

*SYNAPSE HOUSE
INFORMATION PACKET*

We ENGAGE, EMPOWER and EMPLOY individuals affected by brain injury and stroke.

www.synapsehouse.org

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Synapse House! We are pleased to serve you. This packet is to provide valuable information about our services, the organization and required rules and regulations. Please review it completely. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to ask. Synapse House does our best to ensure that all the material contained in the packet is up to date but we cannot guarantee this so please check your mail or email for notifications of any changes.

A signed acknowledgement is required within 30 days of receipt for continuation of services for our current members. Thank you!

Important Information:

Clubhouse Address: 561 N. York Rd., Elmhurst, IL 60126

Telephone: 877-932-1120

Hours of Operation: Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Clubhouse Program Hours: 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Executive Director: Deborah Giesler, deborah@synapsehouse.org

For any issues related to billing, please contact the Director.

Please see our website for more valuable information at www.synapsehouse.org

Holidays:

We are closed for all major holidays. This includes New Year's Day, Memorial Day, 4th of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving (and day after), Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Year's Day. Please see our calendar for any additional days related to the observance of these holidays.

Emergency Closing:

Members will be contacted if we are closed due to severe weather. In the event that threatening weather occurs during the day, we will close early. It is a good rule of thumb that we will be closed if the schools are closed. Please use good judgment and stay home if threatening weather exists.

SERVICES

- Clubhouse Day Program (Business Unit, Culinary Unit, Employment Unit, Wellness Program)
- Employment – Work Readiness, Job Coaching & Supported Employment Program (DRS)
- Social Enterprise Bakery – ***Flour to Empower***
- Community Support Services and Life Skills
- Family meet ups

SCHEDULE

Please arrive at your scheduled time or if you attend the Clubhouse Program, you should strive to arrive by 8:45 a.m. The Clubhouse Program starts at 9:00 a.m. Do not arrive prior to the doors opening. The facility closes at 3:30 p.m. so your ride MUST arrive prior to closing time. Please schedule

this ride 30-45 minutes prior to closing to allow for unexpected delays.

If you are scheduled for a meeting with one of our associates one on one, please make sure to arrive on time and even give yourself an extra 15 minutes. If you cannot make an appointment, we ask that you contact us as soon as possible as some meetings will occur on the job site or out of the facility and our staff may be traveling a fair distance to provide your service.

ENTRY CRITERIA

- Acquired brain injury diagnosis. Other diagnosis may be accepted on a case by case basis.
- Be at least 16 years old.
- Be able to transfer with less than 50% help or attend with a caregiver.
- Take medications without assistance of any associate.
- Be able to take care of personal needs or attend with a caregiver.
- Must not be at risk for wandering.
- Be medically stable.
- Be able to participate without behavioral issues with no at risk for harming self or others.
- Be cleared by a physician, if applicable in some cases of return to work.

INTAKE PROCEDURES AND ANNUAL FORMS

The Executive Director will initiate your intake process by obtaining the initial necessary forms. You will be contacted by the Admission Coordinator to complete all required forms, set your orientation and schedule. Note that prior authorization must be obtained for Workmen's Compensation insurance or if you are referred by the Dept of Rehabilitation Services prior to starting the program.

For continuing members, forms must be returned within 30 (thirty) days or services will be temporarily suspended. We ask that you complete our Satisfaction Survey and any other required assessments. Please carefully review and acknowledge receipt of this updated Information Packet.

Service Availability:

Openings for services are typically available. If there is a waiting list, only persons with completed paperwork and current authorizations will be added to the list. Person served will be accepted in the order of the list. A cap on the number of persons served per funding type may exist.

Transition Criteria:

Persons served may choose to transition to other programs after or in conjunction with the Synapse House Programs. We can assist in locating additional services or partner with other providers such as your speech therapist or vocational counselor. It is your right to determine how you use our services. The door is always open and we welcome your return.

Exit Procedures:

Upon completion of your services, we request that you notify the organization in advance of your last day to complete your final paperwork. Synapse House reserves the right to terminate one's membership if the criteria are not met fully or funding has no longer been authorized or received. Recommendations will be made for any follow up services. Members of Synapse House can continue on with our

organization as Follow Along members and attend periodically. This helps one stay connected to our community for socializing and support.

PROGRAM SERVICE FEES

Private pay rates are based on a sliding scale and on the amount of assistance needed. Payment of invoices is due within 60 days of receipt. A \$25 late charge will be added to late bills. If you have any financial hardships and cannot pay your bill, please contact the Director immediately to work out a solution. Synapse House is working with our State legislators to address the necessary rule changes to the Brain Injury Medicaid Waiver and we hope to have this resolved by May 2019.

For some individuals in the Employment Program, services will be funded by the Dept of Rehabilitation Services or Workers Compensation Insurance. Prior authorization is required and will determine what services you are eligible for. It is your responsibility to ensure that this authorization remains valid and updated by close contact with your case manager. This authorization will outline the services to be provided and the number of days. Services cannot be rendered with any expired authorization. If you exceed the number of days or desire additional services, you are responsible for the cost.

Members and families are highly encouraged to assist in fundraising efforts so that we may keep the costs low and continue to serve all those in need.

SERVICE INFORMATION

Clubhouse Program

The Clubhouse Program is based on the idea that work is healing for people. Members participate in the real work of the Clubhouse through the various Work Units (Business Unit, Culinary Unit, Employment Unit, and Wellness Programs). Members choose work to meet their goals or to enhance quality of life.

Employment Services

Employment is more than just looking for a job. Following an injury, many individuals need to have a complete assessment of skills and how this will relate to returning to a prior career or if a new career path needs to be identified. Barriers will need to be assessed and addressed such as transportation or accommodations. Employment Development Services can include these assessments as well as safety, conflict management, customer service, benefits, time management, money management, job seeking skills, personal hygiene, and attendance.

Life Skills- Launching in 2019!

Synapse House can assist with life skills as it relates to the home and community through our Community Support Specialists. This is a new program for us so please inquire to learn more.

Art & Creativity Group

Synapse House offers special art and creativity groups for a separate fee for those who would like to participate. The fee to participate is included in the daily Clubhouse charge for current members.

Community Integration & Advocacy

We encourage participation in activities that involve our community through planned outings and our events. We also encourage persons served and families to get to know each other and socialize outside of the organization. Isolation, depression and feeling overwhelmed commonly occur after an injury. Our events are excellent opportunities for people to get to know each other!

We encourage everyone to advocate for the needs of persons with brain injury and stroke by spreading the word about what services are needed and how Synapse House can help.

Benefits Education and Assistance

Public Entitlements for Synapse House Members and For Employment Program Participants

For members interested in returning to work, a thorough explanation of the impact of earned income on public entitlements will be offered. Work incentives for SSDI and SSI will be explained and members will learn about SGA, IRWE, Subsidy, PASS, Expedited Reinstatement, Extended Period of Eligibility and all aspects of extending and maximizing benefits while trying out a return to work. Below is a list of acronyms and their meanings. We will also cover HBWD, Health Benefits for Workers with Disabilities, which is a program for Medicaid recipients to buy into Medicaid coverage through the payment of a monthly premium. They will learn that this is a far more economical option than paying Medicaid Spend Down. There will be information presented on how SNAP benefits are decreased when earned income is introduced. We will explain the opportunity for disallowing earned income during the first two years of returning to work for Section 8 subsidy [housing] recipients. Both HUD workers and service providers frequently have inadequate understanding of this very significant work incentive. It is essential that service providers who offer assistance in returning to work are able to give relevant, current and accurate education on how earned income will change benefits for Social Security Disability Insurance and Supplemental Security Income, Medicaid, Section 8 and SNAP recipients. With careful planning and a benefits analysis that can be performed by WIPA staff, members can proceed with clear and comprehensive understanding. We will also assist members with learning about subsidized public transportation and how to qualify for reduced fare cards.

List of Acronyms of Benefits Programs

- HUD Housing and Urban Development, the program that administers Section 8 subsidies
- SGA Substantial Gainful Activity for SSDI
- EID Earned Income Disregard for Section 8 recipients in their first and second year of employment
- EPE Extended Period of Eligibility for Medicare and reinstatement of SSDI benefits
- SNAP Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
- WIPA Work Incentives Planning & Assistance, includes a comprehensive benefits analysis
- UWA Unsuccessful Work Attempts
- AWIC Area Work Incentives Coordinator, a specialist who completes an analysis of benefits and how earned income will affect you
- PABSS Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security
- EIE Earned Income Exclusion for SSI recipients
- PASS Plan for Achieving Self Support
- IRWE Impairment Related Work Expenses

The above is a list of programs and work incentives that represent some, not all of the programs that are available for controlling and planning for the effect that earned income will have on a member's benefits. Depending on the combination of benefits a member receives, an analysis will be done by an AWIC to help them plan accordingly.

Service Capacity:

Services are based on YOUR individual goals. Give the program time as it is not like traditional therapy. Please be aware that many of our services provide real opportunities, access to the community and at times, this may be associated with a small risk.

Service Delivery:

Depending on the program in which you are participating, this will determine where you obtain your services. The Clubhouse Program primarily operates within our facility with outside outings monthly. The Clubhouse is based on a Model that focuses on one's abilities not disabilities. Everyone works side by side to run the daily operations of the Clubhouse. This provides real life experience as well as a sense of belonging and being productive.

For those participating in the Employment Program, you will be spending time in the Clubhouse, volunteer sites and the community to determine work readiness, address barriers and to provide opportunities for situational assessment.

Special Needs: The organization recognizes that those with criminal histories may require additional coordination or screening for services. Note that any person with a history of sexual offenses may not be eligible. All information will be kept confidential and utilized to provide the best plan of care.

Service Duration:

Our programs are available for both short term rehabilitation or long-term day care. The door is always open to return.

Participants in the Employment Unit will be asked to complete 12-day Work Readiness Preparation to address resume building, email, interview skills, job searching, work safety, and evaluation of skills. Employment services are measured in 8-week intervals and may continue for up to five cycles to ensure that you have received adequate support on the job. For those participants of the Dept of Rehabilitation Services, you, your case manager and the Synapse House staff will have regular staffings to discuss your case and length of services required.

Expected Results:

One's outcome is based on the goals that are set by you as the individual. Goal areas may include work skills, social skills, language, daily activities (i.e. cooking), use of computers, time management, money management, quality of life, or increased activity. Goals can be modified at any time.

The outcome for the Employment Program, for most, will be paid competitive work. For others, a rewarding volunteer position may be a good goal. Synapse House will assist with job retention, job coaching and any other service deemed necessary to ensure the highest chance of success. If the

placement does not succeed, Synapse House will assist with, as able, to remedy any issues or will assist in locating resources that can address needs.

Communications:

The Clubhouse Program holds a morning meeting each day to review the work of the day and any announcements. This information is posted in the Clubhouse. Regular meetings are held with each member to review goals, progress and make any revisions to the plan. We will send emails, calendars and newsletters to our members on upcoming activities and announcements. Please make sure we have your correct contact information and that you have a working email address. Members and families may wish to connect with each other on social media and we ask that you “Like” our Synapse House Facebook page. Associates may choose how much outside interaction they would like to engage in with other associates, members or families and as an organization, we respect their right to privacy. If someone on staff would like to keep their private life more private, please respect that.

Qualifications:

The qualifications of our associates vary to best meet the job description. All associates receive initial and ongoing training on the services offered, best practices, positive intervention, advocacy, policies, regulations and acquired brain injury and related impairments. Synapse House will also maintain appropriate business licenses and adhere to the standards set forth for food service sanitation as determined by DuPage County and the State of Illinois.

Alternate Service Options:

Despite offering a variety of services, we may not be able to meet all of your needs. We can assist in locating services for you. Synapse House has Resource Binders that contain brochures from several local providers. Please feel free to view these Resources.

Individualized Service Plans:

Everyone at Synapse House has Individualized Service Plans that direct what you want to accomplish and the action plan to do so. These plans are based on each person’s needs, their strengths, and desires. The goals must be specific, measurable and should be able to be met within a 1-3-month period. The goals are reviewed monthly and progress reports generated. Your families, agencies, or case managers may have input into your plan and require participation in staffings.

For those in the Employment Program, an assessment and job placement/retention plan will be developed with input from you and your case manager.

Outcomes & Satisfaction:

Just as every person has goals, the organization sets goals each year to measure satisfaction, business performance and service delivery. These goals are set with input from all of our stakeholders including persons served, their families, case managers, donors, and our Board. We value your input and want to provide the best services possible while maintaining a strong and efficient business. Please alert a Director as issues arise or if you have comments or suggestions.

Transportation:

Transportation is a critical component in returning back to work and to being more independent. Staff will assist in you in obtaining your Pace Paratransit card and this process should be started immediately as it can take several weeks. We can also assist in providing information about driver's evaluation programs.

During the course of your participation, you may be riding in one of our vans. The rules of the van are as follows:

- No food or drinks may be consumed in the van
- Be ready to go at your pickup time and location
- Seatbelts must be worn at all times
- Distractions to the driver must be minimalized. Do not call or text them while they are driving.
- Call 877-932-1120 by 7:00 a.m. to cancel your ride or earlier to leave a message

RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

The work that we do is based on a process of working together as a team. Both the organization and those we serve have rights and responsibilities to ensure that this process is successful and respectful. It should be understood by both the person served and the organization that this is a partnership. The goal of the organization is to provide services to those in need but no one has a right to receive such services nor can the organization sustain itself and provide services without assistance from all those in our care.

RIGHTS

As a person receiving services through Synapse House, you have:

- The Right to be treated with respect and without discrimination, abuse, neglect or exploitation, or humiliation.
- The Right to have access to your records.
- The Right to privacy and confidentiality of your records and personal information and to whom it will be released.
- The Right to make a choice in services provided to you and the team providing such services. You have the right to make a choice to receive concurrent services.
- The Right to informed consent in which you will be given a clear explanation on the services provided, their risks, benefits and any participation in research studies.
- The Right to make decisions about your goals, your participation and to refuse a service and if needed, assistance by a guardian or advocate.
- The Right to access or receive a referral to legal entities for appropriate representation, self-help support services or advocacy services.
- The Right to express any concerns without fear of retaliation and to receive a prompt investigation and resolution of any alleged infringement of rights.

RESPONSIBILITIES

As a person receiving services through Synapse House, you have:

- The Responsibility to provide accurate and current information needed to provide appropriate care and services.

- The Responsibility to inform the organization of any changes or concerns related to medical conditions, rehabilitative needs, financial or funding status and contact information.
- The Responsibility to actively participate in a positive, respectful way to meet your goals and support the efforts of all others including the organization.
- The Responsibility to accept financial obligations for services rendered and to provide payment in a timely manner.
- The Responsibility to observe the organization's policies and procedures including reporting of any wrong doing.

It should be understood by both the person served and the organization that this is a partnership. The goal of the organization is to provide services to those in need but no one has a right to receive such services nor can the organization sustain itself and provide services without assistance from all those in our care.

RULES

Conduct:

We expect everyone to conduct themselves in a professional business-like manner especially at this stage of recovery. While we recognize the behavioral issues can occur with some brain injuries, we must maintain an environment that is safe and can allow for learning to occur. Violations of policies or behavioral issues can result in temporary suspension or discontinuation of services. We may request that counseling or behavioral contracts are an intervention prior to return. It should be known that in serious violations such as fighting, weapons, illegal drugs, stealing or abuse, the police will be contacted. Synapse House is a **weapon free zone!** No guns or weapons may be brought into the facility for the safety of all those we serve.

Unacceptable behaviors include but are not limited to:

- Fighting, hitting or pushing
- Bringing in any type of weapon
- Any discriminating or insensitive comments on race, gender, religion, sexual orientation
- Harassment of any kind, including criticizing or making fun of another person
- Reporting confidential information about any person or even the organization
- Touching someone without permission, hitting on someone or making sexual advances
- Displays of public affection
- Stealing from any person or the organization
- Destruction of property
- Consumption of alcoholic beverages on outings or in the facility
- Being under the influence of drugs
- Refusing to comply with safety rules, policies or procedures
- Any other behavior that disrupts the program or potentially harms people

Consequences include but are not limited to; contacting local authorities, suspension and/or termination, request for psychological / behavioral consultations or reimbursement for stolen or damaged goods

***Synapse House takes a zero tolerance policy to any weapon or illegal substances at our facilities.
Police will be notified, no exceptions.***

We want to make this a pleasant and productive environment for all. We will work together to address any potential issues but cooperation by all parties is required. If someone is discharged from a program, they may return once they can function within the criteria. An appeal process is available for disputes.

Dress Code:

Please dress appropriately for a work atmosphere. Clean hair, body, teeth and clothes are expected on a daily basis. Clothing should be modest and professional. Please wear nonslip shoes and short sleeve shirts, pants or knee length shorts if you plan to be working in the Culinary Unit or Bakery. Members will be asked to wear an apron, gloves, hair net and beard net (if applicable). Long hair should be tightly secured. Sleeveless shirts are NOT permitted in the bakery or kitchen.

Personal Belongings:

Do not bring large amounts of money or any expensive personal items. We are not liable for any lost or stolen items. ***We request that you label lunches, bags, jackets, tablets and other items to prevent loss.***

Smoking:

Smoking is not permitted in any facility or on any job placement. A smoking schedule is posted. We ask that smokers try their best to minimize the number of breaks required as it disrupts the program and limits the time that is spent in productive activity and well frankly, it is not good for your health! Smokers must follow the rules set by the landlord and city and state ordinances. No smoking will ever be allowed at the front door. Please place all cigarette butts in the appropriate can. We ask that you do not pick up any used butts, share cigarettes or ask others for cigarettes.

Cell Phones:

Personal cell phones should be silenced or turned off. Texting, checking email and personal phone calls can be made on the lunch break unless urgent. If you use your phone for an alarm or memory device, please do so. If you have difficulty putting down your phone, we recommend you leave it at your home so that you can focus on your goals. Communication with our associates should occur through the Synapse House telephone or via email. If you need to have an associate's personal number, please do not contact them during their time off or share it without permission.

Lunch:

A refrigerator and microwave are available. Label lunch bags and beverages. No beverage or food item can be in the work areas, near any computers. Any special dietary issues such as diabetes, religious restrictions or food allergies should be reported to the Director. The Culinary Unit provides home cooked lunches by the members as part of life skills training. The menus can be found on the calendar. If you would like to have our lunch, we ask for a \$3 donation. We can easily add the meals to your end of month bill to eliminate need to bring cash. Please let our staff know if you would like to do this.

Family Involvement:

Annual Support: Participate in one event each year. This could be holding a supply drive at one's place of work, requesting one's church to do a special contribution at a service, volunteer at an event.

Family Feedback: Each Fall, we ask our Families to provide input through a Satisfaction Survey and to

provide input into the goals that your loved on will be working on. This helps us obtain the best results.

Volunteering: Family members can volunteer on outings or at special events. Family members cannot volunteer within the Clubhouse program.

Social Media: Follow and “like” us on Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter. Social media involvement helps those in need find us as well as increasing our involvement in fundraising efforts.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Synapse House maintains confidentiality of all personal information, medical history, and records of all persons served, all associates, our donors and the organization. At no time can information be shared with those that do not need to know or without proper consent. Confidential information is protected by Federal Law and extensive fines and legal action can result in noncompliance.

Members may view their own personal chart upon request only in a designated area. You cannot remove your personal chart or any documents in it. If you wish copies or need to have documents sent to another provider, please fill out the Request Form and we will assist you.

For those who are funded through Worker’s Compensation Insurance or governmental funding, your reports must be shared with any relevant provider as a condition of the receipt of funding.

GRIEVANCE POLICY

Synapse House has a formal Grievance Policy that can be used to handle any complaints. Grievance forms are posted and readily available. If assistance is needed in completing the form, please ask. We encourage any issues be brought to our attention immediately to provide quality services.

Conflict of Interest:

Any conflict of interest in a person’s participation will be disclosed at the time of admission.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

If someone is hurt, an associate will immediately assess the situation and contact 911 as needed. An Emergency Information Sheet is completed by each member in advance and a copy given to the paramedics. We cannot administer medications. Routine emergency drills are performed.

OUR ORGANIZATION

Synapse House is proud to have received a Three-Year Accreditation through the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF). We are an active member of the International Brain Injury Clubhouse Alliance and comply with the Clubhouse Standards set by Clubhouse International.

Our goals for the organization are available for review and determined by input by all stakeholders including the families, members, Board of Directors, associates, donors and referral sources. If you have any suggestions or would like to become more involved, please do not hesitate to contact us.