

Partial Hospitalization Program (PHP)

The Partial Hospitalization Program (PHP) is a voluntary outpatient mental health service that can provide an alternative to—or transition from—psychiatric inpatient hospitalization. The program is designed for adults who need a high level of support to help manage their symptoms when safety and structure are a concern. Participants attend the program Monday through Friday from 10 a.m.–3:00 p.m., excluding holidays. The usual length of stay is two weeks.

On admission, participants are assigned a psychiatrist and primary clinician who provide comprehensive evaluation, medication management, supportive counseling, and aftercare planning. Participants can expect to meet with their assigned clinicians to support their treatment needs, typically once or twice per week.

Each treatment day consists of four therapy groups with a one-hour break for lunch. Fresh lunch is provided in the UCSF Health Cafeteria. Group therapy at Langley Porter is grounded in mindfulness and acceptance-based therapies, including dialectical behavior therapy (DBT), acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT), and cognitive behavior therapy (CBT). Participants will learn skills to promote mindfulness, interpersonal effectiveness, emotion regulation, and distress tolerance with the goals of maintaining safety, improving day-to-day functioning, and decreasing the severity of symptoms.

At the time of discharge, participants may still experience symptoms, but will have the capacity and skills to remain safe in a less structured environment. Following treatment, participants may transition to an Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP) or back to previously established outpatient mental health providers. If providers need to be established, the treatment team will assist you with resources for this as well as other resources based on individual needs.

Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP)

The Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP) is an option for people with moderate psychiatric symptoms who need increased support but are able to structure their time outside of the program and keep themselves safe. Participants attend the program on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday (excluding holidays) in the morning (9 a.m.–12 p.m.) or afternoon (1 p.m.–4 p.m.). The usual length of stay is six weeks. The schedule and duration of IOP allows participants to learn and integrate skills in a supportive environment while navigating the stressors of daily life. Participants are often able to continue or resume work or school schedules while attending IOP.

On admission, participants are assigned a psychiatrist and primary clinician who provide comprehensive evaluation, medication management, supportive counseling, and aftercare planning. Participants can expect to meet with their assigned clinicians to support their treatment needs, typically once per week.

Each treatment day consists of three therapy groups. Group therapy at Langley Porter is grounded in mindfulness and acceptance-based therapies, including dialectical behavior therapy (DBT), acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT), and cognitive behavior therapy (CBT). Participants will learn skills to promote mindfulness, interpersonal effectiveness, emotion regulation, and distress tolerance with the goal of enhancing day-to-day coping and symptom management.

At the time of discharge, most participants experience noticeable improvement in symptoms with the stability and confidence to transition back to their daily lives with the support of previously established outpatient mental health providers. If providers need to be established, the treatment team will assist you with resources for this as well as other resources based on individual needs.

Contact information

Our main program phone number is [**\(415\) 476-7400**](tel:4154767400).

PHP/IOP Hours and Schedule

PHP - Daily Schedule (Monday – Friday)

Psychotherapy Group:	10 a.m.	-	10:50 a.m.
Skills Group I:	11 a.m.	-	11:50 a.m.
Lunch break	11:50 a.m.	-	1:00 p.m.
Skills Group II:	1 p.m.	-	1:50 p.m.
Skills Practice and Review:	2 p.m.	-	2:50 p.m.

AM IOP - Daily Schedule (Monday, Wednesday, Friday)

Psychotherapy Group:	9 a.m.	-	9:50 a.m.
Skills Group I:	10 a.m.	-	10:50 a.m.
Skills Group II:	11 a.m.	-	11:50 a.m.

PM IOP - Daily Schedule (Monday, Wednesday, Friday)

Psychotherapy Group:	1 p.m.	-	1:50 p.m.
Skills Group I:	2 p.m.	-	2:50 p.m.
Skills Group II:	3 p.m.	-	3:50 p.m.

Punctuality & Attendance

PHP and IOP are intensive, short-term programs that are designed to be attended consecutively without absences. Please arrive on time and do not miss any groups or program days. Arriving late, missing groups, and missing program days takes away from you receiving the full benefit of the program.

If you are late or absent, we will help you to identify barriers to attending and evaluate if you are able to commit to the program. We understand that sometimes there are issues that arise which cannot be avoided. Absences should be kept to a minimum and will be actively monitored by us. If you miss more than three groups or program days, you may be discharged from the program.

What to Expect When You Start PHP/IOP

Group therapy

Group therapy is the core of PHP and IOP. These groups are designed to help you better understand your symptoms, share your experiences with others who are also facing challenges in their lives, and increase your capacity to be effective in your day-to-day life.

Many participants find group therapy to be supportive and significantly beneficial to their recovery. We encourage you to participate fully and openly. While we encourage sharing and support within the group, we recommend that you do not develop these relationships outside of the program groups until after you and your peers have finished the program. This provides a safe boundary so that you can focus on your goals and needs during the program.

Your treatment team

On admission you will be assigned a psychiatrist and a clinician, but your treatment team consists of the entire Langley Porter PHP/IOP staff.

Your clinician is a master's level therapist who will be your main point of contact for all questions regarding your treatment. You will meet with your psychiatrist and your clinician within the first two days of the program and regularly through the rest of your treatment in PHP/IOP. PHP can expect to meet with their clinicians once or twice per week and IOP generally once per week.

During your first meeting, your clinician will ask about your general history and current life circumstances and work with you to establish your goals for treatment. Your psychiatrist will ask you about your mental health history, what medications you are taking now, and what psychiatric medications you have taken in the past. Please be prepared to provide that information on your first day.

Settling in

Many participants feel nervous during their first few days—this is normal. Please speak to a staff member about concerns or questions you have. While the experience is normal, we are here to help you adjust to the program and give you the support you need to make the most of it.

After the first couple of days in the program, participants tend to feel more comfortable and settle into the routine of attending. Eventually, most participants come to value and enjoy their time in the program—we hope that will happen for you too.

Coordination with providers outside of the program

If you have mental health providers outside of PHP/IOP, you will be asked to provide authorization for clinical staff in PHP/IOP to speak to those providers for coordination of your treatment. Because the PHP program is so intensive, we advise that you pause any therapy outside of PHP while attending that program. This allows one coordinated treatment team to make recommendations and manage your care during this time. Depending upon personal preference, you may choose to see an outside therapist while attending IOP – ideally this would be on a day you're not attending IOP. Please note that for psychiatrists, only one doctor should manage your medications at any given time and that insurance companies (as well as Medicare) will usually not pay for more than one psychiatrist appointment on the same day.

Psychotherapy and Skills Groups

Psychotherapy group

The purpose of this group is further to prepare for mindfully approaching the full day with presence and purpose. Group begins with a mindfulness exercise, a review of the day's schedule, and skill focus, followed by a brief structured check-in. Following check-in, there may be time for group discussion regarding common themes that have been raised, focusing on how one can use skills to address problems in living.

Skills groups

Each group focuses on learning different therapeutic skills, coping strategies, and concepts to help reduce your psychiatric symptoms.

EXAMPLES INCLUDE:

- Helping you balance your emotions, thoughts, and behaviors.
- Increasing your ability to be present in the moment.
- Increasing your capacity to accept things as they are without judgment.
- Improving your ability to cope with emotional pain and experience increasing positive emotional experiences in your life.
- Learning crisis management skills.
- Developing and/or improving relationships and communication skills.

Other groups

You may attend other groups in the program including:

- **WEEK IN REVIEW, WEEKEND PLANNING, AND SUSTAINING CHANGE**

The last day of each week often features groups which are devoted to a discussion and overview of the skills covered that week (especially those skills which are of special importance in your treatment) and to either developing a specific plan for your activities and safety over the weekend or continued work on sustaining the change implemented during treatment.

Expectations for group participation

Program & group ground rules include but are not limited to:

1. **ARRIVE ON TIME**

The program day starts promptly. Each group starts promptly on the hour. It is important to be on time so as not to disrupt the experience of other participants.

2. **RESPECT**

In order for the group to be a safe place to explore ourselves and relationships, it's important to have an environment of mutual support and respect. In order to achieve this, consider the following elements that foster respect.

- **ACTIVE LISTENING.** This means paying attention to what is being said, demonstrating good eye contact, and showing that you are attending to what's being said.
- **PARTICIPATE.** It is important to participate and contribute to the group to the best of your ability. You can decline to talk, but we encourage you to participate even when you don't want to—this is practicing the opposite action skill and is one way people get better.
- **OFFERING FEEDBACK.** If you choose to offer another group member, please consider asking for their permission. Try not to offer unsolicited advice.
- **BODY LANGUAGE.** Hold yourself with a posture that shows you are present, open, and willing to participate.

3. **OUTSIDE APPOINTMENTS**

Please schedule personal appointments **outside** of treatment hours. If you will be arriving late or will be absent from any scheduled treatment day, please call your assigned primary clinician or leave a message at the mainline (415) 476-7400 as soon as possible. **Given the nature of the program, a welfare check may be initiated for no-call/no-shows of PHP participants.**

4. **NO VERBAL OR PHYSICAL THREATS/VIOLENCE**

This is grounds for immediate dismissal from the program.

5. **NO ACT OF THEFT**

This is grounds for immediate dismissal from the program. Please note that this is an open building, and we cannot be responsible for lost or stolen goods. Please keep your personal belongings with you.

6. **NO DRUGS OR ALCOHOL**

We encourage you to abstain from all drugs and alcohol and while you are in the program. This will help ensure your assessment, treatment, and long-term planning is based on the clearest view of yourself and your situation.

7. **CELL PHONES**

All cell phones must be turned off while in groups. Groups should be as free of distractions as possible. Please **DO NOT** take pictures of the treatment area or other participants in the program (see confidentiality/privacy below.)

8. **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Maintaining the confidentiality and privacy of other participants is a crucial part of creating a safe therapeutic environment. There are many ways we do this:

- **GROUP CONFIDENTIALITY.** Anything said between two or more group members at any time is part of the group process and is confidential. What is said in the group stays in the group—meaning, at no time, should you disclose group member names or personal/identifying information outside of treatment areas.
- **PICTURES/SOCIAL MEDIA.** DO NOT take, share, or post pictures of the treatment area or

pictures of other participants on social media.

9. KEEP RELATIONSHIPS IN THE PROGRAM

While we encourage sharing and support within the group, we recommend that you do not develop these relationships outside of the program groups until you have finished the program. This provides a safe boundary between yourself and peers so that you can focus on your goals and needs while you're here. Furthermore, we strongly advise that you do not develop romantic and/or financial relationships during the program, as these types of relationships interfere with treatment.

10. DISCUSSING YOUR ISSUES IN GROUPS

While it's important for you to share the details of your situation with us, some details are best shared in a 1:1 meeting between you and your provider, rather than in the group setting. Details about issues including safety (self-harm thoughts and behaviors), trauma, and alcohol and drug abuse are best shared in 1:1 meetings. In PHP, you will be prompted to state your safety status each day in groups – please share the status of your safety rather than the details. If you have any questions about what is or isn't okay to share in groups, please review this with your clinician.

11. NO FRAGRANCES

Be aware that there are people who are sensitive to fragrances. Persons attending groups are requested to refrain from using perfume or cologne for the comfort of other participants. The group rooms are closed environments and strong smells do not easily dissipate.

12. NO EATING IN GROUPS

Please do not bring food into groups or eat during sessions as this can be disruptive to others in the room. Beverages are okay to have in sessions. If you need to eat urgently, please be mindful to do this during planned breaks – between sessions, at lunch, or excuse yourself from the room for a short break as needed.

13. MEDICATIONS

Please do not take prescribed or over the counter medications while in group sessions, as this can be unintentionally distressing to other group members. If you need to take a medication during the course of the treatment day, please be mindful to do this during planned breaks – between sessions, at lunch, or excuse yourself from the room to take your medication as needed.

What to Expect on Your First Day of PHP/IOP

Upon starting the program, you will meet with your assigned psychiatrist and clinician for assessment and treatment planning. Your psychiatrist will want to know what medications you are taking now and what psychiatric medications you have taken in the past. Please be prepared to provide that information on your first day. Your clinician is a master's level therapist who will work with you to coordinate your treatment, including your goals for treatment. Your clinician will be your main point of contact for all questions regarding your treatment. You will meet with your clinician regularly during enrollment in the program—for PHP this is generally 1-2 times per week and for IOP generally once per week.

PHP and IOP are group therapy programs and the majority of time you spend with us will be attending groups to learn skills to manage your symptoms.

Many participants feel nervous on their first day—this is normal. Please do not hesitate to speak to a staff member about concerns or questions you have. After the first couple of days in the program, participants tend to feel more comfortable and settle into the routine of attending. Eventually, most participants come to value and enjoy their time in the program—we hope that will happen for you too.

What to Expect at Discharge From PHP/IOP

While PHP and IOP can help you get on the right path, mental health recovery takes longer than a few weeks. Therefore, it is important to have a plan for your mental health care after the program ends.

A typical aftercare plan includes seeing a psychiatrist and therapist on a regular basis. If you need to find a psychiatrist or therapist, we suggest you allow a few weeks to secure appointments. We can help by providing guidance and resources to include information on providers, clinics, group therapy, and support groups. Your assigned clinician will work with you on your aftercare plan, so please feel free to ask them any questions you may have.

Shortly before discharge or on the day of discharge, you will meet with your primary clinician to review your progress during treatment. We will also ask you to complete symptom questionnaires and a Perception of Care Survey. This survey is an important way for us to learn how to continually improve our programs. We read every comment and take all input seriously. Thank you in advance for completing the survey and helping us to improve our programs.

Insurance Authorizations

We are contracted with the following insurance plans:

- Blue Cross of California
- Blue Cross FEP (federal employees)
- Cigna
- Magellan
- Managed Health Network (MHN)
- Medicare
- UBH (United Behavioral Health/Optum)

We are not contracted with the following insurance plans:

- Aetna
- Beacon
- Blue Cross plans not listed above
- Blue Shield (unless mental health is managed by Magellan)
- Medi-Cal

Services have to be approved by your insurance company. This process involves other professionals on the LPPH staff who are clinicians that specialize in working with the insurance companies. At times, we need to have our physicians consult with the insurance company physicians to get continued authorization.

Initial authorization happens on your first day. Insurance companies typically authorize a few days at a time, depending on your progress in the program. Please keep in mind:

- Notices sent to you by mail regarding days authorized for PHP/IOP will usually not provide the latest information and will not reflect current authorizations in process.
- At times, we are unable to obtain additional authorization even when we believe it's appropriate. If this occurs for you, we will assist you with next steps in your treatment.