the 31st day following the client's termination from services. The appeal must contain the following information:

- On what grounds the client is appealing;
- Evidence that the unsuccessful completion or previous action was inappropriate or unsatisfactory.
- Special circumstances that may have related to the unsuccessful completion or appeal.
- The appeals process will follow the steps for submission to the Executive Director and Board of Officers, as outlined in the *Grievance* section.



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