Guide to Arriving at McLean Hospital

Helpful Information for Patients, Families, and Friends
“I can’t say enough about the people at McLean and how supportive they have been.”

– Former McLean patient

All photos: McLean Hospital
We are here to help you. Each member of the McLean community strives to achieve our mission of improving the lives of our patients and their families, and we dedicate ourselves to providing you with compassionate and respectful specialized psychiatric care. You are a vital member of our team. Together with you, we seek to chart a path toward your recovery and well-being.

We will work closely with you to develop an individualized treatment plan to ensure that you receive effective and compassionate care and to provide you with guidance and tools to help you better understand and manage your illness and symptoms, strengthen your resilience, and improve your mental health going forward.

We prepared this guide to provide an overview of what you can expect when you arrive at McLean and to address questions and concerns that you and your family may have. It was written with valuable contributions from McLean’s Patient and Family Advisory Council. We hope that you find the information helpful.

Thank you for placing your trust in McLean Hospital. Your health, comfort, and well-being are our highest priorities.

With best wishes,

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President, Psychiatrist in Chief
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For Patients

When you arrive at McLean’s Belmont campus, you will meet with clinicians in the Clinical Evaluation Center (CEC). A mental health specialist (MHS) will talk with you and gather preliminary information as the first step in a thorough diagnostic psychiatric evaluation.

Initially, for your safety and the safety of others, the MHS will check to see if you have items that could pose a hazard. Your personal belongings will be stored safely in a locked space. You will be given an identification wristband, which you should wear at all times.

The MHS will provide an orientation to the CEC and check your vital signs. A nurse will assess and attend to your nursing care needs, including medications, and ask about any unstable medical conditions or safety concerns. A clinical evaluator then will conduct an initial evaluation, helping the clinical staff determine which hospital inpatient program meets your needs. The evaluation also helps the clinical staff develop your initial treatment plan. Based on this admission assessment, medication may be started or continued, and tests may be ordered. Your participation is very important during this process. Please ask questions and share your concerns.

Up to two family members or friends, except for children under 18 years old, may stay with you (if you permit them) while you are in the CEC. Family and friends will be asked to step out of the room for all or part of the evaluation so you can give private information to the treatment team. Formal family meetings are not routinely part of the initial evaluation. These will occur later at an inpatient program with staff who will follow you throughout your stay and become more familiar with you and your family.

Family members or friends with information that is important for clinicians to know during the initial assessment should ask to speak with staff if they do not have an opportunity to provide this information during the evaluation.

At McLean SouthEast, the admission process is similar but takes place at the inpatient program. A mental health specialist, social worker, nurse, and psychiatrist will participate in the process. With your permission, family and friends may be asked to take part if they are present.

What happens when I arrive at McLean’s Clinical Evaluation Center (Admissions) on the Belmont campus?

What happens when I arrive at McLean SouthEast?
Typically, this process takes three to four hours. Part of this time is needed to write the initial admission note, record information about your treatment plan, and talk to your insurance company. At the end of this process, you will be admitted to an inpatient program or directed to the most appropriate setting for your care.

McLean Hospital recognizes that some patients have limited means and may not have access to insurance coverage for all services. We therefore have a financial assistance program for uninsured patients and underinsured patients with limited financial resources. Visit partners.org/financialassistance to learn more.

You will most likely be asked to tell us about yourself a few times, one time with each professional who meets with you. Different staff will listen to your answers for different purposes. We want to be as thorough as possible as we work with you to develop your treatment plan.

You will be asked to sign release of information forms for your insurance carrier, primary care physician, psychiatrist, and therapist. These releases are required so we may communicate with your insurance carrier and with your health care providers outside McLean.

Later in the process of your treatment, you will be asked to sign additional release of information forms in order for staff to speak with your family or friends.

If you have been admitted, a staff member will accompany you to the inpatient program in which you will be staying. If family or friends are present, they may go with you to the program. In some circumstances, they may be asked to wait until you are settled in your room. You will be assigned a clinical treatment team who will take care of you during your stay.

If you are not admitted to a McLean inpatient program, you may be referred to one of McLean’s residential or partial hospital (day) programs or to our outpatient services. Alternatively, because of your treatment needs and/or your health insurance provider network, we may refer you to a community mental health provider.
Clothing

Plan to wear casual clothes while at McLean and bring two changes of machine-washable clothes for day and night wear, including undergarments, socks, bathrobe, and slippers. Washing machines and dryers are available at every inpatient program. We also suggest that you have a pair of comfortable shoes and a jacket or coat. Please mark your name on all pieces of clothing.

McLean has a limited supply of clean donated clothing available in many sizes for patients. Program staff can assist you in contacting the clothing bank at 617.855.2118. If you receive an item, it is yours to keep.

Medications

To enable the clinical team to review your medications accurately during the admissions process, we recommend that you bring all of your prescription medications, in their original containers, to the hospital.

Once you are admitted, all needed medications will be dispensed by the McLean Pharmacy in accordance with state and federal regulations and hospital policies.

Personal Care Items

You may want to bring items such as a toothbrush and toothpaste, shampoo, a hairbrush, eyeglasses, deodorant, and feminine hygiene products. Basic hygiene kits can be provided at no cost to you if you do not have these items.

You should also plan to bring any durable medical equipment you may need such as a cane, wheelchair, CPAP machine, and hearing or visual aids. Items with cords may need to be kept at the nursing station. Please mark your name on all personal care items.
Cellphones
To help promote focused engagement during group therapy and other aspects of treatment, some inpatient programs do not allow cellphone use while others discourage or restrict usage. A few inpatient programs permit only cellphones without cameras. Please check with the staff about cellphone policies at your program.

Computers
Computers and any electronic equipment that can be used to photograph or record sound or images are not permitted at McLean inpatient programs. Patients on the Belmont campus may check with staff about using computers available for patient use at the Cole Consumer Resource Center.

Restricted Items
Items that are not allowed at the program for safety and privacy reasons:
* Alcoholic beverages
* Razors
* Guns/weapons
* Knives/other sharp objects
* Cameras
* Glass bottles
* Matches/lighters
* Plastic bags
* Drugs/medications
* Mirrors
* Video/tape recorders
* Glass picture frames
Please check with program staff regarding policies on belts, dental floss, electric razors, hair dryers, nail clippers, MP3 players with headphones, cigarettes, and canned beverages.

Personal Valuables
McLean Hospital is not responsible for loss or damage to personal items, including eyeglasses, hearing aids, and dentures. We recommend that you keep jewelry and other valuables at home and not carry more than $10 in cash. Please consider sending valuables home with family. For privacy reasons, cameras, including those in cellphones, and other electronic recording devices are not allowed at inpatient programs.
A mental health specialist or nurse will help you get settled at the program and in your room. All inpatient staff are available to answer questions and address concerns that you may have.

In addition, publications called Guide to Inpatient Care at McLean Hospital and Guide to Transitioning from Inpatient Care are available at every inpatient program and at mcleanhospital.org. These guides provide answers to many questions and present a lot of information that you and your family may find helpful.

Once settled, your family and friends may visit with you. In general, family and friends are allowed to visit during scheduled visiting hours and only if you wish to see them. Talk to a staff member about concerns you may have about visitors.

During your stay, a team of clinicians, including doctors, nurses, and a case manager, will oversee your care and treatment and help you on your way to recovery.
For Families and Friends

When can I see my family member or friend who is being evaluated at McLean?

Up to two family members and close friends, except for children under 18 years old, may stay (with the patient’s permission) while he or she is being evaluated. Family and friends will be asked to step out of the room for all or part of the evaluation.

Any family member or friend with information that is important for clinicians to know during the initial assessment should ask to speak with staff if they do not have an opportunity to provide this information during the evaluation. Formal family meetings are not routinely part of the initial evaluation. These will occur later in the inpatient stay with staff at the program.

How do the privacy rules affect what McLean clinicians and staff can tell me?

Patients who are 18 years old or older are legal adults with legal privacy rights. The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) prohibits clinical staff from sharing information without a patient’s written consent. All health providers must comply with these federal regulations, which means that they must obtain formal permission to share information (including diagnosis, treatment, and prognosis) with you, or anyone else, even if you are a spouse, a parent, or a guardian of a patient. A patient provides permission by signing a release of information form.

Release of information forms can be signed during the admission process and can also be completed at an inpatient program. If the patient has not signed a release for the clinical staff to give you information, they cannot share any information. Please note, however, that you may share with clinicians any information that you think is important for the patient’s treatment and recovery.

How can I learn more?

Staff is available to answer questions. In addition, ask for a McLean Hospital publication called Guide to Inpatient Care at McLean Hospital or view it at mcleanhospital.org. This guide provides answers to many questions that you may have and presents a lot of information that you may find helpful.

McLean Hospital complies with applicable federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, citizenship, alienage, religion, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, or disability.
Our Mission

McLean Hospital is dedicated to improving the lives of people and families affected by psychiatric illness. McLean pursues this mission by:

- Providing the highest quality compassionate, specialized and effective clinical care, in partnership with those whom we serve;
- Conducting state-of-the-art scientific investigation to maximize discovery and accelerate translation of findings towards achieving prevention and cures;
- Training the next generation of leaders in psychiatry, mental health and neuroscience;
- Providing public education to facilitate enlightened policy and eliminate stigma.

Our Values

We dedicate ourselves each and every day to McLean’s mission of clinical care, scientific discovery, professional training and public education in order to improve the lives of people with psychiatric illness and their families.

In all of our work, we strive to:

- Conduct ourselves with unwavering integrity
- Demonstrate compassion and respect for our patients, their families and our colleagues
- Foster an environment that embraces diversity and promotes teamwork
- Achieve excellence and ever-better effectiveness and efficiency through innovation