Policy Title: 6004V.2 Client Information and No-Show Policy
Patient Age Group: (X) N/A ( ) All Ages ( ) Pediatric ( ) Adult

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that clients are clearly informed about the services provided by Centro Savila Behavioral Health Services, including their rights and responsibilities related to appointments, and the expectations regarding attendance. This policy aims to enhance communication, reduce missed appointments, and maintain efficient scheduling to better serve all clients. Additionally, it ensures that clients are aware of the consequences of missed appointments (no-shows) and the steps they can take to reschedule or cancel in a timely manner.

Scope:

This policy applies to all clients receiving services at Centro Savila Behavioral Health Services, as well as all staff members responsible for scheduling and managing client appointments.

Definitions:

1. **No-Show:** A no-show occurs when a client fails to attend a scheduled appointment without notifying the clinic in advance. A no-show is defined as not attending the scheduled session, or arriving more than 15 minutes late without prior notification.
2. **Late Cancellation:** A late cancellation occurs when a client cancels or reschedules an appointment with less than 24 hours' notice prior to the scheduled appointment.
3. **Appointment Confirmation:** A process in which clients are contacted to confirm their scheduled appointment, typically within 24-48 hours prior to the appointment time.
4. **Rescheduling:** The process by which clients who miss an appointment or need to change the date or time of a scheduled appointment are offered alternative dates or times for treatment.

Policy:

Centro Savila is committed to providing accessible, timely, and consistent care to all clients. To ensure efficient scheduling and to provide care to as many clients as possible, it is essential that clients attend their scheduled appointments or notify the clinic in advance if they need to cancel or reschedule.

- **Information on Services and Expectations:** Clients will be informed about the clinic's no-show policy at the time of intake and will receive a written copy of this policy.
- **No-Show Consequences:** Repeated no-shows may result in limitations on scheduling, discharge from services, or the need for a referral to other providers.
- **Flexible and Compassionate Communication:** Centro Savila recognizes that there may be extenuating circumstances that prevent clients from attending scheduled appointments. Our policy aims to balance operational efficiency with compassion, ensuring that clients are not penalized unfairly for circumstances beyond their control.

Procedure:

1. Client Information and No-Show Policy Communication:

- **Initial Intake Process:**
    - During the initial intake, clients will be provided with a written copy of the no-show policy, which includes:
        - An explanation of what constitutes a no-show.
        - The importance of keeping scheduled appointments for their treatment progress.
        - The process for cancelling or rescheduling an appointment with at least 24 hours' notice.
        - A reminder that services will not be denied based on an inability to pay but that clients are expected to attend or cancel appointments in a timely manner.
- **Acknowledgment:**
    - Clients will be required to sign an acknowledgment form, confirming that they have received and understood the no-show policy. This acknowledgment will be included in the client's record.
- **Appointment Confirmation:**
    - Staff will call or send a text or email reminder 24 to 48 hours prior to a scheduled appointment to confirm attendance. Clients are encouraged to respond to confirm or cancel.
    - Clients will be reminded that missed appointments or late cancellations affect their progress and may limit access to future services.

2. No-Show and Late Cancellation Definition and Procedures:

- **No-Show Definition:**
  - A **no-show** is defined as failing to attend a scheduled appointment without notifying the clinic at least 24 hours in advance. If a client does not attend the appointment or arrives more than 15 minutes late without notifying staff, this is considered a no-show.
- **Late Cancellation Definition:**
  - A **late cancellation** is when a client cancels or reschedules an appointment less than 24 hours before the scheduled time.
  - Clients should notify the clinic as soon as possible, ideally at least 24 hours before the scheduled appointment, to avoid being charged a fee or having the appointment marked as a no-show.

3. No-Show and Late Cancellation Consequences:

- **First Occurrence:**
  - If a client misses an appointment without prior notice or cancels with less than 24 hours' notice, they will receive a reminder of the no-show policy and the importance of timely attendance. The client will be contacted by phone or email to reschedule the appointment.
- **Second Occurrence:**
  - If a client misses a second scheduled appointment within a 6-month period, they will be informed that continued no-shows may result in limitations on future appointments.
  - A staff member will discuss with the client the impact of missed appointments on their treatment progress and explore any barriers preventing attendance (e.g., transportation, childcare, work schedules, etc.). The clinic may offer solutions such as telehealth sessions, flexible scheduling, or referrals to community resources to assist with attendance.
- **Third Occurrence:**
  - After a third no-show or late cancellation within a 6-month period, the client may be temporarily discharged from services or placed on a "waitlist" for future appointments. Before discharge, the clinician or case manager will meet with the client to discuss the reasons for missed appointments and determine if further services or accommodations can be made.
- **Exceptions:**
  - **Emergent Situations:** Clients who miss appointments due to emergent or unavoidable situations (e.g., hospitalization, family emergency) will not be penalized. Documentation may be required for these situations.
  - **Rescheduling:** Clients will be encouraged to reschedule any missed appointments as soon as possible and will be given priority in scheduling if they have missed an appointment.

- **Suspension or Discharge from Services:**
    - If a client continues to miss appointments or repeatedly fails to follow the no-show policy, the client may be formally discharged from services after a discussion with their care team and a referral to alternative providers.

4. Rescheduling and Appointment Flexibility:

- **Rescheduling Process:**
    - Clients who miss an appointment or need to reschedule will be assisted in scheduling a new appointment within the next available timeframe.
    - If the client requests a new appointment outside of standard hours, the clinic will do its best to accommodate such requests, but availability may be limited.
- **Alternative Communication:**
    - In cases where clients are unable to attend in-person appointments, telehealth or virtual sessions may be offered, if appropriate and available.
- **Reminder Systems:**
    - Reminder calls, texts, or emails will be sent 24 to 48 hours before each scheduled appointment to reduce the likelihood of no-shows and late cancellations.

Staff Responsibilities:

1. **Clinical Staff (Therapists, Counselors, Case managers, etc.):**
    - Ensure that clients receive and understand the no-show policy during the intake process.
    - Discuss the importance of attending scheduled appointments during treatment sessions and incorporate any barriers to attendance into the treatment planning process.
    - Keep accurate records of missed appointments and no-shows in the client's file.
2. **Administrative and Scheduling Staff:**
    - Confirm appointments with clients 24 to 48 hours in advance and document confirmations.
    - Track attendance and no-show rates for each client and follow up on missed appointments according to the established procedure.
    - Help clients reschedule missed appointments and offer alternative solutions if attendance is a challenge.
3. **Supervisors and Clinical Managers:**
    - Review and monitor patterns of no-shows and late cancellations to ensure Centro Savila is addressing client needs and adjusting scheduling or care strategies as necessary.
    - Provide additional support for clients with ongoing attendance issues to explore solutions, such as transportation assistance, scheduling flexibility, or telehealth services.

Client Rights:

- Clients have the right to be informed about the clinic's policies on missed appointments and to have this information explained clearly during the intake process.
- Clients have the right to cancel or reschedule appointments with appropriate notice (24 hours) and to be informed of any consequences for no-shows or late cancellations.
- Clients have the right to request alternative arrangements (e.g., telehealth) to facilitate attendance when necessary.

Confidentiality:

- All client information, including attendance records and communications regarding missed appointments, will be kept confidential in accordance with HIPAA and Centro Savila's confidentiality policies.

Training and Evaluation:

- All staff will receive training on the no-show policy and how to communicate expectations and consequences effectively to clients.
- The policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it aligns with best practices for client attendance and appointment management.

Policy Review:

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure it meets the needs of the clinic, aligns with client care goals, and adheres to current regulations and best practices.

Approved by: William G. Wagner, Executive Director
Updated: 07/24/2021

Signature: