



BIRMINGHAM GROUP
Health Services, Inc.

Handbook

Providing Hope...Changing Lives

Mission

The mission of Birmingham Group Health Services, Inc. is to improve the health and quality of life of individuals by providing mental health, addiction and domestic violence services.

Core Values

Quality

Outcome oriented, culturally sensitive services provided by qualified and competent staff.

Recovery

Person-centered services that promote the dignity and self-sufficiency of the person.

Respect

Consideration for the needs and interests of others and contributing to the spirit of teamwork and sharing.

Community

Partnering to improve health and safety.

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Welcome to Birmingham Group Health Services, Inc.

The services and treatment offered at Birmingham Group Health Services, Inc. (BGHS) are designed to assist you in developing and fully using your individual strengths and resources so that you can successfully work and live independently in the community. You will be given the opportunity to choose from an array of services that best fit your needs and particular interests. Staff will help you to determine your special goals and then assist you to put together an individualized service plan so that you can reach these goals.

This handbook contains basic information to help you become familiar with BGHS and its services. Please feel free to ask questions.

**BEST WISHES TO YOU AS YOU WORK TO
REACH YOUR PERSONAL GOALS!**

What You Can Expect From Us...

You can expect that we will treat you with courtesy and respect at all times;

You can expect that we will not discriminate against you because of your race, ethnicity, religious beliefs, gender, sexual orientation, age or disability. BGHS services are available to all eligible individuals;

You can expect that you will be the key person making decisions about your services;

You can expect that we will listen and respond to any complaints that you may have about your services or about the conduct of a staff member (specific instructions are included at the back of this handbook);

You can expect that your confidentiality will be protected. Uses and disclosures of your protected health information and your privacy rights are explained in the Birmingham Group Health Services, Inc. Notice of Privacy Practices.

You can expect to have the primary role in any decision regarding when to end services;

You can expect that we will encourage you to provide us input directly about your services. This input is used to make BGHS more responsive to your needs and expectations. Furthermore, it helps us know about the quality of care you are receiving and if there are any recommendations for improvement. You can provide input in a variety of ways: Consumer surveys, Case Reviews, focus groups, Enlightened Lunches or participation on a BGHS advisory committee. The CEO/management team will review your input because we take what you have to say very seriously!

What We Will Expect From You...

We expect that you will be an active participant in all aspects of your services; that you will be on time for your appointments and regular in attendance, notifying staff if you will be late or unable to keep an appointment.

We expect that you will treat others with respect and courtesy.

We expect that you will not be intoxicated or impaired when you come to any BGHS appointment, meeting, group, or sponsored activity. We also expect that you will not demonstrate any threatening or intimidating behaviors (verbal or physical); that you will not steal from anyone or destroy or vandalize any property; and that you will not make inappropriate sexual, physical or personal advances to any other person on the premises.

If you are participating in criminal activity or your behavior towards other(s) is abusive, threatening, harassing, or assaultive, or you are presently intoxicated or impaired, you will be asked to leave the premises. A staff member will discuss with you when you can return and under what circumstances.

Since all services are voluntary, you may withdraw at any time, but we expect that you will notify us of your intent and schedule a final appointment; and

We hope that you will actively participate in our continuous efforts to improve the quality of our services by sharing your ideas with us.

Service Planning

At admission, you will meet with a clinician/counselor who will conduct an extensive interview with you to learn about your needs, your personal history, prior treatment/hospitalizations, strengths and abilities. This information will be used to develop your treatment/recovery plan - a document that describes and lists your goals. The plan is yours and should be expressed in your words. It will say what you want to accomplish by attending BGHS. With staff, you determine which goals you want to work on and when.

We will encourage you to be an active participant in the service planning process. Treatment/service plans will be reviewed regularly with you to update your progress and address any barriers to care.

Confidentiality

We take confidentiality very seriously and we respect your right to privacy. Unless allowed by law, your medical records and protected health information cannot be disclosed without your written permission. You can expect that your confidentiality will be protected and that BGHS adheres to all Connecticut and Federal confidentiality laws and statutes. A complete explanation of BGHS privacy practices can be found in our Notice of Privacy Practices. You will receive a copy during the admission process.

We also expect you to respect the privacy and confidentiality of other program participants. Please do not share information about other people you may know at Birmingham Group Health Services, Inc. without their permission.

Opportunities for Families

With your permission, your family members may participate in your service planning process, case reviews or therapy sessions, as appropriate.

Peer/Family Advisory Council

BGHS offers a monthly meeting for peers, family and friends of persons with mental illness or substance abuse issues. The meetings focus on providing education, information regarding services and resources within our community, and support. For more information, contact the BGHS Peer/Family Educator at (203) 736-2601.

NAMI (National Alliance for the Mentally Ill) Connecticut, Inc.

NAMI-CT offers support, education and advocacy to people living with psychiatric conditions, family members, friends, professionals and the public at large.

For more information about chapter locations and meetings, contact the NAMI-CT toll-free Helpline: 1-800-215-3021 or www.nami.org.

General Information

Hours of Operation

BGHS regular hours of operation are: Monday through Friday, 8:30 am – 5:00 pm.

The Outpatient Clinic is open Monday through Friday as follows:

Monday and Wednesday	8:00 am – 8:00 pm
Tuesday	8:00 am – 6:00 pm
Thursday	8:00 am – 7:00 pm
Friday	8:00 am – 5:00 pm

Many BGHS services offer flexible scheduling (evening hours, weekend hours) to meet the specific needs of participants.

Holidays/Closures

BGHS outpatient services are closed on the following holidays:

New Year's Day	Memorial Day	Veteran's Day
Martin Luther King Day	Independence Day	Thanksgiving Day
Presidents' Day	Labor Day	Day after Thanksgiving
Good Friday	Columbus Day	Christmas Day

Weather Closures/Cancellations

Agency closures will be posted on television (WTNH-TV, Channel 8) and radio (STAR 99.9 FM). If possible, you should all BGHS to confirm your appointment.

General Information *(continued)*

Fire Drills

1. Fire drills may be conducted at any time at any BGHS facility.
2. Each BGHS facility will provide you with specific information about how to evacuate from the building. Evacuation information will also be posted in every building.
3. When you hear a loud signal or an announcement to leave the building, you must evacuate the building immediately through the nearest available exit. Fire Safety monitors and other staff will be available to assist you.
4. You should move away from the building quickly and gather in the nearest parking lot/driveway for a head count. Everyone is asked to stay clear of fire trucks and other official vehicles.

First Aid Kits/CPR

First-aid kits and protective gloves are available at all program sites and the Valley Social Club. There are staff at each BGHS facility that are certified in CPR techniques and first aid training.

Parking

Parking for appointments is available on the street or in nearby parking lots. If you have a handicapped parking permit or license plate, you may use designated spaces located at the rear of the BGHS building located on East Main Street.

Smoking

To protect the health and welfare of all program participants and staff, smoking is not permitted in any BGHS building or agency vehicle. Smoking is only permitted in designated areas outside of each building. Staff can direct you to the appropriate area.

General Information *(continued)*

Alcohol and Drugs

Alcohol is not permitted on the premises of any BGHS facility. The only drugs permitted are over-the-counter medications and medications prescribed by a physician. We expect you, however, to follow common safety procedures and not allow anyone else to use or have access to your medication. Anyone who has illicit drugs in his or her possession will be asked to leave the premises and informed that the police will be notified.

Weapons

All weapons are expressly forbidden on the premises of any BGHS building. If you have a weapon, you will be asked to leave the premises and informed that the police will be notified.

Emergency Interventions

As a community-based outpatient/residential services organization, Birmingham Group Health Services, Inc. does not place individuals in seclusion or restraint. The only exception is a situation that requires self-defense and this is used as a last resort. However, should an individual be out of control and/or dangerous, we will contact the proper authorities – for example, the police and/or ambulance – in order to provide and maintain a safe environment.

Services That Are Not Available

- We do not provide housekeeping or laundry services. Staff assistance with these tasks will only be offered as a learning /skill building opportunity.
- We will not take care of personal hygiene activities for you.
- We do not provide one-to-one staff supervision for extended periods of time.
- We do not provide long-term storage of personal belongings.

Restrictions On Services

Individuals are welcome to fully participate in all activities and services offered by Birmingham Group Health Services, Inc.. Everyone is expected to treat others with respect and to participate in an appropriate manner.

Under certain circumstances, individuals may be asked to leave a service or activity for a specified period of time. These circumstances include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- Presenting while intoxicated;
- Possessing illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia;
- Physically or verbally intimidating, abusing, or threatening someone else (clients or staff);
- Stealing property;
- Vandalizing or destroying property;
- Participating in criminal activity;
- Making inappropriate sexual, physical or personal advances to others (clients or staff);
- Other behaviors that are disruptive, destructive, or designed to prevent normal activities from occurring as planned.

Asking someone to leave is a serious act and will not be undertaken lightly. Before asking an individual to leave, staff will confer with the program's supervisor or director. You will be told clearly why you are being asked to leave and when you can return. The conditions under which you can return will also be clearly spelled out.

Regaining Privileges That Have Been Restricted

If you are asked to leave the premises and/or your rights and privileges to participate in BGHS activities and services have been restricted, you will be informed about the conditions which must be met in order to regain those rights and privileges.

If you are a member of the Social Club the following process applies:

The Social Club Executive Committee will determine if you are to be suspended from the Club and its activities – and for how long. The Executive Committee will establish the conditions for return and inform you in writing. These conditions should address the reasons your privileges were suspended.

If you are enrolled in any BGHS service, the following process applies:

Your treatment team will review the situation and present recommendations to the Clinical Director, the VP-Services and the CEO. The recommendations will contain the conditions you must meet in order to return. These conditions will address the reasons your privileges were suspended.

How to Make a Formal Complaint

You have the right to file a complaint without fear of retaliation or termination of services. If you feel that your rights have been violated, that a staff member's behavior has been inappropriate, or if you disagree with a decision about your services, you may contact the Client Rights Officer for Birmingham Group Health Services, Inc. She will discuss your concerns with you and help you file a formal complaint, if you wish to do so.

- The first thing that you will be encouraged to do is to talk with the staff person involved and/or program coordinator to try to resolve the problem. If this is difficult for you, you may ask a friend, family member or advocate to help you. If the problem is not immediately resolved to your satisfaction, you may request a meeting with the program director.
- If you wish to file a formal complaint, you will be asked to put your complaint in writing. If you are unable to do this, or if you require some help, you may ask any staff person to assist you. The Client Rights Officer can also help you complete this form during your meeting with her.
- You may ask another person to assist you with the complaint process. With your written permission, this person may be present with you at all meetings and receive copies of any records used during the meetings and a copy of the final outcome. BGHS will provide you with information and referrals regarding advocacy support services and/or legal representation, as requested.
- Upon receiving your written complaint, the Client Rights Officer will conduct a full investigation. She will talk with you to obtain all of the details, and then will talk with all others involved. The outcome of the investigation will be shared with you, in person and in writing, within ten working days from the date it was received.

How to Make a Formal Complaint *(continued)*

- If your services are funded by the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, you may appeal the Client Rights Officer's decision, in writing, to the designee in the Commissioner's office. If the designee's decision results in the denial, involuntary reduction, or termination of services, you may request a Commissioner's Fair Hearing. The Client Rights Officer will assist you with any of these procedures.
- If your services are funded by other Departments, the Client Rights Officer will assist you to locate and utilize the appropriate channels for appeal of any decision.
- Finally, please remember that it is a primary goal of Birmingham Group Health Services, Inc. and its staff that you be completely satisfied with our services. Any complaints will be respected and heard promptly.

Important Phone Numbers

Birmingham Group Health Services
24-Hour Crisis Response
(203) 736-2601

Birmingham Group Health Services
Administrative Offices
(203) 736-2601

Birmingham Group Health Services
Outpatient Clinic
(203) 736-2601
(203) 736-2905

Birmingham Group Health Services
Community Support Services
Employment Services
Social Rehabilitation Services
Supportive & Supervised Housing
Programs
(203) 736-2601

Howe Avenue Residential Program
(203) 924-4828

ABI Residential Program
(203) 734-7405

The Umbrella
Family Violence Services
(203) 736-2601

The Umbrella
Family Violence Hotline
24-Hour Crisis Response
(203) 736-9944

Valley Substance Abuse
Action Council (VSAAC)
(203) 736-8566

Valley Social Club
(203) 735-9106

Community Warm Line
(203) 732-2004

NAMI (National Alliance for the
Mentally Ill) - Connecticut, Inc.
1-800-215-3021

You can also visit us on the web:
www.bghealth.org

Or e-mail us at:
info@bghealth.org

Notes:

Notes:



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203/736-2601 Fax: 203/736-2641
435 East Main Street Ansonia, CT 06401
www.bghealth.org E-mail: info@bghealth.org