

Volunteer Rules & Guidelines

Thank you for volunteering your time to help serve the wounded warriors of Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, Bethesda, MD. Your service to Psychiatry Continuity Service’s partial hospitalization program enables our staff to provide quality therapeutic opportunities that some wounded warriors may not otherwise experience. We hope your experience of serving will be beneficial and successful for both you and the service members. We ask that you read below to familiarize yourself with our patient population, common symptoms and behaviors, and most importantly the volunteer code of ethics.

Our Patient Population:

Although not possessing “physical” wounds, our service members have wounds that may be less obvious. For these reasons, please keep in mind that our service members are working toward improving their overall emotional and mental well-being.

Common Symptoms and Behaviors you may see:

Avoidance of large crowds and people, withdrawn behavior, isolation and minimal verbal engagement; easily frustrated, angry and irritated, “on edge”; difficulty concentration and focusing; easily startled by loud noises; low energy, low mood and little interest in the given activity, anxiety, difficulty controlling emotions, flashbacks (certain sights, smells or sounds may bring back memories of a traumatic event).

“Volunteer Code of Ethics”:

- Using, possessing or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs will not be tolerated and is prohibited, as well as verbal communication and physical display of alcohol topics (ie: happy hour invites, logo shirts/hats). Many of our service members have difficulties with substances.
- **Refrain from taking any pictures of the service members. Media and newspaper coverage is strictly prohibited.**
- Use positive techniques of guidance, including positive reinforcement and encouragement rather than competition, comparison or criticism
- Dress appropriately and conservatively
- Refrain from any sort of personal touch or coming up to a service member from behind since this may intolerable for them. If touch is required as part of session (eg. Safety, correction of form, adjusting equipment, etc.), we ask volunteers to communicate where contact is needed, ask permission prior to contact, and discuss purpose of contact.
- Do not exchange personal contact information, money, or gifts with the service members.
- At all times, portray a positive role model for service members by maintaining an attitude of respect, loyalty, patience, integrity, courtesy, tact and maturity.
- The **Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA)** is a multifaceted piece of legislation covering patient confidentiality and protection of health information. HIPAA privacy regulation is not limited to health information that is maintained or transmitted electronically, but also information conveyed on paper or via the **spoken word**. Privacy and confidentiality are of the utmost importance to foster a therapeutic environment.

Violating the volunteer code of ethics can result in inappropriate relationships with patients, breach in privacy and confidentiality, or physically/emotionally unsafe environments. Psychiatric Continuity Services will terminate the relationship with any organization that does not abide by the volunteer code of ethics.

Organization

Representative Signature

Date