



Robert D. Sutherland Center for the Evaluation and Treatment of Bipolar Disorder
University of Colorado at Boulder – Department of Psychology and Neuroscience
Box 345 UCB, Boulder, CO 80309-0345 • Phone: 303/492-5680 • Fax: 303/492-2967
<http://rdsfoundation.org/>

Out of Session Communication and Clinical Emergencies: Resources for Active Clients of the Sutherland Center

There may be times when you feel the need to connect with a mental health professional outside of your scheduled therapy time. Below are some resources that may be helpful in times of distress or mood escalation, as well as information about clinic policies pertaining to out-of-session communication.

- **Practice your skills.** (If you've participated in the ABC's therapy group, you may want to refer to your binder; if you have a folder of notes or handouts from individual or family therapy, or if you have a wellness/relapse-prevention plan, these may be useful resources.)
- **Reach out to your support system.**
- **Contact your therapist.** We understand that you may benefit from coaching or support outside of scheduled appointment times. Therapists at the Sutherland Center strive to meet these needs. However, we do not have the resources to offer round-the-clock, immediate, or frequent out-of-session access to clinical staff. Sutherland Center therapists generally aspire to return calls before going to bed on the day that a call was received (if the caller indicates the need to talk that day). However, each therapist is encouraged to set their own guidelines or boundaries regarding evening and weekend availability. If you can anticipate possibly needing after-hours contact, you may want to discuss with your therapist what you can expect if you reach out to him or her at night or on the weekend.

Your therapist's phone number is available on your treatment contract and on our website: rdsfoundation.org/the-rds-center-at-cu/contact-the-center.

- **Contact your therapist's supervisor.** Graduate student therapists are supervised by licensed clinical psychologists. Your treatment contract will specify who this is and will include his or her phone number; phone numbers also be found at rdsfoundation.org/the-rds-center-at-cu/contact-the-center. As with your therapist, supervisors may not receive your call promptly and may not be available to respond outside of his or her normal clinic hours.
- **Contact your medical doctor.** This could mean your psychiatrist, prescribing psychiatric nurse practitioner, or primary care physician. Prescribing clinicians usually have a 24-hour emergency care phone number.
- **Contact the Colorado Crisis Line at 888/885-1222.** This 24-hour emergency line is staffed by Master's or Doctoral level therapists, and is available to handle a variety of

crisis situations, including, but not limited to, depression, suicidal urges, and escalating mood states.

- **Contact the crisis line operated by the mental health center in your county**
Aurora Mental Health Services: 303/617-2300
Boulder Mental Health Partners: 303/447-1665
Colorado West Regional Mental Health Services (Aspen, Eagle, Grand County, Jackson, Moffit, Pitkin, Rio Blanco, Route, Summit County): 888/207-4004
Community Reach Center (Adams County): 303/853-3500
Jefferson Center for Mental Health Crisis Line: 303/425-0300
Touchstone Partners Crisis Line (Larimer County): 970/ 494-4200
- **Go to the nearest Emergency Department.**
- **Dial 911 or the non-emergency number for local police.** Explain that your emergency is related to a mental illness. Provide details of the situation, and ask for a CIT (Crisis Intervention Team) officer since they have received training about mental illness and may better handle mental health related situations.