

Treatment Consent Form and Office Policies

As a general and addiction psychiatrist, I provide detailed evaluation and treatment of mental health and/or substance use disorders. The following is a brief description of the potential risks and benefits of such evaluation and treatment:

1. **Evaluation:** The initial psychiatric evaluation will last approximately 60-90 minutes. During this evaluation, I will ask you detailed questions regarding your current reason and motivation for seeking treatment, your medical, psychiatric, and substance abuse history, and questions regarding your social and occupational functioning. The benefit to a comprehensive examination, is that I will have a clearer sense of the difficulties that bring you to treatment, and how I can best help. Sometimes, during such an evaluation, difficult questions or issues may arise, which may create discomfort or other uncomfortable emotions. I encourage you to let me know if this happens, so that we can adjust the process accordingly. The goal of the evaluation is to formulate an initial treatment plan. This may include medications, psychotherapy, or both, as well as possibly referrals to other treatment providers and physicians. The evaluation is not a commitment to treatment; rather, it is an opportunity for me, and you, as the patient, to evaluate whether this is an appropriate treatment fit. Occasionally, we may require additional sessions to complete a thorough initial evaluation.

I also provide fitness for duty evaluations for health care professionals. The duration and the extent of such evaluations often varies on a case by case basis. In these situations, the evaluation is extended to include discussion with the referring agency, collateral information from close contacts, review of records, and referral for additional testing or specialized assessments as necessary.

2. **Medications:** Medication management appointments last approximately 25 minutes. Medications may be indicated for a variety of mental health and substance abuse problems. If you need medications, I will discuss the risks, benefits, and alternatives to medication options. I will discuss the appropriate dosage and frequency, as well as possible side effects that you may experience. I encourage you to ask any questions that you may have about medications, so that we are sure to address them adequately. During the initial phase of medication stabilization, more frequent appointments may be

necessary. Once a stable and therapeutic medication regimen has been established, the frequency of appointments will decrease to approximately once per month.

3. **Psychotherapy:** Psychotherapy appointments last approximately 45-50 minutes, and usually occur weekly at a predetermined day and time. When I see an individual for psychotherapy, this may or may not include medication management as well. I will assess your individual history, and current concerns, and utilize a variety of psychotherapeutic techniques to facilitate you reaching your treatment goals. The risks of psychotherapy are primarily the discomfort and negative feelings that you may experience, as you discuss your thoughts and emotions. The benefits are an improved sense of mental health and well being, as well as potentially improved self esteem, relationships, and functioning in social and occupational functioning. Sometimes, as psychotherapy progresses, you may find that the “fit” is not appropriate; in these cases, I will certainly assist you in finding other treatment providers.

Confidentiality:

It is my legal and ethical duty to keep all sessions confidential. In the severe circumstances where I am concerned that you are an imminent danger to yourself, others, or unable to adequately provide for your own food, clothing, or shelter, I may be required to break confidentiality. In these situations, I will only reveal what information should be necessary to insure that you receive the best care possible. Other situations where I may need to break confidentiality in a limited fashion are: if you are being treated in an emergency room, if I suspect you are harming a minor or a vulnerable adult or if a judge requires me to provide information as part of a legal trial. Wherever possible, I would first discuss with you the urgency and necessity of the situation, with the goal of agreeing upon the need and extent of disclosure.

In the case of fitness for duty evaluations, or for health care professionals participating in a formal monitoring program, I am often required to provide documentation of my assessments, or periodic updates on treatment progress. You are allowed access to such documentation. I will always attempt to maintain your confidentiality and dignity to the extent possible, while providing the necessary or required information. As there may be variation on a case by case basis, we will always discuss such issues in detail prior to evaluation and treatment initiation.

Professional Fees and Reimbursement:

The fee for an initial psychiatric evaluation is \$450. The fee for psychotherapy appointments is \$300. The fee for medication management appointments is \$175. Fees for professional fitness for duty evaluations will be discussed on a case by case basis. Fees for specialized consultations, such as to drug and alcohol treatment centers, vary depending on specific needs and mutually agreed upon services and compensation.

My goal is that your treatment will occur during our scheduled time together. If circumstances dictate a significant amount of time outside of sessions, such as for extensive telephone calls, reviewing records, collecting collateral information, writing reports, or testifying, I will bill for the time by prorating your session fee.

I do not contract with insurance companies; however, upon your request, I am happy to provide a superbill which can be submitted to your insurance company, and will allow you to be reimbursed part or all of my professional fees.

Payment is collected at the beginning of each session, unless we agree otherwise. I accept cash, credit card (Visa/Mastercard) or check. There will be a \$25 service charge for returned checks.

I request that you advise me 24 business hours in advance of any cancellations. I do bill for no-shows, or cancellations that occur less than 24 business hours in advance. Please note that insurance companies will not reimburse for missed appointments. I will do my best to provide appointment reminder calls the day prior to your appointment, however please note that this is a courtesy and patients will still be held responsible for keeping their appointments.

When scheduling an initial consultation, I ask that a credit card be provided at the time of scheduling, in order to secure the appointment. Please note that there is a 48 business hour cancellation policy in effect for new evaluations. If sufficient notice of cancellations is not provided, 50 percent of the initial evaluation fee will be billed to the credit card on file.

Communication:

My voicemail number is: 949-612-3955. My email address is: mvasamd@gmail.com. I check my voicemail frequently between 9 am and 5 pm Monday through Friday. I do not routinely check my voicemail on weekends. I will return your call as promptly as possible, at least within one business day.

If you need to reach me urgently, there is a paging option on my outgoing message. If you have an emergent situation, please call 911 or go to your nearest emergency room. Please note that, although I do provide limited communication via email, it is not a secure or confidential form of communication, nor is it an appropriate way to reach me for urgent or emergent issues. If I will be unreachable or away for an extended period of time, I will leave the name and contact number of a trusted colleague for interim coverage.

Please sign and date below to indicate that you have read and agree to abide by the above office policies and procedures.

Patient name (please print): _____

Patient signature: _____

Date: _____

Psychiatrist name: Monisha Vasa, M.D.

Psychiatrist signature: _____