Master of Arts Mental Health Counseling



Mental Health Counseling College of Pharmacy & Health Sciences

Clinical Mental Health Track
2023-2024

http://www.belmont.edu/mental-health-counseling/



Mental Health Counseling

College of Pharmacy & Health Sciences

Table of Contents

Introduction	<u>3</u>
Mission	3
Field Experiences Goals and Objectives	4
Section 1: Preparing for Field Experience Courses	<u>5</u>
Section 2: Registration for Field Experience Courses	6
Section 3: Site Requirements	7
Section 4: Finding a Field Experience Site	8
Preparing for an Interview	8
Section 5: Practices throughout Field Experiences	10
Section 6: Information for Site Supervisors	11
Section 6: Student and University Responsibilities	17
Section 7: Appendices – Student Forms	19

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Mental Health Counseling

College of Pharmacy & Health Sciences

Introduction

The Mental Health Counseling Program is in the College of Pharmacy & Health Sciences. The Program prepares students to become Licensed Professional Counselors, Pastoral Therapists, Marriage, and Family Therapists and/or Mental Health Service Providers in the state of Tennessee. This Mental Health Counseling Field Experience Manual for Practicum and Internship contains information intended to offer guidance on the field experience process to students and site supervisors. This manual addresses expectations and standards for students to satisfactorily complete the practicum and internship experience.

Mission

The Mental Health Counseling Program seeks to train professional counselors who will act ethically as agents of the ministries of healing and transformation through efficacious counseling theory, techniques, skills, and respect for diversity. The Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program is accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP).



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Field Experience Goals and Objectives

Practicum and internships allow students to experience on the job counseling, overcome ethical issues, respond appropriately to diverse situations, and write appropriate treatment plans. Our goal for students is to gain actual experience in the *real-world setting*; therefore, we require students to work with actual cases. This means consistent onsite supervision is both required and imperative. Students are asked to follow ethical guidelines (ACA), laws, as well as agency standards.

The guidelines in this manual apply to all Belmont University students enrolled in the M.A. program in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling track.

The following sections will address what you need to know to prepare for field experience courses, how to register for field experience courses, understanding the site requirements, finding a field experience site, practices throughout field experience, and information for site supervisors.

[&]quot;Your initial field experience will most likely serve as a general training ground, where you are exposed to a variety of presenting problems. You'll notice what clinical work you enjoy most, as well as what you appreciate about your site context (private practice, agency, crisis, etc.). Trust yourself..." ---Ili Rivera Walter, On Being Intentional



Section 1: Preparing for Field Experience Courses

Make sure you complete <u>all</u> the following steps:

- Read this manual in its entirety.
- Discuss possible site with the faculty internship supervisor (CMHC Faculty for LPC Track) and/or (MFT Faculty for MFT Track).
- Contact potential and approved sites to schedule an appointment for an interview.
- Review "Section 4: Finding a Field Site" in this manual to prepare for your interview.
- Once a site offers you a field experience position and you have a site supervisor, contact your faculty internship supervisor and the clinical field experience coordinator, Dr. Jeana Stevenson, to notify of the site/site supervisor's contact information.
- Acquire professional liability insurance in the spring semester prior to
 Practicum. Give a copy of the insurance page showing coverage to the faculty
 instructor on the first day of class and upload into your Tevera file. Liability
 insurance may be purchased from service provides such as: Health Providers
 Service Organization (HPSO) https://www.hpso.com; CPH & Associates
 https://www.cphins.com

<u>Special Note:</u> It is imperative that the student begins searching for a site early in this process. Most sites conduct interviews approximately 6 months prior to the start of practicum/internship.



Section 2: Registration for Field Experience Courses

Students take CTM 6010 Practicum in Mental Health Counseling, during summer of their first year. During the following fall and spring terms, students register for the next two field experiences, or internship courses. Internship courses students must register for are: CTM 6110 Internship Mental Health Counseling I and CTM 6210 Internship Mental Health Counseling II. Each Internship is a 3-credit hour course taken during a different semester. Students cannot take more than 3 hours of field experience during any regular or summer semester.

Students taking the summer practicum course will start classes one week prior to the start of the Belmont summer 1 session and attend until the end of the summer 2 session. This ensures a minimum 10-week practicum experience.

CACREP Requirements for Practicum/Internship Supervision: Students must be supervised a minimum of one hour per week by an approved site supervisor. Site supervisors must have the following:

- a minimum of a master's degree, preferably in counseling, or a related profession
- relevant certifications and/or licenses
- a minimum of two years of pertinent professional experience in the specialty area in which the student is enrolled (CMHC track, MCFC track, or Clinical Pastoral track)
- knowledge of the program's expectations, requirements, and evaluation procedures for students
- relevant training in counseling supervision



Section 3: Site Requirements

The clinical setting is a place where the practice of professional counseling occurs. An appropriate setting for a student's clinical mental health practicum and internship experience must meet the following criteria:

- The site or practice shall be a public, private, or community agency/mental health setting and must have integrated programs for the delivery of counseling which includes clinical mental health counseling for the Professional Counselor licensure (LPC).
- The site or practice shall offer adequate physical resources, such as a private space that meets HIPAA requirements, necessary to allow for supervision and appropriate service delivery.
- The site location shall have at least one licensed mental health professional whose assigned job duties include being available to the practicum/internship student for supervision and/or consultation while the student is engaging in the practice of counseling or counseling related services. In addition, the site location shall have a written emergency plan in place to include method(s) of contacting supervisor(s), alternative contacts when supervisor(s) is (are) unavailable, information regarding crisis services, and crisis decision-making. The licensed mental health professional can serve as the student's supervisor if he or she meets the supervisor's requirements pursuant to the CACREP standards (stated in Section 2.c-see above).
- If a site is a private practice, students will more than likely need to acquire 2 sites (the private practice and one other site) to ensure enough client contact hours are possible.



Section 4: Finding a Field Experience Site

The Mental Health Counseling faculty may be called upon to help students locate a site and/or site supervisor. This process is a dual responsibility between program instructors and the student. The program provides a list of suggested sites to students who are responsible for contacting sites, interviewing for field placement at an appropriate site, and notifying the Clinical Coordinator of progress. It is strongly recommended that students begin this process at a minimum of 6 months prior to the start of field experience courses.

Procrastination in searching for a site will affect success and completion of the practicum/internship courses. Students are responsible for contacting the Clinical Coordinator if issues arise during the process.

Preparing for an Interview

After making the appointment for a field experience interview, prepare to answer questions your potential site/supervisor may ask. Following are a few tips to help in this process.

- Be sure the site and potential site supervisor meets CACREP standard requirements mentioned in Section 3.
- Study the forms/guidelines found in this handbook so you can easily converse about them with a prospective site supervisor. Be prepared to discuss live supervision and the possibility of taping course assignments.
- Prepare a professional resume to share with your site supervisor.
- Dress as you would for a job interview and do your best to arrive at least 10 minutes before the interview is scheduled to begin, and present as you would for a professional job interview.
- Practice discussing your background, experience, and counseling interests and be ready to ask questions about the site (please do your research).



- Inquire about training prior to placement. Ensure you can comply before committing to the site.
- Inquire about and confirm that you can obtain an average of 10 hours per work during Practicum and an average of 20 hours per week during Internship I & II to ensure you earn a total of 40 direct face-to-face hours during practicum and a total of 120 direct face-to-face hours for each semester of internship during the scheduled semester dates.

If a student should find that they will need to secure 2 sites to obtain the necessary hours to satisfy the practicum & internship requirements:

- Students must follow all processes and procedures at each site.
- Students must receive weekly supervision with their supervisor at each site.
- Contact information and professional credentials must be provided for each site supervisor.
- Each site supervisor must complete a midterm and final evaluation for the student.
- Each site supervisor must sign off on log hours in Tevera.

Placement at a private practice site, in addition to above, one must be aware of the following:

- The site must have protocol in place and documented.
- Students are not allowed to develop their own forms, processes, or procedures.
- Students are not allowed to recruit their own clients.



Section 5: Practices throughout Field Experiences

Any issues that arise before, during, or after a counseling session occurs, should be immediately reported to both your site supervisor and your university instructor (faculty). The faculty and site supervisor work together as a team to assist students in handling crises.

Discuss client issues or cases with your site supervisor during minimum 1-hour weekly sessions or as asked during class. At no time should a student discuss a client or case with anyone other than your clinical supervisors. Guidelines are shared for ensuring confidentiality of clients during university class sessions.

[&]quot;When students do not experience what it is like to use the skills they learn, carry a caseload, and see the counseling process through each stage from Intake to Termination, they feel cheated and unprepared for actual work." - Dr. Layla Bonner



Mental Health Counseling

College of Pharmacy & Health Sciences

Section 6: Information for Site Supervisors

The following information is intended to assist site supervisors in understanding the clinical roles and responsibilities of Belmont University's students, university supervisors, and clinical site supervisors.

Field Experience Requirements

Students in the Belmont University M.A. in Mental Health Counseling Program-Clinical Mental Health Counseling track are required to complete **100 hours** (40 direct hours and 60 indirect hours) **in practicum** and an additional **600 hours** (240 direct hours and 360 indirect hours) **accrued over two internship semesters**) of supervised counseling and counseling related activities (from a licensed counselor, social worker, psychologist, marriage and family therapist or clinical pastoral therapist depending on the area of specialty that student is pursuing) in internships.

All hours in **practicum** (100) and each internship (300) will be accrued during each of the semester dates, and extra hours earned in that semester will not be transferred to the next semester. Therefore, students should set their schedules at their assigned site so that they can accrue the expected hours and not go over. If the student fails to complete the required hours during the semester dates due to unforeseen circumstances (such as a crisis or pandemic situation – i.e., COVID-19) the student will be assigned an incomplete grade for the course.

Sequence of Field Experience

Students take **practicum** at the end of their first year of course work, typically in the summer, followed by **internship 1** and **internship 2** in the subsequent semesters. Students cannot count hours attained in **practicum** during internship courses.



The Practicum Experience

The purpose of practicum is to help students gradually become engaged in the counseling profession through guided practice, observation, co-facilitating, shadowing of a professional counselor, and involvement in real world counseling activities. Practicum students typically observe and become familiar with agency and other processes during the first couple weeks of engagement. As the semester evolves, students are slowly given additional experiences and responsibilities while under site supervision (consisting of a minimum of 1 hour per week). Students meet an additional 1½ hours per week in class to gain additional assistance and supervision by the practicum faculty instructor. Students are also required to either videotape or record a counseling session with a client as part of their course requirement. To maintain HIPPA compliance, students must record their video in Panapto through the University's Canvas platform. If the student is unable to videotape or record a counseling session the site supervisor will be required to observe the student engaged in a counseling session and do an evaluation of the counseling session.

The Internship Experience

In internship, students are expected to work closely with clients, actively counsel clients, carry a client load, attend staff meetings, be familiar with the protocols and procedures of the site, meet weekly with their site supervisor for one-hour weekly supervision, (this hour is considered indirect and is logged as indirect hours) attend trainings as offered by the site, and engage in ethical and professional behavior, along with other counseling related activities. Students meet an additional 1½ hours per week in class to gain additional assistance and supervision by the internship faculty instructor. Students are also required to either videotape or record a counseling session with a client as part of their course requirement. If the student is unable to videotape or record a counseling session the site supervisor will be required to observe the student engaged in a counseling session and do an evaluation of the counseling session.



Students are expected to do their practicum and internships at the same site for continuity and continuation of training. Changing sites due to unforeseen circumstances must be discussed with the faculty supervisor before a new site is considered.

Site Supervisor Responsibilities: CACREP Standards

Students must be supervised a minimum of one hour per week by an approved site supervisor. Site supervisors must have the following:

- A minimum of a master's degree, preferably in counseling, or a related profession
- Relevant certifications and/or licenses
- A minimum of two years of pertinent professional experience in the specialty area in which the student is enrolled (CMHC track, MCFC track, Clinical Pastoral track)
- Knowledge of the program's expectations, requirements, and evaluation procedures for students
- Relevant training in counseling supervision
- Evidence of Telehealth training may be required if telehealth is used at site. Our program values the **in-person** experience as the best opportunity for experiential learning. The student intern will primarily see clients face to face and use telehealth as an alternative such as during an emergency or in crisis situations. We do understand that some clients will prefer telehealth; therefore, we ask that our student interns have *no more than 1/3 of their direct hours* allocated for telehealth services. If a student must engage in the use of telehealth for service delivery, they must be physically located onsite unless the site is closed. They must also have <u>immediate</u> access to a supervisor in the event of an emergency. We will require documentation of a telehealth consent form that interns will provide to clients, a copy of policies and procedures related to telehealth that the site, and the name of the licensed therapist(s) who may serve as the representative for the site supervisor on record during an emergency. The site supervisor on record and student intern must both provide

- evidence of the completion of a training in telehealth <u>prior to</u> the student engaging in services via telehealth.
- Site Supervisors Orientation for Practicum and Internship (offered through Belmont Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program Belmont University)

Site supervisors are responsible for ensuring that students have a practicum/internship experience which includes experience in the assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of cognitive, affective, and behavioral problems or dysfunctions in the DSM-5 nomenclature which are part of the rules and requirements that govern Licensed Professional Counselors in the state of Tennessee. Site supervisors are also responsible for students following laws, ethical codes, and agency requirements. Therefore, they should clarify responsibilities and expectations with students before field experience begins. Ongoing feedback and hourly supervision should also be provided each week.

Emergency protocols must be in place (and preferably documented) at the site. This includes but is not limited to what to do and who to contact when a client is harmful to self and other, what to do if the client or counselor is experiencing a personal health emergency, and what to do in the event of some other non-clinical emergency. Interns must have immediate access to a licensed therapist in such events.

The following are pointers to ensure a good experience for site supervisors and students.

- Supervisors may also require the following for practicum/internship students: trainings, orientations, observation, attendance at staff meetings, or other such functions to ensure compliance with state and agency regulations. Typically, sites offer experiences in the following order 1) Site orientation, 2) Observation of procedures, and 3) Counseling participation.
- Supervision sessions are developed by site supervisors based on the needs of students. Times are scheduled to meet the needs of both supervisors and students but must be held for a minimum of 1 hour each week.
- Site supervisors should ensure student hourly logs are accurate, and when approved, electronically sign the logs in Tevera.
- Supervisors should contact the university instructor any time an issue arises. University instructors will make regular contact to ensure student growth occurs in an ethical manner.



- To ensure adequate assistance and in case of emergencies, we ask that students not to perform clinical activities during university holidays or in between semester breaks when faculty are off-duty and not available for faculty supervision of students.
- In addition to the minimum one hour spent weekly in supervision with site supervisors, students receive university supervision from faculty a minimum of 1½ hours per week. This time is used to assist with clients or other issues.
- Supervisors will evaluate student growth at midterm and end of the semester using a university/student provided electronic form.
- Ensure that students receive clinical supervision rather than simply administrative supervision. This means offering guidance and feedback on clinical skills, consultation on case issues, ensuring understanding and compliance with professional ethical codes and laws, and ensuring client well-being.



Student Role and Responsibilities

- Students in field experience courses should be engaged in clinical counseling responsibilities at the site throughout each week during the semester.
- The number of hours and level of responsibility increases as students advance from practicum to internship courses.
- Students are expected to participate in a broad range of clinical mental health counseling activities including facilitating or co-facilitating a group.
- Students may be required to engage in telehealth during a crisis or ongoing pandemic (see section: Preparing for an Interview).
- Students are expected to comply with laws, ethical codes, and agency requirements including professional dress, prompt arrival, and participation in agency training.
- Students will evaluate the site supervisor, university instructor, and site at the end of the course.
- Students must have current counseling liability insurance throughout field experience courses.
- Students maintain an electronic log that describes all field experience activities and hours in Tevera. The site supervisor will review and sign the logs to ensure accuracy.
- Students meet for a minimum of 1½ hours weekly for group supervision during practicum/internship university class time. Students may be required to bring in their logs on a weekly basis to be reviewed by the faculty supervisor. See course syllabi for more information.



University Responsibilities

Students attend field experience courses at the university while completing practicum and internship hours. During course sessions, students discuss ethical issues, case conceptualization, treatment planning, diagnosis, diversity, demonstrate counseling skills, and a host of other issues that may be pertinent when working with clients. Faculty may contact site supervisors regularly to ensure student growth occurs and issues are resolved. In order to ensure success in clinical skills, site supervisors may, with client permission, be asked to evaluate live counseling sessions conducted by students, observe video recordings, or allow university faculty to conduct these evaluations. To maintain HIPPA compliance, students must record their video in Panapto through the University's Canvas platform.

Concerns During Field Experience

Please contact the university instructor immediately if concerns arise. Issues might include student impairment, unethical behaviors, etc. Impaired students should be removed from offering services to clients until the issue is resolved. Please know it is the responsibility of the faculty to facilitate these issues for students and site supervisors so immediate contact should be made.

Appendices

Section 7: Student Forms

Appendices below list forms used in field experience courses

Appendix A: Site Agreement Forms

Supervisor/Student Counselor Agreement Form Site Supervisor Information Form Practicum/Internship Agreement A Sample Description Practicum/Internship Student's Duties Clinical Affiliation Agreement

Appendix B: Assessment

Forms Student
Practicum/Internship
Evaluation Site Supervisor
Evaluation
Counseling Site Evaluation
Student Disposition/Professional Rubric

Appendix C: Logs/Records Forms

Practicum/Internship Student Record of Hours Practicum/Internship Student Hours Log

Appendix D: Video Release Forms Counseling Release – Adult Counseling Release – Minor



Field Experience Manual Signature Page

I	hereby certify that I have read and that I
(Print name)	
understand the information presented in this Field	Experience Manual for Clinical Mental Health
Counseling.	
(Signature)	(Date)



Appendix A: Site Agreement Forms Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Agreement Between Internship/Practicum Supervisor and Internship/Practicum Student

Counselor Date:	Course	Semester
Start of Practicum/Internship Date:	End of Prac	cticum/Internship Date:
I agree to offer clinical counseling site site supervision to (student counselor naboth counsel and offer supervision to constudent's site (listed below) employs at specialty in Clinical Mental Health Counsite for a cumulative minimum of 20 how health counseling services in accordance minimum of two years of experience in	ame) counselors in the state least one licensed ranseling or Marriagours per week. Further with Tennessee ranseling or marriagours per week.	. I certify I am licensed to be of Tennessee. I also certify that the mental health professional with e, Couple, and Family Counseling on her, the site delivers clinical mental ales. Lastly, I certify that I have a
Supervisor Signature:		
Supervisor Name:		
Site Supervisor Email:		
Site Supervisor Phones:		
Site Name:		
Site Address/Street/City:		
City/State/Zin:		



Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Site Supervisor Information Form

Name of Supervisor:	
Title:	
Counseling Licensure(s): (List all relevant counseling of	eredentials)
Degrees Earned: (please list your earned counseling-re	lated degrees)
Minimum of Two Years of Professional Counseling in	:
2 yrs in Clinical Mental Health Counseling 2 yrs	s in Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling
Professional Counseling Experience:	
Supervision Training/# CEUs acquired in supervision:	
*Please provide a hard copy of your most up-to-date lie	censure or certificate.
Please Read and Sign Below: I received a copy of the Field Health Counseling from the Belmont Mental Health Counse expectations and requirements. I also know that faculty offe I will be expected to attend this training.	ling Program and understand the supervision
Signature: Date:	



Clinical Mental Health Counseling Track Practicum/Internship Agreement

Field experience courses in the Belmont University Mental Health Counseling Program provide students with clinical training necessary to prepare for future counseling licensure and careers. Sites and site supervisors are an integral part of student success. Information below ensures understanding and cooperation between students, site supervisors, and university instructors.

I. Length of the Practicum or Internship Experience The student counselor will work with clients hours per week between and (dates). Students will not perform counseling services during university holidays. This agreement covers only the time listed above and ends when the Belmont University semester ends. All required hours must be completed by this date to include 100 hours total for practicum and 300 hours total per internship. Summer practicum starts 1 week before the official summer session begins to ensure a 10-week practicum experience. II. Policies and Procedures All parties must comply with the terms of the Clinical Affiliation Agreement between Belmont University and [Facility], dated (mm/dd/yyyy). Students and site supervisors must comply with the American Counseling Association's ethical code as well as Tennessee state law. The course syllabus also discusses procedures required for successful course completion and is incorporated into this agreement. III. Professional Liability Insurance

Students are required to purchase and maintain professional liability insurance at all times during their practicum or internship experience. Although the university does not

purchase insurance for site supervisors, site supervisors must carry liability insurance at all times during the student's practicum or internship experience to cover supervision and counseling practices.

IV. Student Records

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act protects student records in the university setting. The student's signature on this agreement gives permission for university faculty and site supervisor(s) to exchange information regarding the student's academic and work performance.

V. Modification of this Agreement

Any modification of this Agreement will be in writing and signed by all of the parties.

VI. Additional Responsibilities

The site supervisor must maintain Tennessee licensure as an LPC, LMFT, LPT, psychiatrist, or psychologist with supervision credentials throughout the student's practicum or internship experience. The site supervisor must also warrant that they hold a minimum of two (2) years of field experience at the time this agreement is executed.

The site supervisor will serve as consultant and supervisor of the Counselor-in Training. Specific duties for each party are listed in the Field Experience Manual for Clinical Mental Health Counseling. All parties agree to abide by the guidelines.

VII.Covid-19 Updates

Students choosing to conduct counseling in face-to-face settings during practicum or internships must abide by Belmont University's health and safety policies including quarantining for up to 14 days after exposure.

By signing below, the parties agree that they have read, understood, and accepted the terms and conditions of this agreement.

Counselor-in-Training:	Date:
Site Supervisor: Date:	
University Supervisor: Date:	
Program Director:	Date:
Dean of CPHS:	Date:



A Sample Description of Clinical Mental Health Counseling Practicum/Internship Student's Duties

- 1. Individual Counseling: The counseling Internship/Practicum requires 100 hours of experience (including 40 direct client contact hours) at this site for students enrolled in Practicum and 300 hours (including 240 direct client contact hours) per internship. The counseling training should include although not be limited to treatment goals, counseling theories, counseling techniques, assessment techniques, multicultural and diversity issues, referral procedures, record keeping, and other issues related to counseling the client/student.
- 2. Group Counseling: The Counseling Internship/Practicum is focused on individual counseling although some group counseling experience is encouraged. Students enrolled in practicum must complete a minimum of 10 hours conducting group counseling.
- **3.** Conducting Psychoeducational Classes: Clinical mental health counselors-in-training may deliver psychoeducational classes in areas in which they are qualified.
- **4.** Program Planning: Clinical mental health counselors-in-training are expected to attend staff meetings, write reports, and prepare for delivery of direct services.
- **5.** Consultation: Clinical mental health counselors-in-training are expected to participate in case management with professional staff. They are also required to participate in onsite supervision (a minimum of one hour per week). The supervision is conducted by the on-site, approved supervisor.
- **6.** Professional Development: Students are expected to attend workshops and conferences as assigned by the Site Supervisor and/or University Professor.
- 7. Other duties as may be assigned



Site Interview Checklist

As you interview, you must ensure that each expectation below can be met.

Discuss these requirements during your interview and check off each one as you've received confirmation. Sites that cannot commit to one or more of these requirements will not be appropriate.

The student intern <u>must</u> be able to earn a total of 40 total face to face hours during Practicum (this is about 10 hours per week) and 120 total face-to-face for each semester of Internship (this is about 20 hours per week) during the scheduled semester beginning and end dates. Student interns will be on break when the university is on break between semesters.
The student intern must receive weekly individual supervision for 1 hour face to face. Individual supervision is classified as 1 supervisor and no more than 2 interns. More than 2 interns during a supervision would classify as a group supervision. CACREP requires 1 hour of individual supervision each week. The supervisor must also sign off on hours weekly in Tevera (our online platform) and submit required documentation for site supervisors each semester. Lastly, the site supervisor must also be able to document that he/she has completed training in supervision.
The student intern will <u>not</u> have to develop his/her/their own client forms, processes, or procedures. We do not permit our students to set up any sort of "private practice." The intern is not permitted to receive any fees/money/payment for service. Any fees that they collect must only go towards the practice/agency.
Emergency protocols must be in place (and preferably documented) at this site. This includes what to do and who to contact when a client is harmful to self and other, what to do if the client or counselor is experiencing a personal health emergency, and what to do in the event of some other non-clinical emergency. Interns must have immediate access to a licensed therapist in such events.

