Referral FAQs

**How do I find a therapist?**

If you are working with a Referral Coordinator at CAPS [1], they will get you started by providing a targeted list of referrals.

There are also ways to identify potential providers on your own. You might ask family, friends, or your medical provider for suggestions.

You may also call your health insurance company (or go to your health insurance website) to get a list of local providers who are in-network for your insurance company.

Finally, there are some search engines to sort providers by various categories (specialty areas, location, etc).


*(The above link does not provide an exhaustive list of qualified providers, and does not constitute our endorsement of the providers listed).*

It is important to choose a provider who is licensed to provide therapy. Providers with the following types of titles/licenses are able to provide therapy:

- Psychiatrists (MD)
- Psychologists (PhD, PsyD)
- Clinical Social Workers (MSW, LCSW)
- Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists (LMFT)
- Licensed Professional Counselors (LPC)
- Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP-BC)

Psychiatrist and Nurse Practitioners are often able to prescribe medication in addition to provide therapy. Psychologists are often able to provide psychoeducational evaluations in addition to therapy.

**How do I know if the therapist I’ve found is a good fit?**

The success of therapy is strongly related to the strength of the relationship you develop with your therapist. Factors that determine fit include personality, theoretical approach and style of therapy. For these reasons, people often shop around for a therapist. Questions to ask yourself after speaking with a potential therapist include: Do I feel comfortable working with this
person? Do I feel like they are able to understand me (or at least are working to understand me)?
Do I believe they can be helpful to me?

How much will therapy cost?

Often, students decide to use their health insurance to help cover the cost of therapy, so in that
case, cost is largely determined by your health insurance coverage. A typical co-pay (amount you
would pay per session) is around $30. If you would like to gather more information related to your
plan, call the customer service number on your health insurance card and ask: What are my
benefits for outpatient mental health therapy? They will give you information about your co-pay,
and your deductible (if you have one). Don’t be afraid to ask them follow-up questions. (What is
a deductible? How much of my deductible have I already met?). If you would like assistance
navigating your insurance benefits, please feel free to schedule a Referral Coordination
appointment [1].

If you are a student with the UNC system BCBS plan, here is a link that outlines benefits:


If you are an RA/TA with the BCBS plan, here is a link that outlines benefits:


Sometimes students don’t want to use their health insurance, or they have high co-pays or
deductibles. There are a good number of providers in the area (and even some on-campus
resources) that offer sliding scale fees that adjust based on your financial situation. If you have
already identified a provider you would like to work with, you could ask them if they offer sliding
scale fees for students.

Therapy can be vital to one’s well-being, or at least life enhancing. Some students find ways to
re-prioritize their budgets to allow for treatment. At the same time, the Chapel Hill/Triangle area is
rich with providers and resources. If you want to participate in therapy, and finances are the sole
obstacle getting in the way, schedule a Referral Coordination appointment [1] to explore your
options.

Source URL: https://caps.unc.edu/services/referral-support/referral-faqs

Links
[1] https://caps.unc.edu/services/referral-coordination