

# Mental Health Practitioners

Navigating health care systems can be challenging and even overwhelming at times. We are here to help! This month we will be sharing weekly tips for navigating health systems and information!

Mental health practitioners are health care professionals and social services providers who focus on improving mental health and treating mental illnesses. This umbrella term includes several professionals with a variety of educational experience and expertise. Let's learn about the most common types of mental health practitioners and their areas of expertise!

**Psychologist:** Psychologists have a doctoral degree and are often addressed as "Dr." but are not considered medical doctors. They can assess and diagnose mental illnesses and support mental health through talk therapy but cannot prescribe medication.

**Psychiatrist:** A psychiatrist is a licensed medical doctor who can assess and diagnose mental illness, prescribe and monitor medication, and provide talk therapy.

**Psychotherapist and Counselors:** Psychotherapists and counselors can provide guidance on improving mental health and managing mental illness through talk therapy. They are unable to diagnose mental illness or prescribe medication.

**Social Worker:** Social workers can work with individuals, families, and groups using solution-focused talk therapy to improve social situations, challenges, and improve overall well-being.

Now that we have learned what the most common mental health professionals are, how are you to choose which would be best for you? Consider these questions:

1. What are your specific goals and needs? Are you looking for talk therapy, medication management, or a diagnosis?
2. Review the mental health professionals above. Which professional can help meet your goals and needs?
3. Research and find the right fit.
  - Look up mental health professionals in your area or connect through Magna's Employee and Family Assistance Program
  - Look into fees and insurance coverage
  - Know that it is okay to try multiple providers

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