

VIRTUAL BEHAVIORAL HEALTH URGENT CARE

Frequently Asked Questions for GHS Staff, GHS Network Providers, and Community Partners

1. What is Virtual Behavioral Health Urgent Care (BHUC)?

BHUC is a 100% virtual service for persons located in Genesee County providing remote face-to-face video chat services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with licensed mental health professionals. Staff provide supportive chat sessions, safety screening, and full crisis assessment services when needed to assess for urgent needs.

2. How does a person get started with BHUC services? Is a referral required?

Call GHS 24/7/365 at 810.257.3740 or 877.346.3648 and staff will assist with getting a person connected. The person needing the service must be present, willing to engage in a session, and have access to a smartphone or electronic device with video capabilities. A referral from a health care provider is not required.

3. I am a health care worker, behavioral health care provider, professional, essential worker, or someone receiving this flyer. Is this service available to me or my family?

Yes, we all need a listening ear sometimes and are here to support you! The BHUC staff are specially trained to work confidentially with anyone providing services to the public during this unusually stressful time of the COVID pandemic.

4. How much does BHUC cost?

BHUC is available to persons located in Genesee County, regardless of insurance or ability to pay for services. We will not bill a person for supportive chat, safety screening, or crisis assessment services (what a person gets when they initially call in). However, if a person is referred for additional services following their initial visit, insurance billing may occur and a sliding scale fee is available.

5. Can BHUC staff authorize services?

BHUC can authorize services to inpatient psychiatric hospitals, crisis residential, crisis stabilization, and partial hospitalization programs.

6. What service will the BHUC provide for open GHS consumers during business hours?

Open consumers will receive a brief safety screening and, if warranted, a full crisis assessment screening to determine level of care. General support requests will be referred back to the care team.

7. Can children use BHUC? If so, does a parent or guardian have to be present?

Children can use BHUC. Children under 14 must have a parent or guardian present. Teens 14 and older do not need parental consent. Children under 18 must have a parent or guardian available for referrals to higher levels of care.

8. What can a person expect at a visit? Is there a wait time? How long do sessions usually last?

The BHUC staff will collect some basic information (name, phone number, current location) and conduct a basic safety screening before conducting a support visit or crisis assessment. The wait time will vary depending on how busy BHUC staff are with current volume and the option to make an appointment instead of waiting is available. The session is approximately 45-55 minutes.

9. Is an appointment needed?

No, advance notice is not required. An appointment can be made to secure a time for the same, or next, day.

10. What type of staff provide the services at the BHUC? What kind of training do they have?

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All staff at the BHUC are licensed mental health professionals including social workers, counselors, and nurses with a mental health background. All staff are trained in crisis and safety assessment, as well as psychological first aid techniques.

11. Are interpreter services available? Is an advance notice appointment required?

Yes. The BHUC staff will engage interpreter services at the time of the call during business hours. If someone is not immediately available, an appointment will be scheduled as soon as possible with an interpreter. Calls outside of traditional business hours can be conducted via TTY phone connection at the time of the call, or a video chat session can be scheduled with an interpreter based on the preference of the caller. The BHUC is working to make available on demand interpreter services 24 hours a day.