



## **What to Expect When Your Child is at Clara's House**

### What is Clara's House/Partial Hospitalization?

Clara's House is a behavioral health treatment program with the goals of assessing and stabilizing severe symptoms of depression, anxiety, impulsivity, and behavioral problems. Patients are generally divided into three age groups:

- Child: 5 to 9 years old (grades K-4)
- Early Adolescent: 10 to 14 years old (grades 5-8)
- Adolescent: 15 to 18 years old (grades 9-12)

### What are the program hours of Clara's House?

Monday–Friday, 8:00am–3:00pm during the school year, and 8:00am–2:00pm in the summer.

### How long will my child be at Clara's House?

Children generally participate in the program about 3 to 6 weeks. Insurance issues can sometimes suddenly impact the length of stay.

### What will my child do at Clara's House?

Your child will be participating in many types of group therapy including: psychotherapy group, skills group, yoga/mindfulness group, art therapy, and recreational therapy. Patients on the Child Unit participate in occupational therapy as well. Additionally, your child will meet individually with his or her therapist and attend weekly family therapy sessions. Your child will also meet with a psychiatry provider two times per week for ongoing care and evaluation. The provider directs patient care and manages any medication that your child may be taking.

### What will my child learn from all this?

Your child will learn how to regulate his or her emotions and understand why this regulation is important. Your child will also grow in his or her understanding of how therapy works, which will make outpatient appointments more effective. Your child will begin to understand and apply a variety of

strategies such as mindfulness, coping skills, communication skills, and anger management skills. Most significantly, it is likely that your child will experience an increase in self-esteem and self-acceptance while at Clara's House.

### Who will be caring for my child?

Your child will become part of a small group that includes peers of similar age in addition to a core group of staff. The staff on each unit function as a multidisciplinary team including psychiatry providers, psychotherapists, nurses, a Program Facilitator, Behavioral Health Associates, a classroom teacher, and a paraprofessional. Specialty staff, who work with children from each of the units, consist of art therapists, a recreational therapist, yoga/mindfulness therapist, occupational therapist, and occupational therapist assistant.

### What is expected of parents when their child is at Clara's House?

- Participate in the admission process which lasts about 2-3 hours (this can be shorter or longer depending on complexity).
- Complete and return the mandatory communication sheet daily.
- Return phone calls as quickly as possible.
- Ensure that your child attends programming each day as daily attendance is mandatory. If your child is ill, please call the unit nurse to discuss this.
- Share concerns, ask questions, and let staff know what would help your child.
- Engage your child by asking about his or her day at Clara's House and review/reinforce what your child is learning about.
- Participate in family therapy sessions weekly, as family involvement is critical for optimal care.
- Attend a discharge planning meeting toward the end of your child's stay that can include staff from your child's school and any other professionals that may be involved in your child's life.

What about my child's education while at Clara's House? Education is provided by St. Cloud School District 742. Clara's House collaborates with District 742 so that education is provided during the programming day. Your child will participate in two

hours of classroom time each day that school is in session (according to the District 742 academic calendar). The teacher at Clara's House will be in contact with you and/or the appropriate school staff to help determine the educational topics that your child will focus on while at Clara's House.

#### How is transportation handled at Clara's House?

In most cases, your child's home school district is responsible for providing transportation for your child during his or her time at Clara's House. The teachers at Clara's House will help with these arrangements. This process can sometimes take a few days to be completed. **Therefore, parents are responsible for arranging or providing transportation for their child to and from Clara's House until school transportation is in place.** Additionally, Clara's House is a hospital program which means it is open on non-school days. Parents are responsible for arranging or providing transportation for their children to and from Clara's House on non-school days when the school district does not usually provide transportation. For example, school districts will not provide transportation in the summer months.

#### Can my child continue to see his or her therapist and/or psychiatry provider while at Clara's House?

Unfortunately, no. Insurance typically only covers the services of one provider and one therapist at a time. However, know that your child will be seen regularly by a psychiatry provider and therapist throughout the duration of his or her stay at Clara's House. Please put outside psychiatric, therapy, and skills appointments on hold while your child is at Clara's House.

Why is my child's Clara's House binder/tool bag important? Each patient on the Adolescent Unit and Early Adolescent Unit is given a binder to help organize the information they receive from Clara's House staff. Patients on the Child Unit will receive a Clara's House tool bag that contains fidgets and other helpful calming tools. Patients are introduced to a lot of new information, so having these materials helps them teach family members what they are learning about in addition to providing a good review for your child after discharge.

#### What can my child bring to Clara's House?

Patients should have their Clara's House binder and completed communication sheet each day. A jacket, hat, gloves, boots, and snow pants may also be necessary. There is a gym at Clara's House, so tennis shoes are helpful. Electronic devices will be secured upon arrival and returned for use at the end of the day. You will be informed if anything else is needed.

#### Why are family therapy sessions important?

Family therapy helps improve the overall functioning of the family by addressing needs such as improving communication, strengthening relationships, and increasing each family member's understanding of alternative perspectives/feelings.

What is a discharge plan? One of the most important goals at Clara's House is the development of a plan to establish services and routines that will help your child maintain the progress made during his or her time at Clara's House. Some of these services may include outpatient therapy, psychiatry appointments, case management services, and in-home therapy/skills. Your child's school will also be contacted to help with the creation of a plan for academic success. It is very important that you as a parent establish relationships with these service providers and your child's school because most of the staff at Clara's House can no longer participate in your child's care after discharge.

#### What are Bridging Therapy Services?

Bridging Therapy provides a unique opportunity for youth and families to meet with a Clara's House therapist before starting the program. Children and adolescents who have recently discharged are also able to meet with a Clara's House therapist for ongoing support if they are unable to see a traditional therapist within a reasonable amount of time.

#### What is Parent Enrichment?

Parent Enrichment is an education and support group open to any parent/caregiver who has a child at Clara's House. This is an opportunity for parents to feel supported by connecting with other parents who have been through similar experiences. Parents will also learn about effective parenting approaches and increase their understanding of behavioral health.