

Barnabas Clinical Services

Thank you for taking the time to learn more about our new program. We hope this document will serve as both an inspirational and informative tool to shed light on the dire need for mental health services in the Wimberley Valley. We have taken great care to partner with many local organizations who serve our community, to get their feedback, and to hear the voices of those who need these services directly—local students, teachers, parents, doctors, first responders, and more. Mental health impacts ALL of us; together, we can be a healthier Wimberley Valley.

Our goal in sharing this document is twofold. First- find community partners that want to walk beside us as we open our doors and begin offering this vital service to our community. Second, to share with our community and those who can change the accurate picture of mental health needs and lack of equitable access.

Whether you can make a small donation, help us fund a large portion of our new program, or spread the word about what we are doing—your contribution is excellent and makes a difference.

Why Barnabas Clinical Services?

Over the last 19 years, The Barnabas Connection has served in the Wimberley Valley. One of the consistent needs we have seen in our community is a lack of mental health resources. As part of our Strategic Plan for 2023, we are starting two new programs- Clinical Services and Educational Programming. Our request aligns with the philanthropic interests of our donors and funders and is also one of our community members' most requested services. Through our research, we have found a shared vision by the vast majority of our community to provide equitable access to mental health services. Any family or individual who lives within the WISD Attendance Zone will be eligible to receive these services.

We hope as you read through this document you will see our vision and be inspired to partner with us as we move forward to provide equitable mental health services in the Wimberley Valley.

Thank you,

Kate Sowell
Executive Director
Barnabas Connection
512-585-2593

Jenny Kenley, LPC-S, NCC
Licensed Professional Counselor
Clinical Services Chair
Barnabas Connection



Mission/Purpose

Barnabas Clinical Services

Barnabas Clinical Services exists to provide quality, low-cost mental health services to the Wimberley Community. Our desire is not to turn anyone away due to a lack of financial resources. Our target population includes those that are uninsured or underinsured. Wimberley faces increased mental healthcare needs and a shortage of providers and community resources. There are no providers who currently accept Medicare and Medicaid clients. For those that have private insurance, the wait times are several weeks to months for an initial appointment.

Year One

One Clinician provides 15 hours of direct support per week.
One Administrative Person provides 20 hours a week of support, including scheduling and generating required weekly and monthly reports.

Year Two

Two Clinicians provide 30 hours of direct support per week.
One Administrative Person provides 30 hours a week of support, including scheduling and generating required weekly and monthly reports.
Addition of Group Services

Year Three

Three Clinicians provide 45 hours of direct support per week.
Weekly Group Support Provided
Providing support in independent space.

Current Identified Need

Young mothers, domestic violence, teens, moms, bilingual services, alcohol, and drug abuse

Referrals

Referrals to Clinical Services will come through the Barnabas Case Manager (Daphne Smith) and EMS giving our program information to Wimberley Valley Residents when they are called out to a mental health call. Individuals with needs will be referred to Clinical Services to schedule an intake appointment. Standard of care: we aim to schedule individuals within two weeks of initial contact.

Record Keeping

EHR: TherapyNotes
Cost: \$100 per month
Includes: One clinician and unlimited support persons
This cost will increase by approx \$30 per month with the addition of another clinician.

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| Program Costs | Max Cost |
|----------------------|-----------------|

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| Clinician: 1099 paid by number of clients seen at a reimbursement rate of \$85 per session for LPC/LCSW. \$70 per session for LPC Associate | \$5,100 per month \$61,200 per year |
| Administrative Person: \$18 per hour 20-hour work week | \$1,440 per month \$17,280 per year |
| EHR Software: TherapyNotes Cost: \$100 per month | \$1200 per year |
| Messaging Software: HIPAA compliant with BSA agreement in place GSuite (email) | Included with EHR Software |
| Starting Year 2 Reimbursement for group to clinician \$100 per group | \$4,000 per year for year one (40 groups) |

Sustainability

Our program would be fully sustainable in three years as all client funds received will be directly reinvested into the Clinical Services Fund. We are also seeking additional community partners.

Other Information

Clinicians will carry liability insurance and be required to provide proof of insurance yearly.

Group Sessions

Barnabas will not charge for groups. Community members will have the option to donate what they can when attending a group.

***Ideas for groups**

- Narcotics Anonymous - ages 17-25
- High School Group
- Young Adult Group - ages 18-25
- Grief Group
- Trauma
- Pregnancy loss/loss of a child
- Parenting Support Group

Reimbursement for group to clinician \$100 per group

Cost to Client for Clinical Services

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Psychological research supports that when clients have a financial investment in the therapy process, it contributes to a successful outcome. While Barnabas agrees with the need for client investment, we remain committed to providing quality mental health services without financial barriers. As such, we have created a fee schedule reflecting this commitment. Barnabas will reinvest the funds collected from clients into the Clinical Services program and help contribute to its long-term sustainability.

Suggested Rate for Clinical Services Fees

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| Less than \$25,000 | \$20 |
| \$25,000-\$50,000 | \$40 |
| \$50,000-\$75,000 | \$65 |
| More than \$75,000 | \$85 |

**No Client will be turned away due to financial hardships. Clients will be able to work directly with the clinical services assistant regarding payment options.

Follow up Questions for Barnabas Clinical Services

To help understand our program better, we have prepared a list of typical follow-up questions. If you have additional questions, don't hesitate to contact our Executive Director or Clinical Services Chair. (contact information on the title page).

1. Please describe the need for this program using local health or health-related outputs or outcomes. What are the supporting stats for this?

To our knowledge, there has not been an official study on Wimberley's mental health needs. Like other areas, Wimberley is combined with Hays County when state officials consider the need. And like other areas, it never tells the story of Wimberley. For example, Wimberley is often considered a community of well-resourced citizens. However, we know that **18.9% of children in the WISD footprint live below the poverty line**, and when we compare that to the rest of Hays County (13.6%), it is **5.3% percent higher**. While the community of Wimberley comprises 2,837 people and the community of Woodcreek comprises 2,279, the local school system serves more than 2000 students. The footprint of the Wimberley Valley and the citizens Barnabas Serves is much larger, serving **16,107 people**.

The need for increased mental health services is not in question. Initially, we hoped that it was just a matter of connection, and we began working to identify providers in our community. We conducted several attempts at this stage of planning. We learned that our local providers are full and most unable to respond to counseling requests. We found only one provider willing to work with the uninsured or underinsured. We could locate only two providers that accept insurance of any kind. These included one provider who accepts only BCBS and works a less than part-time schedule. The average cost per session is \$150. There were some additional options via telehealth, but this is the primary nonmedical determinant of health in our community. Large areas of our community need internet service.

We have continuously reached out to and referred to state resources. And while we have tremendous respect for the individuals doing this excellent and hard work, the truth for our

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community is that it hasn't worked. The result was this effort aimed to create a program specifically for the needs of this community.

2. Knowing this is a new program, please estimate the referral numbers.

When we held the Community Conversation with the St. David's Foundation at our office, Mental Health was among the top listed needs by many of those in attendance. We have reached out to some of those groups to gather an estimate of how many referrals they believe they will be able to process per year to Barnabas Clinical Services.

WISD- on average, our High School Wellness Center Averages 800 students per semester. While this is a great short-term solution, many students would benefit greatly from counseling outside of school.

- Blue Hole Primary reported 12 students who needed outside counseling. Still, they needed an appropriate place to refer to due to a lack of affordable options in the area for the families.
- We are working to get the numbers from the other campuses but are aware that as the age level rises, so does the need for mental health care.

Christus Health- refers to an estimated 100 patients annually for mental health services. In speaking with one of the Dr. at this location, he believes there would be an estimated 450 referrals per year between the clinics combined in Wimberley.

Wimberley EMS has continually reported to us that mental health calls are consistently among the highest they receive. In addition to referring community members for services, the EMS could use this service after a severe call when needing to debrief as a group. They estimate they would refer around 100 community members per year.

Hill Country Women's Health Collective- 5 per month and more as they grow their services.

VFW-while we are currently partnering with the VFW to refer Veterans to VET REC for Rec Therapy, this would provide an additional level of care for their families. The data shows that this is a critical need in our community. The unadjusted rate of Suicide in 2020 among U.S. Veterans was 31.7 per 100,000. Over the period from 2001 through 2020, age- and sex-adjusted suicide rates for Veterans peaked in 2018 and then fell in 2019 and 2020. From 2018 to 2020, age- and sex-adjusted suicide rates for Veterans fell by 9.7%, leaving a rate of 22% per 100,000 or 22,000 veterans who committed Suicide. For Hays County, the following occurred between January and June of 2023. We have had 14 Veterans fall to Suicide in our County. In the Wimberley WISD area, we have had 3 Veteran Deaths from Suicide this year thus far. Because the Wimberley Valley has minimal mental health, and the closest Hospital is in San Marcos, we are responsible for helping our residents. The VFW (Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 6441) is one of the largest and most active non-profits drawing members and support from a 50-mile radius.

Churches-many churches have expressed an interest in referring over members. We have spoken with 2 for their estimated numbers. There are 12 churches in Wimberley, which would be a significant potential source of referrals.

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- **First Baptist**-Outreach/Community Benevolence-if Clinical Services had been established last year, they would have been able to refer over 40-50 community members annually.
- **Wimberley United Methodist**- 1 to 2 children per month, 5-6 adults or families per month.

How many children and/or adults will be served over the 12 months recognizing that you are building this program?

The number of clients is difficult to quantify, but we anticipate each clinician being able to provide 720 direct service hours per calendar year. Some of these hours will include group counseling. An average therapy group consists of 8-10 people.

Our long-range planning calls for adding a clinician in January 2024 and August 2024, with three providers by the end of 2024.

3. How many total hours of counseling will be provided over the 12 months?

See above

4. What will the referral process look like?

Clients will contact Barnabas through the established crisis line or directly to clinical services. Clinical Services will have a dedicated phone line and an admin assistant to monitor that line. From that point, they will be scheduled for an Intake Appointment. Part of the intake process is determining the appropriateness of care in an outpatient setting. Factors to be considered for referral to a high level of care include active suicidal ideation, history of repeated attempts, inability or unwillingness to commit to the treatment plan, or issues with custody (for minors).

The current provider can see individuals ages 3+, so we can provide services to those most in need. However, we have developed a robust referral list of providers in the area. We will primarily utilize Wimberley EMS and Austin Oaks (recently opened a bunch in San Marcos) for individuals needing a high level of care.

Barnabas has an established relationship with our local school district, and referrals will come from the School Counselors and Administrators.

5. Has Barnabas reached out to the LMHR?

Yes, Hill Country MHMR is the current provider in our area. Many years ago, they had an office in Wimberley, but unfortunately, due to limited funds and staffing, they could not continue paying rent and had to close. This office was an excellent resource as it was housed just down the hall in the building we used to rent.

Their closest open office is currently located in San Marcos. They schedule appointments in Wimberley (held at the First Baptist Church) a few times monthly. Barnabas, EMS, and WISD all refer to them. However, many clients report that this is unsuccessful as the process is lengthy to get an evaluation, and they must travel to San Marcos. Clients also say being frustrated with insurance processes, paperwork, long wait times between contacting them and initial referral, and the need for more consistency when seeing therapists (there is a high turnover rate).

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6. Who are your current partners?

Wimberley Veterans of Foreign Wars Post #6441

John Thompson Veterans Mental Health Fund- this fund was established in honor of the late commander of the VFW. They have committed to covering therapy costs for local veterans and their families.

VetRecOutdoors

Has partnered with us to provide rec therapy for veterans and their families at NO COST for the first year.

Wimberley Ministerial Alliance- many local churches expressed interest in being able refer members and to offset the costs when they do so.

Wimberley ISD and Wimberley EMS-will be able to give our information to community members in need

7. What is the compelling case to fund this now? What is the urgency?

There are currently no accessible mental health resources in the Wimberley Valley to our uninsured or underinsured neighbors. The closest possible care is San Marcos or Dripping Springs. While on a map, this looks accessible, the reality is that most of our families are constrained by nonmedical determinants of health, including access to affordable healthcare and transportation. Barnabas is launching on-site mental health services to fill this gap.

We plan to start services in August when students return to school. This timeframe is typically when high acuity mental health needs and caseloads are full, requiring long wait list times to be seen.