



International
OCD
Foundation

OCD and Related Disorders Clinic Profile

Columbia University Clinic for Anxiety and Related Disorders (CUCARD) of Westchester

Clinic/Program Director: Anthony Puliafico, PhD

Name of Intake Coordinator: Diane Leach

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155 White Plains Road
Tarrytown, NY 10591

Treatment Providers:

Anthony Puliafico, PhD

Nicholas C. Crimarco, PhD

Rachel E. Ginsberg, PhD

Payment Options:

Self-Pay

Populations Served:

Adults

Adolescents

Children

Treatment Strategies Offered:

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)

Exposure and Response Prevention (ERP)

Group Therapy

Habit Reversal

Home Visits

Prescribe Medication

Treatment for Co-occurring Conditions

Areas of Specialty (in addition to OCD in general):

Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD)

Hoarding Disorder

Perfectionism

Scrupulosity

Skin Picking (Excoriation Disorder)

Tics/Tourettes

Trichotillomania (Hair Pulling Disorder)
Violent/Sexual Obsessions

Summary of our services:

CUCARD Westchester opened in 2015 as an outpatient clinical service affiliated with Columbia University's Psychiatry Department. CUCARD Westchester is directed by Anthony Puliafico, PhD and is comprised of Ph.D. level clinicians, all of whom have specialized training in the assessment and treatment of OCD, anxiety and related disorders. CUCARD Westchester specializes in providing accelerated therapy services for children, adolescents and adults requiring a high level of outpatient care. Patients can be seen up to five times weekly and for several hours per day, as indicated by presenting problems. A more intensive treatment approach is often appropriate for children, adolescents, and adults whose disorders are significantly impairing school or work attendance or performance, or ability to complete daily tasks (e.g., washing, eating, leaving the home). We also provide intensive treatment services for individuals or families who travel from out of town for specialized care. CUCARD Westchester also provides standard outpatient treatment for individuals and families in the metro New York area. Standard treatment typically involves once or twice weekly sessions.

Treatment Planning Process

At CUCARD Westchester, we offer a comprehensive evaluation that results in a better understanding of the ways that environmental, psychological, and biological factors contribute to current problems in functioning. Additionally, we outline specific recommendations for treatment and therapeutic goals.

For adults, initial assessments usually involve completion of a background questionnaire, assessment forms, and a diagnostic interview that lasts approximately 90 minutes. With the individual's consent, we also speak to other treatment providers or relevant family members (e.g., parents of young adults, spouse) who may be able to offer other insights and observations to assist in the assessment or treatment planning. For children and teens, our intake involves diagnostic interviews with both the youth and caregiver(s). In addition, we may ask to speak with school personnel if the child is having difficulty in school.

Following this evaluation process, a treatment plan will be developed collaboratively with the patient, family, and therapist. This treatment plan will include specific treatment goals, approach, and recommended frequency and duration of treatment. If at the conclusion of our evaluation we determine that an individual would be better suited for treatment elsewhere, we will provide appropriate referrals and recommendations for those services.

Core Treatment Components

CUCARD Westchester is dedicated to delivering evidence-based interventions for OCD and anxiety disorders. We provide cognitive behavioral treatment, which is focused on modifying behavior and thoughts through active therapeutic interventions. For OCD, treatment typically involves Exposure and Ritual Prevention (EX/RP). In EX/RP, a therapist guides an individual in gradually facing anxiety-provoking situations while resisting urges to engage in compulsions or rituals. Exposure treatment is also typically used to treat the range of anxiety disorders and cases of school refusal. Treatment for tic disorders and trichotillomania typically involves a type

of intervention known as habit reversal training (HRT).

Besides individual treatment, CUCARD Westchester also provides weekly treatment and support groups for children, adolescents, and young adults suffering from OCD.

Medication is used as first-line and adjunctive evidence-based treatment for anxiety, depressive and mood disorders. Research studies in children and adolescents, as well as adults, have shown that for some disorders the combination of medication and CBT is the most effective treatment. Our team collaborates with Columbia University-affiliated child and adolescent psychiatrists who provide services on site.

Parents, Family Members, Friends, Teachers, etc. Involvement

CUCARD Westchester will include parents, teachers, family members, and other professionals in a variety of ways including: conducting a thorough assessment of the biological and environmental factors contributing to the presenting problem, educating parents and other supportive people on how to respond effectively to their child's anxiety and utilizing supportive people to facilitate a person's gradually facing anxiety provoking situations and reducing compulsions. Parents and caregivers will be directly involved in the treatment process to the extent deemed appropriate by both the family and therapist.

Treatment of Co-Morbid Disorders

CUCARD Westchester specializes in the treatment of OCD and related disorders. CUCARD Westchester also provides assessment and treatment services for the following disorders:

- Hoarding Disorder
- Generalized anxiety disorder
- Social anxiety disorder
- Separation anxiety
- Panic disorder
- Specific phobias
- Tic disorders, including Tourette's syndrome
- Trichotillomania
- Excoriation disorder (skin picking)
- Oppositional Defiant Disorder

Individual Therapy

Treatment frequency for accelerated treatment programs is individualized, and can range from twice weekly to daily, for several hours a day. Standard outpatient treatment is also available. Standard treatment typically involves weekly 45 minute sessions.

Length of Stay

In general, CBT is a short-term and goal-oriented treatment. However, the length and duration of treatment depends on several factors, including but not limited to the severity of the presenting concern, presence of additional concerns, attendance, motivation for treatment, adherence to treatment and ability to collaborate with your clinician. We can provide a better estimate of the length of treatment after an evaluation.

“Census” (i.e., the maximum number of clients seen at any given time)
No.

Other Resources for Outpatients

We offer accelerated/intensive programs for children who are school refusing.

We are in the process of expanding Parent Child Interaction Therapy Services for children with disruptive behavior disorders and anxiety disorder.

Groups are offered for young adult college students that are suffering from anxiety or require life skills.