

# Health Trends

## National Survey Identifies Barriers to Seeking Psychological Care



(NAPSA)—Results of a national survey show an overwhelming number of Americans fear their psychological health records are not kept confidential, particularly from their employers. The survey also demonstrated most people are unaware many insurance plans require a diagnosis of psychological illness to cover ongoing counseling.

The recent Omnibus survey revealed 86 percent of Americans with psychological health coverage are concerned about maintaining the confidentiality of their psychological health counseling records, and 37 percent of Americans reported a reluctance to seek psychological care for fear their psychological health records may be shared with their employers or others. Two-thirds of Americans would not be likely to tell their employer they were seeing a psychological health professional, and 70 percent would not tell their work associates.

In another alarming finding, 69 percent of Americans were unaware most health insurance plans require a psychological health professional to make a diagnosis of a psychological illness in order to receive approval to continue treating the patient, even if the patient is clearly seeking help for a situational, life transition issue such as bereavement or family counseling.

This finding proves to be a major barrier to seeking treatment because half of Americans said they would hesitate to see a counselor if a psychological illness diagnosis were required. Ironically, the study found nearly half of Americans would be most likely to see a counselor for a non-diag-

nosable issue, such as situational depression caused by a life event, as opposed to a chronic psychological illness.

In response to these concerns, and to ease the stigma associated with psychological therapy, a new concept in psychological health services was recently formed. OnMind Psychological Services ([www.OnMind.info](http://www.OnMind.info)) has created a nationwide network of thousands of licensed psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, and counselors who provide strictly confidential and affordable counseling services free from the oversight of patients' employers or health insurance companies.

OnMind is not an insurance plan. OnMind's national network of over 2400 professionals have agreed to accept OnMind members on a direct-pay basis. For a yearly membership fee of \$50 for the entire household, therapy session fees for OnMind members represent savings of up to 50 percent or greater, compared to national averages. These fees are equivalent to many insurance plans' co-payments and/or deductibles, but there is no maximum number of visits.

OnMind is designed to facilitate a private and confidential relationship between patient and therapist, so there is no risk of personal information being obtained by employers, co-workers, insurance companies, or anyone else. Members also have access to discount prescription and non-prescription medications, self-assessment tools, a free 24-7 crisis hotline staffed by licensed therapists, and much more.

For more information, log onto [www.OnMind.info](http://www.OnMind.info).