

Dear Community Physicians/Clinicians

We are very happy to report that the **Art of Living Mindfully (ALM)** has been running for over 6 years!

During this time we have been able to provide mindfulness meditation teaching and CBT strategies to over 3000 participants through 182 classes. In addition, we have grown from 4 facilitators up to 8 and now offer ALM in the Comox Valley.

Our course is facilitated by Family Doctors who see up to 18 patients in a 'group medical visit' setting. MSP coverage is dependent on a participant having a specific ICD9 diagnosis. A situation of 'general stress' is not enough to qualify for this funding. The ALM course has been found to be particularly helpful for patients with insomnia, chronic pain, anxiety disorders, chronic illness and depression.

For patients who do not meet a defined ICD9 diagnosis, we would recommend that these patients consider our Community Art of Living Mindfully (CALM) class on a private pay basis (please see our website-bcalm.ca- for more information). These individuals must not already have been referred to ALM as this would preclude them from attending CALM.

Please discuss the following points with your patient prior to submitting a referral:

- Participants are expected to commit to attending all 8 consecutive sessions. As the courses are billed fee-for-service through MSP we need to charge a nominal fee for absences in order to maintain our funding.
- Participants must be able to attend weekly 90-minute sessions (both physically and from a social skills point of view as this is facilitated as a Group Medical Visit) for 8 weeks.
- A willingness to learn and a commitment to practice meditation is key to the course. There will also be weekly home exercises and reading
- As a means of monitoring progress, participants must be able to share briefly (verbal check in) in the group each week
- There is a \$55 administration and materials fee to be registered in the course. Multiple absences and withdrawals will be invoiced.

SPECIAL NOTE: Patients with acute severe depression, acute suicidality, psychosis, **active** symptoms of PTSD/flashbacks (chronic or remote PTSD that is not currently active may be permissible), history of violent behaviours, or those currently using substances to the degree that it would impair their participation in the course are NOT APPROPRIATE REFERRALS. .

OUR REFERRAL PROCESS:

Our form asks for very specific information that helps us to understand and better support your patient. *Incomplete referral forms are returned to the referring physician's office for completion and resubmission, not only using extra administrative time in both offices but also delaying your patient's placement. We can accept referrals only from physicians, Nurse Practitioners, and Midwives.*

Prior to submitting any referral, please ensure:

- Hand written referrals are legible
- ALL patient demographics are provided INCLUDING email address
- Complete referring practitioner info is included (name, position, clinic AND fax number)
- Current and relevant history sections are completed
- Any other conditions your patient has are listed
- Medications are listed or attached OR "No Medications" box is checked
- All check boxes in the lower section are marked
- PHQ9 or GAD7 are welcome if you wish to attach them

Thank you for your ongoing support of our program and we look forward to another great year of service, growth and healing.

Dr. Mark Sherman

Executive Director

BC Association for Living Mindfully