



# **BENTEH WELLNESS**

## CENTER

Participant Handbook

2024

## Table of Contents

Introduction .....	4
• Vision.....	4
• Mission.....	4
Philosophy.....	4
Access and Information .....	5
Orientation and Expectations of Participants.....	5
Personal Belongings.....	5
Medication .....	5
Cell Phones.....	5
Housekeeping .....	5
Transportation .....	6
Services Provided.....	6
Program Expectations.....	7
Attendance.....	7
Cancellation/No Show of an Appointment.....	7
Privacy.....	7
Snacks and Beverages.....	8
Violations of General Program Rules.....	8
Program Health and Safety.....	8
Emergency and Evacuation Information.....	8
Tobacco Products, Alcohol, and Illicit Drugs.....	8
Restricted Items .....	8
Children: Minors under 18.....	9
Anger, Violence, and Threats of Violence.....	9
Inappropriate Sexual Conduct .....	9
Guardianship.....	10
Infections and Communicable Diseases .....	10
Notice of Privacy Practices.....	10
How BWC May Use and Disclose Information.....	11
For Treatment .....	11
For Payment.....	11

Medical Privacy Rights .....	11
Health Information Rights.....	12
Your Individual Rights and Responsibilities as a Participant.....	13
Responsibilities .....	14
Participant Grievance Procedure .....	15
Informal Concern(s) .....	15
Formal Grievance(s).....	15
Program Changes .....	15
Meet the Clinical Staff.....	16
Definitions.....	17
Standards .....	17

## Introduction

Knik Tribe acknowledges the importance of supporting the mental health of young people in the Mat-Su Valley. To address these needs, Knik Tribe has established the Community Behavioral Health Services Department at the Benteh Wellness Center (BWC).

This department is dedicated to meeting the mental and emotional needs of youth, young adults, and their families through various programs. At the BWC, individuals can access assessments, psychotherapy (including treatment for co-occurring disorders), case management, skill development, and other programs designed specifically for youth.

The overarching goal of these programs is to encourage compassion, empowerment, self-trust, and healthy relationships. Additionally, the BWC aims to promote the development of self-awareness, humility, and joy. The duration of each program is tailored to the needs of the individual and their family, guided by best practices and a commitment to ethical service delivery. Knik Tribe remains dedicated to creating a community where the mental well-being of our youth is a top priority.

All Benteh Wellness Center programs align with the organizational philosophy, which is:

- **Vision**— To create communities free from the widespread effects of trauma, such as suicide, child abuse/neglect, and substance misuse. We strive to foster family strengths, establish robust community support systems, and provide compassionate, person-centered care that empowers individuals to discover their true social, personal, and community identity.
- **Mission**— To cultivate resilience and empower young individuals by providing comprehensive behavioral health services. Our mission is to address the diverse needs of children, adolescents, and their families through assessments, therapy, case management, skill development, and youth-centered programs. Through collaboration and support, we strive to create lasting positive change in self and community.

## Philosophy

Benteh Wellness Center’s program philosophy revolves around a theory of change based in compassion and connection. Behavioral health is a complex and multidimensional issue with various pathways to improving mental and emotional wellbeing. BWC delivers compassionate, participant-centered care by improving the well-being of the whole individual, family, and community. We foster healing through professional and ethical therapeutic relationships built on empathy, acceptance, and encouragement. Integrating Alaska Native cultural and traditional knowledge with evidence-based, comprehensive therapeutic models, BWC walks with participants on a path to strong and meaningful connections with their culture and identity. We also provided skill development for healthy relationships with adults and peers, and facilitate and increase in self-awareness, self-trust, humility, joy, and a shared sense of community.

## Access and Information

- Referral sources include: The State of Alaska; in-state and out-of-state and behavioral health programs/medical providers agencies; and self-referrals.
- After hour crisis response services are located at Mat-Su Regional Emergency Department located at 2500 South Woodworth Loop, Palmer Alaska. They can also be reached at 907-861-6000. Additional crisis lines include:
  - Adult Protective Services: 800-478-9996
  - Alaska Family Services: 866-746-4080
  - Child Abuse Reporting Hotline: 800-478-4444
  - Mental Health & Suicide Prevention: Text **4 Help** to 839863
- Sources of funding for the Benteh Wellness Center may include: Medicaid, private insurance, and self-pay. A sliding-fee scale is used to identify appropriate fees to bill you if self-pay is the payment of choice.
- Operating hours are Monday through Friday 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

## Orientation and Expectations of Participants

### Personal Belongings

- You are responsible for your personal items, such as backpacks, purses, writing utensils, and books. BWC is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

### Medication

- Please make attempts to leave any needed medication at home or in your vehicle rather than bringing into the program. If it is necessary to have them for your immediate use, they should not leave your possession at any time.

### Cell Phones

- During group and individual sessions, please turn your phone to silent or completely turn off. On rare occasions, it may be necessary to take an important call during a session. Please get prior approval if expecting an important call.

### Housekeeping

- You are responsible for discarding all personal cups, papers, tissues, etc., used during your time in the Benteh Wellness Center. The group rooms, offices, and waiting areas are to be free of your trash and other items before you leave the building. You are asked to assist in keeping the restrooms clean and sanitary by appropriately discarding of all litter and paper products. Please alert employees if any problems arise.

## Transportation

- You are responsible for making your own transportation arrangements to and from the Benteh Wellness Center. Due to confidentiality and safety concerns, guests providing transportation for after business hour services will not be allowed to wait in the building.

## Services Provided

- BWC provides individual psychotherapy, group psychotherapy, family counseling, case management, community recovery support services, home based services, and psychosocial assessments. The need for services and frequency of services will be determined at intake, and are provided face-to-face. Services are provided in the clinic, or in the community if the need is determined. Services are provided by a Master's level clinician, Behavioral Health Aides, Case Manager, or any combination of providers.
- BWC provides access and support in utilizing community resources through case management services such as,
  - Legal Representation/Legal Help
  - Primary & Specialist Medical Care
  - Education/Employment
  - Childcare
  - Financial/Housing
  - Specialized Behavioral Health Care
- Treatment modalities utilized include:
  - Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)
  - Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT)
  - Expressive Arts
  - Internal Family Systems (IFS)
  - Play Therapy
  - Sand Tray Therapy
  - Trauma focused reprocessing approaches (EMDR and Brainspotting)

- BWC is a training facility. Sessions may be shadowed by interns with your consent, or shadowed for quality review by the Clinical Supervisor. Chart reviews are conducted monthly, and are chosen at random.

## Program Expectations

### Attendance

- You are expected to attend all scheduled groups and individual sessions as addressed in your treatment plan. You may not enter a group therapy session after it has started, and the door is closed. You are encouraged to take restroom breaks prior to your sessions and leave only when necessary.
- Sessions are expected to start on time, and any arrival after five minutes of the session start time may be turned away due to non-compliance; this late arrival will be considered a no show and may be subjected to the cancellation/no show expectation outlined in the next session.
- You may be discharged after one month if you have not attended an appointment, unless specified as part of your planned treatment.

### Cancellation/No Show of an Appointment

- If you are unable to attend a scheduled appointment, or it is necessary to cancel your appointment, please contact the Benteh Wellness Center front desk at (907) 671-6871 as soon as possible to reschedule. BWC understands that emergencies arise; however, repeated cancellations or no shows may indicate that this is not the right time for services and will be discussed with your directing clinician.
- Three missed or cancelled appointments in a one month period may result in discharge from services.

### Privacy

- It is expected that Participant's will have privacy, this includes that sessions will not be recorded without permission, and the use of apps or devices will not be used for the purpose of listening/observing sessions.

## Snacks and Beverages

- Healthy eating is an important part of well-being and we encourage you to choose healthy and nutritious food items if you bring them to your session. Please do not bring food to share with the group as it creates a distraction during group sessions, and we are sensitive to participants who may have special diets and/or food and weight issues.

## Violations of General Program Rules

- Program rule violations will result in a conversation with your clinical team. Upon violation, the best course of action will be determined to match your treatment needs/journey and the safety and well-being of yourself and others. The clinical director is consulted for all final decisions regarding administrative discharge.

## Program Health and Safety

### Emergency and Evacuation Information

- Notification to employees and participants of emergencies and evacuation events will be announced by alarm. Evacuation will be directed by program employees following established emergency exits. Emergency exit plans are located in each office and room in the Benteh Wellness Center. All employees and participants will proceed in a calm and orderly fashion. First aid kits are in the program (at the front admin desk and employee break room) and accessible to all employees.

### Tobacco Products, Alcohol, and Illicit Drugs

- BWC is a tobacco-free environment. It is the policy of BWC to provide a safe, chemical-free environment. There will be no use of tobacco products including e-cigarettes, other electronic products, vapes, chew, alcohol, and/or drugs on BWC property.

### Restricted Items

- The following items are prohibited from your possession and are not allowed to be carried into the buildings: firearms, ammunition, or weapons of any kind



including knives, carving tools, mace or pepper spray, illegal drugs and drug paraphernalia, alcoholic beverages, and any other illegal or inappropriate over-the-counter substances such as bath salts. Legal drugs will be addressed by the clinical team to ascertain appropriateness while in treatment.

### Children: Minors under 18

- BWC is responsible for maintaining a safe and secure environment for you and your children, as well as for employees. Employees will not be responsible for any children. No children are allowed in the building unsupervised, including the public bathrooms in the lobby. Children may not attend treatment that they are not participating in, except for special requests for individual sessions and newborns up to three months. Please discuss all childcare and parenting concerns with your clinician.  
If you are planning on dropping off your child for services, please check with your clinician if you need to leave the building. We require a parent in the building for children under the age of five (5).

### Anger, Violence, and Threats of Violence

- BWC has no tolerance for acts of violence and/or threats of violence. In the event of physical violence, employees on duty will call 911. BWC employees do not use seclusion or restraints in response to emergencies involving assault or aggression. Violations may result in criminal charges, restitution, and/or immediate discharge. BWC considers the following behaviors to be acts of violence:
  - Verbal abuse including name-calling, racist remarks, etc.
  - Physical attacks including pushing, hitting, punching, hair pulling, scratching, spitting, etc.
  - Psychological abuse including intimidating comments and/or behaviors that instill a sense of fear or anxiety.
  - Uncontrolled behavior causing the disruption of treatment services.

### Inappropriate Sexual Conduct

- BWC encourages appropriate and healthy boundaries. Inappropriate displays of affection including prolonged kissing, fondling, groping, sexual touching, and sexually explicit language will be addressed. Incident(s) of inappropriate sexual conduct will be reported to the BH Director, and/or Clinical Supervisor for follow-up, as appropriate.

## Guardianship

- Upon initial contact, program employees will verify if the Participant has a legal guardian. A screening process will collect demographic information and identify treatment needs to be completed by the legal guardian. Program employees will obtain the legal copies of required documentation indicating who your legal guardian is by fax, email, or the legal guardian in person. Assessment and treatment will only begin after guardianship paperwork is completed. Documents that establish legal guardianship include: birth certificate, court order signed by a judge, court document appointing a Guardian ad litem, court adoption documents, court divorce decree indicating custody, and/or a power of attorney properly conveyed. Power of attorneys are accepted on a case-by-case basis and will be reviewed by BWC compliance team.

## Infections and Communicable Diseases

- BWC staff are aware of common illnesses and diseases that are easily transmitted between children/youth, such as pink eye, lice, chicken pox, strep or staph infections, mononucleosis, and venereal and other sexually transmitted diseases. If at any time the Participant has any infections or sign of infections, they should not attend their scheduled appointment and instead call BWC to cancel and reschedule their appointment. If the Participant is on location and has signs of an infection, they should let a staff member know as soon as possible and proper procedures will be followed.

## Notice of Privacy Practices

THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED AND HOW YOU CAN GET ACCESS TO THIS INFORMATION. PLEASE READ AND REVIEW IT CAREFULLY.

- This Notice of Privacy Practice will tell you about: (1) the way that BWC may use and give out medical information about you; (2) your medical privacy rights; and (3) the responsibilities of the program in using and disclosing your medical information.
- BWC clinics are required by law to maintain the privacy of your protected health information and to provide you with notice of its legal duties and privacy practices with respect to your protected health information. BWC clinics are required by law to abide by the terms of this notice. BWC reserves the right to change the terms of this notice and to make new notice provisions effective for all protected health information it maintains. If BWC make changes, they will update this notice. You

may receive the most recent copy of this notice by calling in a request to Benteh Wellness Center at (907) 671-6871 or by visiting the Benteh Wellness Center.

- BWC respects your privacy and understands that your personal health information is sensitive. Benteh Wellness Center employees document in your electronic health record the care and services you receive at the program. This information is needed to give you quality healthcare and comply with the law. For example, your electronic health record includes information about your symptoms, test results, diagnosis, treatment, health information from other medical providers, and billing and payment information related to those services. BWC will not disclose your information to others unless you tell us to do so, or unless the law authorizes or requires BWC to do so.

## How BWC May Use and Disclose Information

### For Treatment

- Information obtained by a member of BWC's health care team will be recorded in your electronic health record and used to help decide what care may be right for you. BWC may also provide information to others providing your care. This will help them stay informed about your care so they may help you if needed.

### For Payment

- You will be required to fill out all forms necessary to begin services which include the sliding fee scale form and the Alaska Automated Information Management System forms which document the intent to share responsibility for your care here at BWC. BWC may use and disclose medical information about you so that the treatment and services you receive at the program may be billed and payment collected from government, insurance company, third party, or other responsible individual(s).

### Medical Privacy Rights

- You have the right to request restrictions on certain use and disclosure of your protected health information. BWC follows laws governing what we can and cannot disclose. Any restriction you request (if allowable by law), is bound by that agreement and may not use or disclose any information that you have restricted, except as necessary in a medical emergency.

- You have the right to request that we communicate with you by alternative means or at an alternative location. BWC will accommodate such requests that are reasonable and will not request an explanation from you. You also have the right to inspect and copy your own health information maintained by BWC, except to the extent that the information contains psychotherapy notes, information compiled for use in a civil, criminal, administrative proceeding, or in other limited circumstances.
- You also have the right, with some exceptions, to amend your protected health information maintained in BWC records, and to request and receive an accounting of disclosures of your health-related information made by BWC during the six years prior to your request.

### Health Information Rights

The health and billing records BWC makes and stores belong to BWC. The protected health information in it; however, generally belongs to you. You have a right to:

- Receive a copy of the notice of privacy practices.
- Read and ask questions about this notice.
- Ask us to limit certain uses and disclosures. To limit use and disclosures, you must give us a written request. BWC is not required to grant the request, but if BWC grants your request, we will comply with it.
- Ask that you be allowed to see and get a copy of your protected health information. You may also request that your protected health information be given or sent to you by another means or at another location. These requests must be made in writing using the release of information (ROI) form. You can receive the form from the Benteh Wellness Center front desk employee.
- Have BWC review a denial of access to your protected health information.
- Give BWC a written request to change your health information. BWC may accept your request and if we do, we will add an amendment to your record. If BWC denies your request, you may write a statement of disagreement that will be stored in your electronic health record and BWC may add our own statement disagreeing with your proposed changes. These statements would be included with any release of your records.

- Request a copy of the list of certain disclosures made of your protected health information outside of treatment, payment and health care operations. This list will not include disclosures to third party payers. You may request and receive this information without charge once every twelve (12) months, but BWC may be delayed in providing you with a copy of the list of certain disclosures if the law requires that we not disclose that information for a period of time. BWC will notify you of the cost involved if you request this information more than once in 12 months.
- Cancel prior authorizations to use or disclose your protected health information by giving BWC a written request to end the authorization. This request does not affect information that has already been released or affect any action taken before we have it

For help with these rights, please contact BWC Compliance at (907) 671-6871 during normal business hours.

## Our Responsibilities

- BWC is required to:
  - Keep your protected health information private
  - Give you this notice of privacy practices
  - Follow the terms of this notice
- Mandatory Reporting:
  - The clinical staff are specifically identified by Alaska Statute to have reporting responsibility when, in the performance of their occupational duties, they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child and/or elder/vulnerable adult has suffered harm as a result of abuse or neglect.
- Questions or Comments
  - If you have questions, want more information, or want to report a problem about the handling of your protected health information, you may contact BWC's Compliance at (907) 671-6871.

## Your Individual Rights and Responsibilities as a Participant

### **Participant Rights – Treatment**

1. You and your family have the right to be informed of these rights in a language and method you understand.

2. You have the right to designate a surrogate decision maker if you become incapable of understanding a proposed treatment/procedure or are unable to communicate your wishes.
3. You have the right to ask about the educational and professional background of providers as well as licensing information.
4. You have the right to reasonable access to care which respects your dignity, values and beliefs regardless of your race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age or disability.
5. You have the right to receive information about your treatment, alternative treatments and to seek a second opinion. Like other medical treatments, behavioral health treatment has benefits and risks and there are no guarantees with respect to outcome.
6. Treatment is voluntary and you may end treatment at any time. However, if the treatment is court ordered or required by another agency, discontinuing the treatment may result in consequences outside the control of your provider and BWC.

### **Participant Rights - Confidentiality**

1. Once you sign an official release of information form and this information is released to another agency, we can no longer guarantee the confidentiality of this information.
2. Providers may be required to disclose information without your authorization to protect your safety or the safety of others including:
  - a. If you are in clear danger of hurting or killing yourself or are unable to care for yourself.
  - b. If you are in clear danger of hurting or killing someone else or have clearly threatened to hurt someone else.
  - c. If you tell a provider about neglect or abuse of a child, an elder or an individual who is unable to care for him/herself.
  - d. If a child is witnessing domestic violence within the home.
  - e. When records are subpoenaed or ordered to be released by a court of law.
  - f. For purposes of program accreditation, certification or state agency reviews and audits.

### **Responsibilities-**

#### **Participant Responsibilities**

1. You have the responsibility to provide information about your present concern, past illnesses and medication to your provider. Parents/Guardians are responsible for providing the provider with timely and accurate updates and concerns for minor children.
2. You have the responsibility to ask questions about anything you do not understand during your assessment or treatment.
3. You have the responsibility to actively participate in treatment including keeping scheduled appointments.

4. You have the responsibility to follow the recommended treatment plan after adequate instructions have been provided. If you disagree with the recommended treatment plan, it is your responsibility to discuss these areas of disagreement with your provider.
5. You have the responsibility to accept the consequences of not following the recommended treatment plan.
6. You are responsible for seeking emergent mental health care when indicated. You may call your family physician, the Crisis Line at 376-2411, the Alaska Careline at 1-877-266-4357 or go to the emergency department at the nearest hospital.
7. You have the responsibility to fulfill financial obligations, if applicable.

## Participant Grievance Procedure

BWC encourages you to express your problems, concerns and opinions on any issue, through the customer service comment form or per the participant grievance procedure. BWC provides an effective process for you to express your problems, concerns, and opinions without fear of retaliation or reprisal. All information is thoroughly investigated and BWC does not tolerate retaliation against anyone who makes a report in good faith.

### Informal Concern(s)

- You are encouraged to talk to the employee on duty, your assigned Behavioral Health Case Manager, Clinician, and/ or Program Manager about your concern(s); with the understanding that we are all human beings with individual faults as well as strengths. It is possible that a misunderstanding has taken place and can be cleared up if the individual(s) involved are aware that a problem exists.

### Formal Grievance(s)

- You may at any time submit a written customer service comment form to the Clinical Supervisor or Program Manager.
- A copy of all customer service comment forms will be submitted to the BWC Corporate Compliance team for review and recommendations.

## Program Changes

During your treatment, it may become necessary to change or add to this handbook. When changes occur, you will be notified by announcement and there will be a written notification posted in the waiting area. If situations occur that are not covered in the above information, the clinical treatment team will make decisions based on past practice and the merits of the individual situation. The primary purpose of this handbook is to foster an atmosphere conducive to recovery and participant responsibility.

## Meet the Clinical Staff

- Dustin Allen, Clinical Supervisor
  - Education – Master of Arts in Counseling from Wayland Baptist University.
  - Specialties: EMDR, Brainspotting, CBT and DBT
  - Licensure: Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) #137697, and Licensed Professional Counselor – Supervisor (LPC-S) #181183.
  
- Bryan Taylor, Clinician II
  - Education – Master of Science in Community Mental Health Counseling from the University of Wyoming.
  - Specialties: Individual, Couple and Family Counseling, CBT, DBT, CPT, Solution Focused and Strengths based approaches and techniques
  - Licensure: LPC # 195264, and Licensed Professional Counselor – Supervisor (LPC-S) #217539.
  
- Sheri Locklear, Clinician I
  - Master of Social Work from Kennesaw State University
  - Specialties: Substance Use, Domestic Violence, and Trauma.
  
- Jacqueline Madsen, Clinician I
  - Master of Arts in Art Therapy and Counseling from Southwestern College and New Earth Institute
  - Specialties: Art Therapy, Humanistic, Mental Health, Sand Tray Therapy, LGBTQ+ Support, Adolescents, Individual and Family Counseling, and Historical and Family Trauma.
  
- Colleen Newcity, Clinician I
  - Master of Social Work from Walden University
  
- Hunter Bailey, Behavioral Health Aide I
  - Training for Behavioral Health Aide services through Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium.

All services by licensed clinical staff are rendered at the Benteh Wellness Center physical location:

780 S. Snodgrass Dr.  
Palmer, AK 9945  
Phone: (907) 671-6871

For fees related to service please refer to the signed financial policy, and sliding fee scale that were signed prior to the introduction of services.

This information is required by the Board of Professional Counselors which regulates all licensed professional counselors.

Board of Professional Counselors



## Definitions

- EHR: EHRs (Electric Health Record) are used to chart participant progress, referrals, internal transfers, treatment plans, demographics, clinical documentation, and administrative duties.
- Behavioral Health Case Manager: An employee in this role is a member of an integrated care team; facilitates learning circles, serve as learning group care team support, coordinates participant care, acts as a liaison and referral to community resources, and follows up with participants.
- Participant: An individual who seeks and receives services at BWC.
- Group Therapy: A small group of participants who share an interest and desire for personal growth in an area of common interest. These groups of people have a shared commitment to each other and to the process that group therapy or skill development groups provide.
- Release of Information (ROI): is an authorization signed by the participant or legal guardian to release or obtain information.
- Legal Guardian: An individual, who may or may not be related, and has been given authority by a court of competent jurisdiction to make certain decisions, including health care, for a minor (under age 18) or an individual found incompetent to make those decisions for themselves.
- Treatment Plan: A treatment guide created by the Mental Health Clinician and participant that identifies the participant's individualized treatment goals.

## Standards

- CARF standard 1.A.6.a-b, 1.A.7.b.
- CARF standard 2.A.1
- CARF standard 2.A.9
- CARF Standard 3.O.1
- CARF Standard 3.O.3
- CARF Standard 3.O.5

