



Handbook



South Oaks is accredited/licensed/affiliated as follows:
Office of Mental Health
Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services
The Joint Commission
New York State Department of Health
An Affiliate of North Shore – LIJ Health System

Welcome
Privacy Practices
Your Rights & Responsibilities
Evaluation & Admission
Your Health Care Team
Treatment & Other Services
Billing & Payment

we care for people
www.south-oaks.org



About South Oaks Hospital

South Oaks Hospital has a long-standing reputation of commitment to quality and compassionate care, crisis management, treatment and recovery — locally and nationally. For over 130 years, South Oaks Hospital has dedicated its expertise, staff and resources to providing treatment and recovery from acute psychiatric illness and addiction in an optimal setting for individualized assessment and treatment.

Mission

"We Care For People"

Values

Compassion – Dignity – Diversity
Efficiency – Excellence – Integrity
Learning – Patient Safety – Respect
Teamwork

Philosophy

Sanctuary Model of
Trauma-Informed Care

South Oaks Hospital is committed to providing a safe place in which healing can occur. The Sanctuary Model of trauma-informed care guides us to create positive change both within our organization and the people who we serve. Our staff know that negative things that have happened to people in the past have a lot to do with the problems they are experiencing in the present. Our adoption of the Sanctuary Model has provided the framework in which we effectively understand, consider, and address the past trauma to achieve positive outcomes in the here and now.

In the Sanctuary Model, treatment focuses on issues of SELF: maintaining individual and community SAFETY, learning and practicing EMOTION MANAGEMENT, processing LOSS, and developing hope for the FUTURE. Community meetings, safety plans, treatment team meetings, special red flag emergency meetings, and SELF-based treatment planning are tools that are utilized in treatment. Everyone in the South Oaks Sanctuary Community makes a commitment to non-violence, open communication, democracy, shared responsibility, shared learning, emotional intelligence, and change.

Welcome to South Oaks Hospital

We know you are experiencing many different feelings. You may be mad, sad, or glad to be here depending upon what has happened so far. Mad because you are frustrated by what is happening; sad because you know being here means things have not gotten better; and possibly glad because there is hope and you or your child, spouse, partner, parent or friend is now safe.

We will make every effort to accommodate you during you or your loved one's stay with us. In terms of loved ones, there may be some issues due to confidentiality that we can and cannot communicate to you depending upon the service the person is receiving and the person's age. When we cannot answer a question, we will explain why.

If at any time you feel your questions are not being answered or there is a complaint you want to register, please **Speak Up** to your Health Care Team. If you have continued concerns the team and unit Administrative Director have not been able to resolve, please contact my office at 1-800-720-9801 or www.longislandhome.org, to get further assistance. You can also use the 1-800 number and website to share your positive experiences or offer suggestions for improvement. If you feel that you have concerns that are not resolved through these channels, you may contact the Office of Mental Health (1-800-597-8481), Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services (1-800-553-5790), or The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (1-800-994-6610).

Robert E. Detor
President and
Chief Executive Officer



Your Rights & Responsibilities

We encourage you to communicate openly with your health care team, participate in your treatment choices, and promote your own safety by being well-informed and actively involved in your care. The following information will assist you to become an active member of your treatment team.

Rights

Refer to “Your Rights as a Hospital Patient in New York State” brochure for more detailed information.

- You have the right to understand and use these rights
- You have the right to receive treatment without discrimination of any kind
- You have the right to receive considerate and respectful care in a clean and safe environment free of unnecessary restraints
- You have the right to receive emergency care if you need it
- You have the right to be informed of the name, positions, and roles of all hospital staff involved in your care
- You have the right to a non-smoking room: South Oaks campus is smoke-free
- You have the right to receive complete information about your diagnosis, treatment and prognosis
- You have the right to receive all the information you need to give informed consent for any proposed procedure or treatment, including possible risks and benefits
- You have the right to receive all the information you need to give informed consent for an order not to resuscitate (DNR), or to designate this right to another individual if you're too ill to do so. If you would like additional information, please ask for a copy of the pamphlet “Deciding About Health Care—A guide for Patients and Families”
- You have the right to refuse treatment and be told what effect this may have on your health
- You have the right to refuse to take part in research, and to a full explanation of the research
- You have the right to privacy and confidentiality
- You have the right to participate in all decisions about your treatment and discharge, a written discharge plan, and a written description of how you can appeal your discharge
- You have the right to review your medical record without charge or obtain a copy for a reasonable fee
- You have the right to receive an itemized bill of all charges
- You have the right to complain to the hospital or other regulatory organizations without fear of reprisal about care and services
- You have the right to authorize family members and other adults who will be given priority to visit consistent with your ability to receive visitors
- You have the right to make known your wishes in regard to organ donation

Responsibilities

- You are entrusted to provide complete and accurate information to the health care team regarding your identity, insurance coverage, and your health and medical history—including all medications that you take and allergies that you may have.
- You are expected to the best of your ability to treat all hospital staff, other patients, and visitors with courtesy and respect; abide by hospital rules and safety regulations; and be mindful of noise levels and privacy. *Refer to your unit's guidelines for details.*
- For your safety and health, you are requested to practice good personal hygiene, grooming, proper dress including footwear (closed toe/rubber sole for off-unit activities), and room cleanliness.
- We are counting on you to ask questions when you do not understand information.
- If you believe you can't follow through with your treatment plan, you need to tell your doctor or other treatment team members about this. Ultimately, you are responsible for your well-being, if you do not follow the treatment plan recommendations.
- You are expected to inform your health care providers of the effectiveness of the treatment you are receiving.
- Please leave medication and valuables at home and only bring necessary items for your hospital stay. *Refer to your unit's guidelines for details.*
- You are entrusted to refrain from smoking and use of alcohol or illicit drugs while on hospital grounds.
- You are encouraged to provide the hospital with a copy of your advance directive if you have one.
- Please provide your health care providers with feedback regarding your care experience, either on the Patient Satisfaction Survey, in a letter, or orally.
- You are entrusted to refrain from sexual and physical contact while hospitalized.
- You are expected to **S.P.E.A.K. U.P.** to reduce the potential for medical errors:
 - S**peak up if you have questions or concerns, and if you don't understand, ask again. It's your body and you have a right to know.
 - P**ay attention to the care you are receiving. Make sure you're getting the right treatments and medications by the right health care professionals. Don't assume anything.
 - E**ducate yourself about your diagnosis, medical tests you are undergoing, and your treatment plan.
 - A**sk a trusted family member or friend to be your advocate.
 - K**now what medications you take and why you take them. Medication errors are the most common health care mistakes.
 - U**se a behavioral healthcare facility, program or service that has undergone a rigorous on-site evaluation against established, state-of-the-art quality and safety standards, such as that provided by The Joint Commission (South Oaks is accredited by The Joint Commission and is licensed by the Office of Mental Health and Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services).
 - P**articipate in all decisions about your treatment. You are the center of the behavioral health care team.

Our Privacy Practices

South Oaks Hospital is committed to protecting your medical information.

Our privacy practices are described in the South Oaks Hospital's Notice of Privacy Practices, a booklet that explains how this obligation will be followed by all staff, interns, volunteers, and business associates of the hospital.

If you have a privacy concern or complaint, please call South Oaks' Privacy Officer at (631) 264-4000 x 6980.



Evaluation & Admission

We are required to do a few things before anyone is admitted for care. These steps may take several hours. They involve the completion of examinations so we can better understand your needs, as well as paperwork so we can effectively communicate these needs to the treatment team. We will explain all of the forms and the processes as we go along. Please ask any questions that you or your loved one may have. Some questions we can answer right away; in regard to others, we may have to wait for information from a referring practitioner or the insurance company before we can answer you.

- **Check-in with one of our intake specialists:**
We need to gather information about you and review information about your treatment.
- **Psychiatric examination by one of our mental health professionals:**
We need to establish, to the best of our ability, that you or your loved one needs hospitalization. Today's behavioral health inpatient care is for 'acute' conditions. Acute means the person being considered for admission is either in danger of harming themselves or others; or in the case of a person seeking admission to detoxification or rehabilitation the person has to have tried other types of outpatient care unsuccessfully. There may be circumstances that suggest that you or your loved one would be better treated at another facility or in an outpatient setting. If that is the situation, the details will be explained.
- **Physical examination by one of our medical professionals:**
We need to establish that you or your loved one is medically stable. South Oaks Hospital is a behavioral health facility not a general hospital, so this may not be the best place for someone who has additional serious medical conditions. The admitting staff will make the determination based upon our physical examination as well as medical history.
- **Financial clearance with one of our business office professionals and insurance company:**
We need to establish the means of payment for the care. No one who is determined to need care and is unable to pay will be denied treatment. When there are problems due to insurance eligibility, we will try to make the necessary arrangements or connections for care to be provided where there is coverage. South Oaks is a private nonprofit hospital, so we must make every effort to obtain reimbursement.
- **Safety check of body and belongings:**
We need to ensure a safe environment for care delivery. Weapons and illicit drugs are not permitted and are confiscated. Other objects which are deemed as potentially unsafe to the people that we serve on the various units are sent home with loved ones or secured by the hospital staff. This includes sharp objects, cigarettes, matches, belts and cords. Valuables are routinely sent home with loved ones or secured by the hospital staff. The hospital is not responsible for lost or stolen valuables. *Refer to your unit's guidelines for details.*

Your Health Care Team

Physicians and Nurse Practitioners

You will have an Attending Psychiatrist who is in charge of your care. He or she will supervise your treatment and determine when you're ready to be discharged. On most units your Attending Psychiatrist, Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner, or Physician Assistant will prescribe your medication and monitor your progress throughout your stay; on the Chemical Dependency Rehabilitation Unit the Attending Psychiatrist is available on a consultant basis when needed. Medical Nurse Practitioners, Internists, and Specialists are available to follow up on medical problems as deemed necessary by your Attending Psychiatrist. Your medical team will recommend diagnostic tests that may be needed.

Nurses

Registered and Licensed Practical Nurses help communicate your needs to the other health care team members and teach you about your condition and your treatment. Registered nurses assess your condition and plan and evaluate your daily care. Nurses administer your medication and other treatments. Nurses ensure that daily structure and safety are maintained in the care environment.

Case Coordinators

Case Coordinators may be Registered Nurses, Social Workers, Certified Alcohol and Substance Abuse Counselors, or Mental Health Counselors who provide individual, family, and group counseling; assist you in identifying financial resources; refer you to community resources; and arrange for appropriate and professional follow-up care upon discharge.

Assistant Counselors

Assistant Counselors are individuals with training and education in psychology, substance abuse, or a related field, who provide emotional support and education to you both individually and in group.

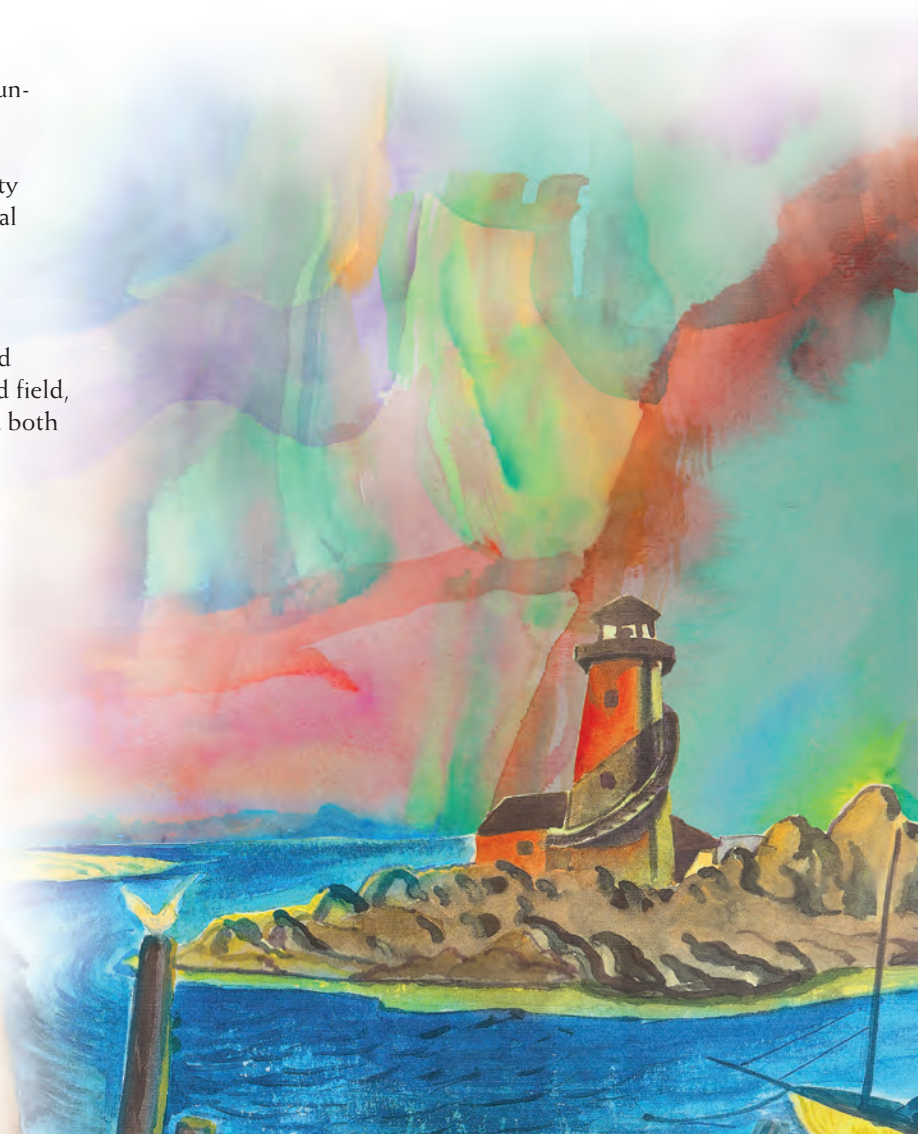
Therapeutic Rehabilitation Professionals

Therapeutic Rehabilitation Professionals have education and training in creative arts, occupational therapy, or therapeutic recreation. Therapists assess your coping and socialization skills, physical activity level, learning and work achievements, and creative outlets as well as support your ability to build upon them to improve your daily functioning. In addition, creative arts, wellness, and recreation therapy groups are provided.

Psychiatric Attendants

Psychiatric Attendants are a critical link between you and the other members of your health care team. They are available to you 24-7 for your safety and comfort needs. Psychiatric Attendants encourage your participation in treatment, keep your environment safe, take vital signs, and assist you with maintaining your personal hygiene and other activities of daily living.

Other members of your team may include Dietitians, Pharmacists, Phlebotomists, Physical Therapists, and EKG technicians.



Your Treatment

Your Participation in treatment is very important. Discuss your treatment plan with your health care team and make sure that you understand and agree with the plan. Let the staff know if you're experiencing pain or any other symptom that needs to be addressed. Please ask questions if you are having difficulty understanding your condition, treatment, or discharge plan. We recommend that you designate and give consent for a trusted family member or significant other to be the point person for interaction with the treatment team and for passing along information to the rest of your family and friends. For children and teens, this will be your parent or guardian.

Length of Stay in the hospital depends on your symptoms and improvement in your condition, as well as the resources that are available in the community for you. In most cases it takes about a week in order to get the help that you need in order to return safely to the community, but in some cases the length of stay may be shorter (for example, if you're here for detox) or longer (for example, if you're a senior adult).

Medication Management is an important part of psychiatric inpatient treatment. The goal of using medication to promote mental health is to decrease illness symptoms and behaviors that would otherwise interfere with your functioning in the community. Once the medication begins to work to stabilize illness symptoms, you will be better able to benefit from the other therapeutic interventions that are offered both in and outside of the hospital. The type of medication utilized will be determined by the Attending Psychiatrist or Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner, based on your symptoms and past experience with medication. For drug and alcohol detoxification, medication management is utilized to safely taper you from the substances.

Milieu Therapy is the use of the environment in your healing. South Oaks staff members strive to provide a safe Sanctuary for healing. The inevitable stressors that remain in the environment provide prime opportunities to practice new coping skills with the assistance of staff coaching. For children and adolescents, the milieu is enhanced by a more structured point and/or level behavioral system (*Refer to the unit's Level System Guide*).

Group Sessions may include group therapy, educational groups, therapeutic recreation, physical fitness, ROPES team-and confidence-building experiences, expressive and creative arts, task groups, animal-assisted activities, and self-help or advocacy meetings.

Individual Counseling will focus on the problems, behaviors, and symptoms that led to your hospitalization. The goal of counseling in the hospital is to provide you with an increased ability to cope with stress and to manage your illness and problems after you are discharged.

Family Sessions may be facilitated by your Case Coordinator, depending on your needs and situation. The goal of family sessions in the hospital setting is to educate family members about your illness and treatment needs and to provide coaching regarding coping skills and healthy interactions among family members.

Education is provided individually and in group, and is focused on illness and treatment, coping with symptoms, and relapse prevention. For children and adolescents who are currently registered in a school district, academic instruction is provided on site through BOCES upon receipt of authorization by the home district.

Sensory/Calming Tools are offered on all of the units. On the child and adolescent units, there are specific rooms designated for the use of calming tools. There are calming/sensory items affiliated with each of the senses that can be used for self-soothing and calming. Examples include aromatherapy, calming music, relaxation tapes, and stress balls.

Seclusion and Restraint are utilized infrequently, to keep the environment safe. When people in treatment become so overwhelmed by their feelings that they become threatening to themselves or others, and if the treatment modalities outlined above are ineffective in dealing with this, then seclusion (physical restriction to a room alone) or physical restraint (holding a person or securing extremities to a bed with straps) is utilized. These restrictive interventions are only performed with a Physician's order under the direct supervision of a Registered Nurse, and are utilized as briefly as possible. If this level of intervention is used, parent or guardian (when applicable) will be notified. You can help minimize the use of seclusion and restraint by letting us know what triggers a negative emotional reaction for you (or your child), and what works and what doesn't work when you (or your child) loses control. Please contact the professional staff if you would like more detailed information regarding the hospital's seclusion and restraint policy.

Your Treatment (cont'd)

Family/Significant Other Contact is made by the treatment team for all children and adolescents, and for those adults who consent to this contact. Family contact is made by the psychiatrist within 48 hours of psychiatric admission. After that, the Case Coordinator will serve as the primary contact person for the family in terms of your care. On those units with visiting hours, the nurses and other health care professionals will address questions and concerns from your loved ones with your consent during visiting, however there may be a waiting period due to the number of visitor and patient care needs.

Discharge Planning begins on admission and consists of working with you and your family and other supports to determine what your treatment and living situation will be after discharge. Your Case Coordinator is extremely knowledgeable regarding community resources and aftercare that you can benefit from when you leave the hospital.

Discharge from the hospital occurs as soon as safely possible, so you can continue your healing in a less restrictive environment. We will try to give you advanced notice of your discharge date, however this is not always possible. Before leaving, be sure you are clear about discharge information, including instructions about continued care as an outpatient, any follow-up visits you may need, and directions about taking medication. Make sure you are given a contact phone number to call if you have questions. Discharge time varies according to unit; please consult your treatment team for specifics.

Other Services

Security - For the safety of you or your loved one, security staff are on premises 24 hours a day. It is the policy of South Oaks Hospital that all visitors and employees prominently display a guest pass or ID badge while in the buildings. Passes are available at the main entrance.

Foreign Language Interpretation - A language bank of employees who are competent in speaking and understanding a language other than English is maintained in order to assist our clients who have difficulty communicating in English. Interpretation via Cyraphone service is also available.

For the Hearing Impaired - American Sign Language Interpreters and telephone communication devices (TTD's) are provided by the hospital.

Spirituality - Spiritual leaders from our community visit and are available upon request.

Visiting Hours - Receiving visitors can be an important part of the healing process. On psychiatric units, visiting takes place during specified visiting hours and on Chemical Dependency units visiting takes place during sessions scheduled with the Case Coordinator. For your safety, privacy, and comfort: visitors must present a picture ID and receive a pass and sticker from the reception desk prior to visiting, the number of visitors permitted at one time is limited, and visitors are not permitted to bring personal items such as pocketbooks into the hospital. Children under the age of 18 are not permitted to visit. Children and teens may only be visited by their parents, grandparents, guardians, and siblings. Adults may restrict visitors by notifying a treatment team member of the restriction. Exceptions to the

visitor policy will be made at the discretion of the health care team and based on your specific needs and your condition. Visiting hours, permission, and visitor responsibilities differ from unit to unit so please consult the visitors' guide and the unit staff for specifics.

Telephones - Courtesy telephones are available for use. Phone calls may not be made or received during groups or therapeutic activities and should be limited to 10 minutes in order to accommodate all clients on the unit. Please refer to the visitors' guide for more details.

Mail - Letters with return address may be sealed, stamped, and left at the nursing station for mailing. Return address is 400 Sunrise Highway, Amityville, NY 11701. All mail must be opened in the presence of staff. Please have incoming mail labeled with the unit's name.

Amenities - Televisions, DVD/VCRs, video games, board games, and reading material are available. Structured and unstructured activities are offered in our outdoor courtyard, gymnasium, fitness center, game room, and on our ROPES course. A washer and dryer are available if needed.

Medical Records - If you would like a copy of your medical record or a part of your record, you may have one for a small fee when the record is complete. Please ask your case coordinator for a release of information form to be faxed to the medical records department during your hospital stay, or after discharge please call the Medical Records Dept. at 631-608-5345.

Mental Hygiene Attorney - Is available weekly to discuss your legal status and patient rights concerns.

Billing & Payment Information

What is a deductible?

A deductible is a part of the agreement that you have with your insurance company. Deductibles are a predetermined amount of money that you must pay before your insurance benefits will begin. Please refer to the terms of your insurance plan regarding deductible levels.

What is a co-payment?

A co-payment is a fixed fee that is required to be paid each time you receive care. For example, a \$15 co-payment each time you see your primary care doctor. A co-payment is the sole responsibility of the patient; your insurance will not pay for this fee. Please refer to the terms of your insurance plan for information on the specific co-payments that relate to your policy.

What is co-insurance?

Co-insurance levels are a part of the agreement that you have with your insurance company. When you get billed for a service, the insurance company will determine what cost (allowable charge) they feel is appropriate for the services that you received. The insurance company will then pay a percentage of that "allowable charge". For example, if the insurance company requires 30% co-insurance, for every \$100 in allowable charges, you will be expected to pay \$30.

What is an Explanation of Benefits (EOB)?

An Explanation of Benefits is issued by your insurance plan and explains your financial responsibility based on the terms of your insurance policy.

Does South Oaks Hospital accept my insurance plan?

South Oaks Hospital accepts many insurance carriers and plans. Contact your insurance plan to find out if they participate with South Oaks Hospital.

I requested a detailed statement for my bill but I don't understand it.

Can I get a better explanation?

The hospital bill shows the major transactions on your account. You can call your insurance plan and ask for an Explanation of Benefits (EOB) or you can call our Business Office and a representative will be happy to review your bill with you.

I gave my insurance information to the admissions department, why am I being billed?

It is possible that your insurance plan has already been billed and made a payment. You may be receiving a bill for a co-payment, deductible or co-insurance. You should have received an Explanation of Benefits (EOB) from your insurance plan that would explain your responsibility. If the claim was not sent to your insurance plan, please give us your health insurance information so that we can file a claim on your behalf. You will be responsible for any out-of-network charges, deductibles and co-payments.

How can I make a payment on my bill?

There are 3 ways that you can make a payment on your hospital bills. (1) You can mail your hospital statement to the address listed on your bill with a check, money order or your credit card information. (2) You can call our business office at the phone number that is listed on your bill, and give our representatives your hospital account number and your credit card information. (3) You can come to Carone Hall during our normal business hours and make a payment.

How can I set up a payment plan on my bill?

Call the business office to speak with your account representative to make a payment arrangement.

Why am I receiving multiple statements?

Each inpatient hospitalization and outpatient encounter is billed to you separately.

