



Telepsychiatry Consultation Clinic Policies

The NC MATTERS Telepsychiatry Consultation Clinic supports health care providers who serve pregnant and/or postpartum patients in health care settings. Telepsychiatry is the use of two-way real-time audio and video to provide and support psychiatric care when geographical distance separates participants.

NC MATTERS provides a **one-time** behavioral health assessment to patients, completed by a psychiatrist or psychiatric nurse practitioner (PMHS) with specialized training in perinatal mental health. The Telepsychiatry Consultation Clinic is designed to offer additional support to providers beyond the psychiatric consultation line in situations deemed necessary and when equivalent in-person services are not available.

Situations or reasons for which Telepsychiatry would **NOT** be appropriate include (but are not limited to):

1. Clinical reasons, such as delusions related to electronic devices, exceptional paranoia, or similar schizoid or psychotic symptoms that might interfere with the therapeutic milieu;
2. Concerns of the patient being an immediate danger to himself/herself or others;
3. Insufficient sensory acuity to permit meaningful perception of audio/video linkage signals.

We ask referring providers to review the following policies and procedures related to this service:

1. Providers who call NC MATTERS must speak to the MD/NP covering the line in order to have their patient approved for a one-time assessment. If the calling provider is not a prescriber, they must agree to work with the NC MATTERS team to connect the patient with a care team (including a prescriber) who can carry out the MATTERS team's recommendations.
2. Patients cannot be referred to NC MATTERS for an assessment without their knowledge and consent. Providers will inform their patient that UNC will call to arrange the appointment.
3. NC MATTERS staff may request authorization forms, applicable records, laboratory examinations, and/or results necessary to the PMHS in advance of the telepsychiatry encounter.
4. NC MATTERS staff may request that the provider screen their patient using the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Screening (EPDS), or other relevant screenings, ahead of the consultation visit and provide the results.
5. Patients referred to NC MATTERS will receive a **one-time** behavioral health assessment for the purpose of consultation and **not** ongoing treatment, such as medication management and therapy services.
6. The PMHS may make medication recommendations, but will not directly prescribe medications to NC MATTERS patients.
7. The PMHS will follow up with the referring provider after the assessment with recommendations for patient care, which may include medication, ongoing therapeutic service recommendations, and relevant resources/referrals for ongoing services. NC MATTERS cannot guarantee the timeliness or availability of external services.
8. NC MATTERS staff will not be held responsible for patient scheduling or follow-up with referrals or recommendations.

We appreciate the opportunity to support you in caring for your perinatal patients.

Please contact Program Manager Karen Burns with questions about our services: karen_burns@med.unc.edu

Please call our consultation line for clinical questions: 919-681-2909 x 2