

A B U N D A N C E

practice-building

Insurance Panel Appeal

Ms./Mr./Dr. Whomever,

I understand that you have a tightly managed network and that your panel is currently closed to new providers. However, my experience & expertise in eating disorders and sexual trauma are needed on your panel. As I'm sure you are aware, treating people suffering from eating disorders is a specialty. Those without proper training and experience jeopardize clients' recovery. In my experience, many clinicians "check the box" for eating disorders when presented the opportunity thinking the disease process mimics that of addiction, which they may have more experience in. They do not know best practices, have working relationships with dietitians and physicians, or have connections within the eating disorder treatment community to connect clients with groups. In my conversations with members of the eating disorder treatment community in Asheville, many of the providers have small, part time private practices while also working at the treatment centers in the area. Many of these practices stay full as a result of little availability. Eating disorders are the most fatal mental illness. As a result, it is vital that adequate and timely treatment is available. With knowledgeable, evidence-based treatment, the time it takes to recover is shortened, thus saving time & money for both the patient and the insurance company. I have also been told by area clinicians that Asheville is in need of therapists who treat survivors of sexual trauma, a population I have been working with since 1998.

Before moving to Asheville, I had a private practice in Seattle from June 2011-June 2014. I have been on the Board of Directors of the Puget Sound Chapter of the International Association of Eating Disorder Professionals since fall of 2011 during which time I served as Secretary. This year I was granted the Certified Eating Disorder Specialist (CEDS) by the International Association of Eating Disorder Professionals, a distinction that takes years to earn. Prior to opening my practice in Seattle, I was the Eating Disorder Treatment Team Coordinator at the University of Georgia. I worked

within the University's Counseling and Psychiatric Services, which was housed in the University Health Center. The Eating Disorder Treatment Team was a multidisciplinary team that used an integrative approach to eating disorder treatment which included mental health, physical health, and nutrition counseling. I oversaw treatment planning for all new clients presenting with an eating disorder while maintaining a clinical caseload. My experience in eating disorders began in 2001 when I worked as a psychological technician at The Renfrew Center, an inpatient eating disorder treatment center which has 10 locations on the east coast. At The Renfrew Center I facilitated meal groups and a cognitive-behavioral support group. My work day was spent in the milieu, which provided many learning opportunities. Following this job, the majority of my research in graduate school was focused on the relationship between eating disorders and sexual trauma.

In addition to my experience with eating disorder treatment, I have significant experience working with survivors of sexual trauma. Roughly 30% of my caseload at the University of Georgia included clients diagnosed with Acute Stress Disorder, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, or other disorders presenting after sexual assault or sexual abuse. I facilitated a weekly group for survivors of sexual trauma. For two years, I served on the Board of Directors for The Cottage, the Sexual Assault Center and Child Advocacy Center in my former region. As a counselor, I worked exclusively with survivors of sexual trauma and their loved ones at the Sexual Assault Center of Northeast Georgia from 2003-2005. During this time I ran weekly support groups including an Incest Survivor's Group, a Date & Acquaintance Rape Group, and Heroes Great and Small (for children aged 6-12). I volunteered as a crisis counselor and on-call advocate with the same agency from 1998-2001.

Practicing therapy for over a decade, I have had ample opportunity to work with clients with anxiety, depression, adjustment disorders, substance abuse struggles, relationship problems, and sexual dysfunction. My three strongest areas of practice are eating disorders, sexual trauma, and anxiety disorders.

I have attached my CV. I am licensed in North Carolina as an Licensed Clinical Social Worker (license # C008799). I have 3,000,000/1,000,000

professional liability insurance through Health Providers Service Organization. Please let me know if I can provide more information for you. I hope we will be able to work together to meet client needs.

Sincerely,
Allison Puryear, LCSW, CEDS
Psychotherapist
www.allisonpuryear.com