

Client Orientation to Nursing and Medical Department

At Harmony we have two nursing/medical stations. One station is in the Main Lodge and another is in the Swickard Building. The Nursing/Medical staff includes Nurses, Medical Assistants (MA) and a Physician (MD). Nurses are Licensed Practical Nurses (LPN) and Registered Nurses (RN).

You will be admitted to the Main Lodge initially and the Nurse will assess your condition and determine if you will be residing in the Main Lodge Observation Room or in the Main Lodge Upstairs. This is based on how you present physically and emotionally on admission. You will be checked on frequently while you are in the observation room. Nursing staff will check on you during the night when you are in the lodge. Please do not be alarmed when the nurse enters your room. The nursing/medical staff are watching out for your safety. If your physical condition changes you will be moved back to observation or to the Lodge for further observation or monitoring as needed.

After you have provided information about your medical history and substance use the RN/LPN will contact the physician to obtain admission orders which include all the medications and lab tests that you will need while at Harmony. Please be very honest and open about your recent use of alcohol, medications and/or street drugs.

Your vital signs (temperature, heart rate, respirations, blood pressure and pulse oximetry) will be taken every eight hours initially and then depending on the results will be taken less frequently. Typically we take your vital signs at 8 am, 4pm and 8pm. Blood will be drawn for laboratory testing on admission and then as needed depending on the medications that are prescribed for you or the symptoms you are exhibiting. Your urine will be tested initially and then randomly or as ordered by the physician. Your blood alcohol level will be tested on admission.

Labs are drawn Monday through Friday starting at 6:30 am. You will be given medications to assist you in reducing your withdrawal symptoms and possibility of a seizure as needed. The RN or LPN will administer these medications based on what the Harmony physician prescribes for you during your stay at Harmony. You will get your medications at the Main Lodge (men) or the Swickard Building (women). For more information please read "What to Expect from Withdrawal" or "A Very Brief Outline of Commonly used Medications in the Treatment of Substance Abuse." Medications are usually given at 8 am, 4pm and 8pm. Some meds are given at different times for example at 2pm. Please come to the station to get your medications from the nurse.

Once you no longer require medications to help with your withdrawal symptoms you will be transferred to a cabin. This is based on multiple criteria for example, your vital signs and symptoms, lab values, sleeping pattern, and the last time you received certain medications. This is individualized for each client based on medical criteria. Typically clients are in the Main Lodge for 1 week but can be in the lodge for up to ten days. A cabin criteria checklist will be used by the nursing/medical staff to see if it's appropriate to move you.

The RN/LPN will provide teaching about the medications you are prescribed. They will give you copies of information from the pharmacy and they will review that information with you. If you have any questions please ask. Please note we cannot give any medication without an order from the physician so please be patient as we obtain those orders from the physician.

You will see the physician around the 7th day of your admission. This way the physician has the information he needs (lab results, nursing observations, counseling evaluations etc.) to help him determine what additional needs you may have. Our physician is a board certified family practitioner with specialty training in addiction medicine.

Please report the following symptoms to the nursing/medical staff:

- Difficulty sleeping
- Headache (we are at high altitude so please drink plenty of water)
- Nausea
- Feeling anxious, nervous
- Shakiness, tremors
- Seizures
- Diarrhea

We will do whatever we can to make your stay here comfortable and productive. There will be times when the nursing/medical staff will encourage you to attend lectures instead of taking medications as the medications will interfere with your group process. Your recovery will be enhanced by taking this recommendation. Please discuss this with your counselor as well so as a team we can decide what is in your best interest.

In the event of a medical emergency you will be responded to by the Medical/Nursing staff who will determine if a 911 response is required. If so, 911 will be called and the Estes Park Medical Center Ambulance crew will respond. The crew is staffed with paramedics (EMT-P) and emergency medical technician's (EMT) they will assess your condition and then transport you to the Estes Park Medical Center Emergency department for further Medical/Nursing/medical care. Seizures at Harmony are considered medical emergencies so 911 will be called. Typically clients stay in the Emergency Department (ED) for several hours. During your ED stay clients may have labs drawn and may be given intravenous (IV) fluids and/or medications to treat the seizures. Over night stays or transportation to another facility may be required for serious medical emergencies.

We hope that we will be a resource for your recovery. Please let us know how we can be of assistance during your stay.

Thanks,

The Nursing/Medical Staff