

# Process Improvements

Dr. Terry's response to reviews received - March 2022.

It took me a long time to get through these threads. I am sorry that many of you have had negative experiences at Mercy Wellness. We are listening and trying to improve our processes. I appreciate your honesty and hopefully, we can prove to the community that we are delivering good quality healthcare again. As I read through there seem to be a few common problems that we have had and have been trying to fix for a while, I hope that we have reached a fix on many fronts. I have highlighted a few:

1. In a time when many doctor's offices were closing or only seeing patients virtually, we decided to stay open and see patients in the clinic. Looking back, we definitely did things that could have been done better. I don't like excuses, but if I was to state a reason it would be personnel issues. Whether it was covid illness or quarantine, or having a hard time filling positions. The bottom line is that we didn't have enough people to fill the needs of our patients. So, we have hired more staff.
2. Continuity: Our electronic medical record does not have a way that we can assign patients to a certain provider. When we first received suggestions to provide continuity for our patients, we brainstormed and tried a few things. We now have implemented a continuity plan. We are still working out the kinks, but for the most part, it works and when a person comes in and establishes care they will be able to see the same provider consistently. One thing that might be different from other clinics is that our providers work 4 days a week, so if you walk in on a day that your provider is not in, you will be seen by someone else, and that person is going to be random. I can't fix that.
3. Communication: We have tried multiple ways to fix our call system. We have tried different software, different phone trees, and a triage system for calls. None of these have worked well. Now we have a mix of a phone tree and human interaction. And the most recent solution was to just hire more people to answer the phone. This process seems to be working better. We are in the process of making it so that we can receive text messages through the mercy wellness line, but that isn't online yet. We check our emails and voicemails multiple times a day. We are looking at the data of how many missed calls and voicemails that we receive daily in an effort to minimize lost calls and lost communications. Adjustments will be made accordingly.
4. Referrals: Admittedly, in a few instances we have performed poorly. Most of the problems we have had stemmed from not having enough workers to handle all of the referrals that go out of our office. On top of hiring more staff for our referrals department, they got their own direct phone line. That has proved to be beneficial. If you have questions about a referral, please call and speak to our referrals department.
5. Prescriptions: This is a tricky topic that I am still unsure why it isn't a sound process. When someone calls in to get a prescription refill they are sent to a voicemail. That voicemail box is checked twice a day. The prescriptions list is then taken to the providers

it is approved and then it is sent in. There are a lot of steps, but this process happens daily. Our policy on refills may be misunderstood or not very well-publicized. If the prescription asked for is a current medication that we have prescribed before and that person has been seen within a year, we refill the medication for a year. If the patient hasn't been seen in over a year, we give a 30-day prescription to allow time to come in for an appointment to reassess the need for the medication or a possible change. If the medication is a controlled substance, a refill is given for 3 months instead of a year, because if someone is taking a controlled substance they need to be seen every 3 months.

So, I am sorry if you have had a bad experience with us. I take full responsibility for the lapses in care. I am sorry and I hope to be better in the future. If you have not found a medical home that you are happy with, I hope that you would give us another chance. I welcome any critique. Please email me at [aterry@mercywellnessclinic.com](mailto:aterry@mercywellnessclinic.com).