Institute of Living
A Division of Hartford Hospital

Updated May 2025

Professionals' Program Overview and Schedule

The Professionals' Program is an intensive group therapy program for individuals struggling with their mental health, relationship to work, work stress or work-life balance difficulties, and complications in their relationships.

- Most program participants start at a five-day a week PHP schedule (partial hospitalization program). PHP involves attending four groups/day (9am to 1pm) for approximately the first 2-3 weeks depending on clinical need.
- Participants then "step-down" to a 4 day/week, 3 groups/day IOP schedule (intensive outpatient program; 9am to 12pm) for 2 weeks, before moving to a 3 day/week, 3 groups/day schedule (9am to 12pm) for the remainder of the program.
- In total, the program is 8 weeks. Consistent attendance is required with limited interruptions in treatment (e.g., vacations or travel need to happen before or after attending the program)
- Most individuals take leave from work during the first 4+ weeks in program. If clinically indicated and permissible by their employer, individuals may choose to begin a part-time return to work schedule around the 5th week in treatment.
- No individual therapy is provided; each program participant will be assigned a clinician they will work with to utilize the benefits of group by identifying group-specific treatment goals and help complete any leave paperwork.
- Medication management is offered with psychiatry for those who are interested.
- Groups average approximately 10 patients per group for most groups but can be anywhere from 6 to 12 depending on the day. There are a total of 6 to 30 participants in attendance, depending on the day; admission is on a rolling basis.
- The group schedule and goals for each group are outlined below.

Week 1 - 2 (PHP)
- Monday - Friday
- 9am to 1pm

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Week 3-4 (IOP)
- Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday
- 9am to 12pm

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Week 4 - 8 (IOP)
- Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday
- 9am to 12pm

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Professionals' Partial Hospitalization Program (PHP) Schedule

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9:00 – 10:00 Group 1 Assessment	Assessment Group	Assessment Group	Assessment Group	Assessment Group	Assessment Group
10:10-11:00 Group 2 Process	Interpersonal Process Group	Interpersonal Process Group	Interpersonal Process Group	Interpersonal Process Group	Interpersonal Process Group
11:10 – 12:00 Group 3 Skills	Group Reflection & Yoga Group or Spirituality (bi-monthly)	Skills Group	Skills Group	Skills Group	Skills Group
12:10-1:00 Group 4 PHP	PHP Wrap-up Group	PHP Wrap-up Group	PHP Wrap-up Group	PHP Wrap-up Group	PHP Wrap-up Group

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Professionals' Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP) Schedule

	Monday (by assignment)	**Tuesday**	**Wednesday**	**Friday**
9:00 – 10:00 Group 1 Assessment	Assessment Group	Assessment Group	Assessment Group	Assessment Group
10:10-11:00 Group 2 Process	Interpersonal Process Group	Interpersonal Process Group	Interpersonal Process Group	Interpersonal Process Group
11:10 – 12:00 Group 3 Skills	Group Reflection & Yoga Group or Spirituality (bi-monthly)	Skills Group	Skills Group	Skills Group
Please Note: Monday groups are by assignment.				

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Group Descriptions

Assessment group (1st group of the day)
In Assessment group, each group member is asked to 'check-in' and describe their current mood and emotions, symptoms, stressors, reflect on treatment goals, and identify any medication issues. The goal of the group is twofold: to provide the treatment team with the clinical information needed to assess each group member's needs and to provide every group member with an opportunity to practice checking-in with themselves - to be able to step back and reflect on their emotions and share how they are feeling with others openly in the group process. It is also an opportunity for group members to offer feedback to each other, identify shared themes and offer support to one another.

Medication check-in group
1x a week, the program psychiatrist joins the assessment group to conduct a "medication check-in" with each group member. This allows our psychiatrists to connect with each person to adjust medication. Also, this group creates a space in which group members feel safe talking about medications with others and reduce the stigma often felt about taking psychiatric medications.

Interpersonal process group
Interpersonal process group is meant for *illuminating and processing* interpersonal patterns, challenging emotional content, and exploring moments of disconnection and connection with others. This group tends to be focused on shared experiences, relationships and relational functioning that often play a large role in experiences of depression, anxiety and ability to function at work. **Interpersonal group therapy is frequently a "microcosm" of other groups or dyads that members are a part of, such as one's family, intimate, and work relationships. That is to say, the way you find yourself thinking and feeling about yourself and about other group members is likely similar to ways you experience yourself and others in your other relationships.** Thus, relationships and ways of relating to others in the group are actively explored and identified as treatment targets within the process group. For example, a group member may struggle with feeling ignored and distanced from their partner or good friends and then they find themselves feeling a similar way in group. This would be actively explored it group, with the hopes of changing ineffective patterns of relating. See the last page of this handout for examples of Interpersonal Goals for Group Therapy.

Skills Group
Skills group focuses on a specific topic, idea, or coping skill. Skills group topics range from distress or emotional tolerance, attachment and relationships, shame and guilt, anger, and cognitive distortions, to name a few. Skills groups often include hand-outs, a video, or a short reading that are provided to group members and reviewed in the group. Group members are asked to apply the skill to their own experience and share that in the group.

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Wrap Up Group (PHP ONLY)
Wrap-up group provides an opportunity to engage in setting goals for the evening that will help progress in recovery, such as reviewing skills handouts, practicing a new coping strategy, reestablishing a new routine, etc. Wrap-up group goals aren't simply tasks that were going to be completed anyway, but a goal to challenge yourself to be an active participant in your recovery outside of group.

Group Reflection and Interpersonal Goals (1st, 3rd and 5th Mondays of the month)
This group reviews group guidelines and creates a space to reflect on how group can be utilized to support treatment goals. Group reflection is a place to revisit interpersonal treatment goals, including understanding the benefits and targeting specific interpersonal goals in group.

Yoga Group (2nd and 4th Mondays of the month)
2x a month Yoga Instructor Andrew joins us for a yoga class focused on breathing, gentle movement, strengthening poses and mindfulness. This is an active yoga class, we encourage group members to wear comfortable, flexible clothing (not jeans). If you have any concerns about participating in this physically active group, please talk with the program manager or clinician.

Example Interpersonal Goals for Group Therapy

- I want to learn to be honest about my emotions and feelings with others.
- I want to work on giving honest and direct feedback to others, particularly when its critical feedback.
- I want to work on listening to others to understand their experience, and not just listening until I get to respond.
- I want to get outside myself and my problems and try to understand what other people are going through.
- I want other people to get me back on track when my thinking goes off course.
- I want to communicate better with other people. (With whom would you like to communicate better in the group?)
- I want to learn how to trust people more. (Who in the group would you like to trust more?)
- I want to talk about my anger. (What part of your anger can you discuss without it overwhelming you? Can you talk about a specific frustration or annoyance you have experienced in this group that we can work on today?)
- I want to talk about being afraid to talk in front of other people. (What makes you afraid to talk about your problems in this group?)
- I want to look at what I do that makes other people angry at me.
- I want to be patient with others in group who continue to struggle with the same problems. (With whom do you want to be more patient?)
- I want to learn how I come across to people by asking for feedback when I share.
- I want to be more assertive about getting my needs met in group. (What do you need today and how can people help you obtain it?)
- I want other people to listen to what I have to say and to try and understand me.
- I want to connect with (e.g., not push people) away who are trying to help me.