

Possible Questions for Mental Health Professional

Reaching out to a Health Care Professional for Mental Health can be a little overwhelming. Don't be afraid to ask questions at your first appointment to decide if they will work for you. Here is a checklist of common questions. Decide which ones are most important to you and bring them with you.

Please Note: It is always recommended to see your family doctor in addition to your Mental Health Professional. Some LTD claims have been denied as the member was only seeing a psychologist and not their family doctor.

Provider Specific

- How long have you been practicing? How long have you worked in this field?
 - What licenses and certifications do you have? What kind of therapy do you offer?
 - What are your areas of expertise?
 - Do you accept WSIB patients?
 - Do you have a particular approach, expertise or training?
 - What experience do you have treating people with my condition or similar circumstances to my own?
 - Have you worked with police officers/partners before? If so, how long and what proportion of your caseload have been/are officers or military members or partners?
 - Are you a racialized person or have experience living as a minority member of a community?
 - I am here because X (e.g. I am feeling stressed, I'm having panic attacks, I lost a person close to me, I think I might be depressed, etc.), and I'm having trouble (at work, at home, in social situations, sleeping, etc.). What type of training or clinical experiences have you had in treating the kinds of problems I am having (mood problems, anxiety, sleep difficulties, etc.)?
 - Do you deal directly with my insurance plan or do I need to?
 - Are you willing to communicate with my other doctors and therapists to coordinate care?
 - Are you more directive or more guiding?
 - If you are a counselor or psychotherapist, are you supervised by a psychologist? (this is required for Coughlin and WSIB to pay for services)
 - If my employer requires documentation to support my absence or accommodation, do you write to them directly? How does this process work and what information would you supply to my employer?
-

Appointments

- How hard is it to schedule an appointment?
- Are you currently conducting appointments in-person? By video? By phone?
- What times are you available to see me?

- How often do you recommend seeing me?
 - What is your cost for service?
 - What happens if I need to cancel or change an appointment? Is there a fee?
 - If you work with other members from OPS, do you have any procedures in place to ensure I won't run into someone I know from work (ie. booking appointments not back to back)?
-

After Hours

- How hard is it to contact you outside of business hours?
 - Do you charge for non-emergency consults after hours?
 - Will I be able to contact you in an emergency?
 - Do you have an off-site receptionist during off-hours to assist me in the case of an emergency?
 - If you aren't available, is there someone who is "on call"?
-

Appointment Time

- What can I expect during a typical appointment? How long will it last?
 - Will I get time to ask questions?
 - Will you be asking about other elements of my life?
 - Do I have to talk about things I do not want to?
-

Therapy/Treatment

- What are the risks and benefits associated with my treatment?
- How soon could I expect to see signs of feeling better?
- What type of treatments do you use? How effective are they in dealing with situations similar to mine? How do you know if treatment is working, and what do you do when it doesn't work?
- What are the chances that treatment will succeed?
- How will we assess my progress?
- What should I do if I don't feel better?
- How long will my therapy sessions last?
- What will my treatment plan look like?
- What should I work on this week?
- If there is anything you don't understand, ask for clarification. Can you explain that to me?

- Is everything I tell you confidential? In what cases would you break confidentiality?
-

Medication (only Psychiatrists can prescribe medication)

- Are there going to be side effects to my medication?
- Are there alternative treatments that would be beneficial to recovery?
- Will symptoms return in the future? What will the warning signs be?