

Neuropsychological and Psychological Services during Covid-19

Hybrid In-Clinic Model

While we are very enthusiastic to see improvements in the pandemic situation and recognize that new guidance from the CDC and adjustments to mandates from Governor Mills have been relaxed when it comes to mask-wearing, our clinic for now is going to continue to require that a mask be worn by all people in the building. We are doing this in the interest of personal safety for all people regardless of health and personal risk status, recognizing that even mild Covid 19 illness is causing persisting symptoms and impairment for some people and that the vaccinations, while very effective, are still limited in preventing illness and transmission. Additionally, we are doing this to contribute to reducing spread of the virus, which in turn reduces the opportunities for the virus to mutate into potentially more harmful and contagious forms. Preventing spread and these mutation opportunities will ultimately allow for a return to normal for everyone. We will continue to monitor scientific information as it becomes available and will adjust our policies accordingly.

We are happy to answer any questions you may have regarding how this impacts test results and your personal safety. Certain clinical evaluations and screenings can be done completely by video-audio link without needing to be present in the building. If that is your preference, your provider will decide and advise what we can do using this method. This will be done on a case by case basis. While we are doing everything we can to reduce risk of contagion in the building, there is no zero risk scenario.

If either party (you or NCMA staff) have symptoms of- or have recently been exposed to COVID 19, the in- clinic portion of services may be rescheduled. Late cancellation fees directly related to COVID-19 will not apply. By signing this consent form, you agree to inform us if you, a member of your household, or anyone with whom you have had contact, has recently had symptoms of COVID 19, has potentially been exposed to COVID 19, or has had a positive test for COVID 19. Our team members will similarly monitor themselves and let you know of any symptoms, incidental exposures or positive test results so that you can make your own decision about risk.

General In-Building Policies & Procedures:

- You, and anyone accompanying you, must wear a mask into the building. This must be a well-fitted appropriate cloth mask, a surgical mask, or an N-95/KF-94/KN-94 type (non-vented) mask. If you do not have such a mask, we will provide one. In this instance, you would call us from the parking lot when you arrive (594-2952) and wait for us to bring one out.
- You may bring one other person to accompany you during the interview if desired, but that individual may not be present during the testing, and if that person waits for you during the testing, they will have to wear a mask throughout that time, while in the waiting room.
- While you need to continue to wear a mask when in all common areas (waiting room, hallways, restroom) in the building and when a staff member is in the same room with you, you will be able to remove your mask when in the exam room by yourself for periods of time, which for most people will be for the majority of the appointment, as much of the process will be done by video from room to room.

- Please use hand sanitizer in the entryway OR wash hands immediately upon entering. Use hand sanitizer or wash hands after handling any paper/pens and after touching your face.

The exam room and its materials will be sanitized between occupants, and time will be allowed in between appointments for proper ventilation and recirculation of the air via HEPA filtration. The room will be set up with the necessary testing materials, secure audio-video link, and hand sanitizer. You may remove your mask when in the testing office with the door closed. You must put the mask back on if a staff member needs to enter the room for any reason or if you leave the room. Most often, we are doing interviewing by the video set up from office to exam room so that masks do not need to be worn and to limit time spent together in a small room. The testing is done via a mix of in-person masked and by video-audio interface, depending on the nature of the test and the needs of the person being tested. There are cameras in the room to allow us to view your work space and activity, making this as much like testing in person as possible. Video is seen only by clinical staff and we are not making a recording. If other people need to be interviewed separately, such as a family member, this will be arranged by secure audio-video link or by phone. Evaluation feedback (if applicable), and if not done during the same day as testing, will be done by secure audio-video link or by phone. This can be done from your home or in our building if you prefer video and do not have access from your home.

There are some potential risks and limitations of this method. We encourage you to ask your physician for guidance regarding your personal risks in terms of potential exposure to Covid 19. In terms of risk to the assessment process and outcome, please be aware of the following: This arrangement relies heavily on technology; if it malfunctions, it is possible that the evaluation could be delayed until the malfunction is resolved or we might need to switch to doing all of the process in person with masks. You would be given the option to reschedule as opposed to doing the process in person. If video or audio malfunctions in the middle of a test, we may not be able to use the results of that test or may need to repeat it or a similar test. We use a HIPAA compliant, secure tele-health system that is privacy-protected (Doxy). However, as with any technology, there is always the possibility that others could gain access to personal information shared over video-conference.

Regarding validity of tests done via the video-audio link, limited studies show administering some of our tests in person and by video are approximately equivalent. In other words, the same test administered face to face versus over video conference from clinic to clinic showed a similar level of performance. However, not all of our tests have been studied in this manner. Extrapolating from the research that has been done, we judged that the other tests utilized likely would have reasonable equivalency as well. For those tests that do not seem like they can be done in a reasonably equivalent manner, we do not use the test (and find another way to assess that area) or do that testing in the exam room with both parties wearing masks. Our observations of the testing process are more limited than in a face to face interaction, though the addition of cameras largely addresses that issue. Despite our best efforts, there could be some impact on results that is not completely understood at this time related to the alterations in exam process combined with pandemic-related concerns. Due to the unknowns with this new method, it is possible that results of the evaluation may be called into question by third parties (e.g., attorneys, schools, insurance companies, etc.). If we are evaluating you for a legal application, such as a lawsuit, we advise your attorney or the requesting party first of this current set up.

Telehealth & Phone Services

Feedback (if applicable), additional interviews, and certain evaluations may be done remotely (not in clinic) by Doxy, a secure tele-health video conferencing platform. You, or your family member, must have access to a stable internet connection to use the video-conference option.

Potential Risks to Confidentiality: We have a legal and ethical duty to do our best to protect all communications in this remote evaluation. On our end, we take reasonable steps to ensure your privacy. We use a video-audio telehealth system that is privacy-protected (Doxy) and HIPAA compliant. Due to the security of this program, it is not likely that other people would gain online access to our private communications, but it is still possible. We cannot personally guarantee your privacy, even though we use a secure, private platform and internet access. You should take steps to ensure the privacy of our communications as well. For example, avoid using a public WiFi system and only use secure networks. Also, be sure to have passwords to protect the device you use for any video based meetings. If you are not in our building for services, it is important for you to make sure you find a private, quiet place where you will not be interrupted.

The extent of confidentiality, the exceptions to confidentiality, and the other conditions of services at NCMA that we outlined in our general Agreement and Consent still apply in addition to the above. Please let us know if you have any questions about exceptions to confidentiality or any other questions regarding this adjusted evaluation format.

By signing below, you acknowledge that you understand that there is still a potential risk of exposure to the novel corona virus or other such illness and that you agree to follow the safety protocols outlined above in order to receive services in our clinic.

When you sign this form, it will create an agreement between you and Neuropsychology and Concussion Management Associates, LLC indicating you have read the document agree to follow all policies outlined.

Examinee, Patient, or Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Printed name: _____

Patient or Examinee name if other than above: _____