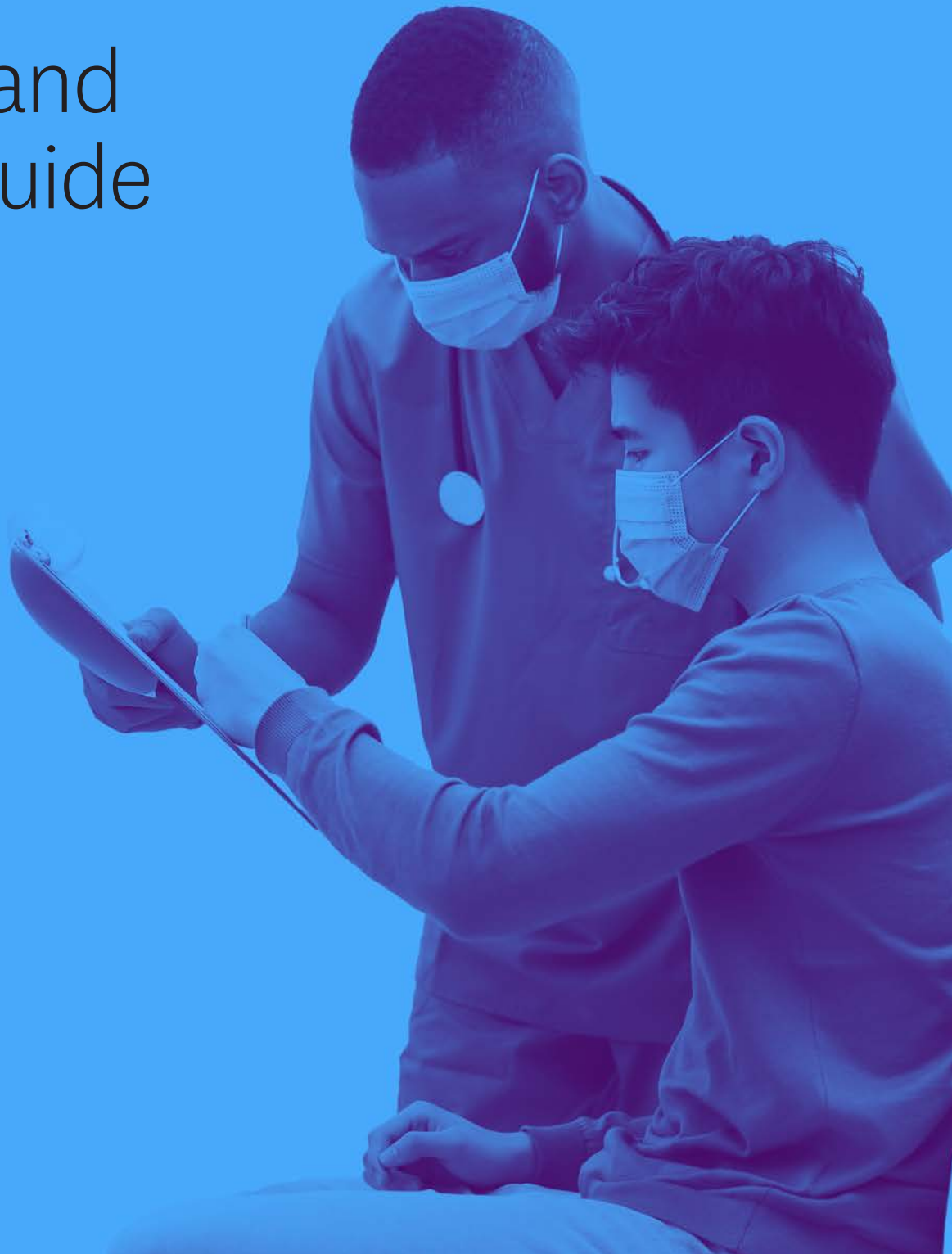




Howard Brown
Health

Patient and Client Guide



OUR MISSION AND VISION

Howard Brown Health was founded in 1974 by volunteers and is now one of the nation's largest lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) organizations.

MISSION

Rooted in LGBTQ+ liberation, Howard Brown Health provides affirming healthcare and mobilizes for social justice. We are agents of change for individual wellbeing and community empowerment.

VISION

Howard Brown Health envisions a future where healthcare and transformative social policies actualize human rights and equity for all.

WELCOME TO HOWARD BROWN HEALTH

Dear Patient or Client,

Thank you for choosing Howard Brown Health for your care.

This Patient and Client Guide's purpose is to empower you in your health journey. In the following pages you will find descriptions of our services, tips for making informed health decisions, and information about insurance, our sliding scale, and payment.

Your care team is here to help you access primary care, screening and treatment for sexually transmitted infections (STI), substance use recovery, behavioral health services, OB/GYN care, transgender and nonbinary services, pediatric care, and more. We encourage you to visit howardbrown.org to learn more about our locations, health services, and announcements.

Our goal is to provide integrated, patient-centered care at every visit by providing affirming medical care, health education, and responsive services so you can feel your best. If you feel we have not met this goal, please let us know.

We are your partners in health. Please speak to a member of your care team if you have any questions about your care or the contents of this guide.



Dr. Magda Houlberg,
Chief Clinical Officer



OUR SERVICES

Howard Brown is your medical home.
Our services include:

Physical and Behavioral Health

- Behavioral health and psychiatry
- Dentistry
- Diabetes care
- HIV screening, prevention, care, and social services
- Hepatitis C screening, immunization, and care
- Pediatric care
- Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) navigation
- Primary medical care
- Sexual health education
- STI screening and treatment
- Transgender and nonbinary health
- Travel immunizations
- OB/GYN care including but not limited to pap smears, colposcopies, pregnancy testing, birth control, pregnancy planning
- Anal health services

Supportive Services

- Aging Services
- Ryan White HIV Case Management
- GED tutoring
- Insurance navigation
- Legal clinic
- Services for survivors of sexual assault
- Social services and support groups
- Violence prevention

Broadway Youth Center

The Broadway Youth Center (BYC) works to improve the quality of life experienced by youth (12-24) who are LGBTQ+, underserved, and/or experiencing homelessness through the provision of youth-centered integrated healthcare and social services. BYC sees anyone, regardless of ability to pay. No appointments necessary, walk-ins only.

We encourage you to visit howardbrown.org to learn more about our locations, health services, and announcements.

Primary Care for the Whole You

**At Howard Brown
we provide care
that makes you feel
respected and valued
just as you are.**

We provide safe, timely, cost effective, equitable, and high quality services throughout the life span. You are at the center of our mission and meeting your comprehensive health and wellness needs is our ultimate goal.

As a patient, you are assigned to a care team that includes a dedicated medical provider, nurse, case manager, behavioral health consultant, health educator, medical assistant, and other healthcare providers. With team-based care, you can rely on a consistent and dedicated team of professionals attending to your overall, long-term health and wellness needs.

Health is more than physical wellness. It also includes emotional and mental wellness. As a Patient Centered Medical Home, Howard Brown strives to meet your overall needs with comprehensive care that includes social services, behavioral health, and a full range of medical services.

Learn more at howardbrown.org/service/primary-care/

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES

We Meet You Where You Are

Our therapists are passionate about providing non-judgmental, personalized care. We respect the choices that are right for your life. Our therapists are sex-positive, trauma-informed, and LGBTQ+ affirming.

Integrated, Whole-person Care

We believe that both mental and physical health impact the quality of your life. Therapists will collaborate with your medical provider, psychiatrists, or nurses, focusing on your holistic health.

Howard Brown provides mental health services tailored to your needs. Our team of counselors, social workers, and psychologists offer individual, relationship, and group therapies.



Individual Therapy

You'll work one-on-one with a therapist who understands. Together you'll identify the concerns most important to help you find relief. Work with an individual therapist for up to 24 sessions (about 7-9 months).



Group Therapy

Our groups offer a safe place to learn how to feel less overwhelmed or controlled by emotions while talking and being with others who may experience similar struggles.



Relationship/Couples Therapy

Support for those who want to strengthen their relationship, improve communication, or work on things that are getting in the way of being together.



Substance Use Therapy

Whether you are looking to stop, cut back or get a better understanding of how drugs and alcohol affect your life, we can help.



Psychiatry

Psychiatry is available for primary care patients at Howard Brown. Your psychiatrist will work with you on your mental health and offer appropriate medical treatment.

Learn more at howardbrown.org/service/behavioral-health/

APPOINTMENT TIPS

What to Expect

At Howard Brown, we want you to feel safe and informed during your appointment. Here are some tips for making your appointment as informative and helpful as possible.

- Decide what questions are most important to ask your provider beforehand.
- Come to the clinic at your provided arrival time.
- Have a list of your current medications or bring them with you.
- Stay focused on why you are there.
- Be honest with your care team.
- Share your point of view.
- Take note of instructions and next steps.

APPOINTMENT TIPS

What to Expect

When you arrive at the clinic at the provided arrival time, a Patient Services Representative will check you in, collect your current insurance, if available, and provide you a form for updating your personal information. Afterwards, you will be asked to have a seat until the exam room is ready. Your first appointment will last half an hour to an hour.

Once in the exam room, a Medical Assistant from your care team will take your vital signs and ask some additional medical questions to get your visit started. Afterwards, your primary care provider will see you.

During your visit, your healthcare provider will talk to you about your medical and sexual health history. You will be asked about medications you take and will be offered a routine, opt-out HIV test. If needed, vaccines may be administered or recommended.

If you are in need of medications, health screenings, lab work, a referral, or a follow-up appointment, your provider will provide you with next steps and answer any questions you may have.

APPOINTMENT TIPS

Feedback

You can provide feedback at:
howardbrown.org/provide-feedback-online

We appreciate you taking the time to share your thoughts and feedback about Howard Brown's services.

Please note that we respond to feedback on an as needed basis. While we review all comments, complaints, and suggestions, any feedback shared through this form may not be responded to directly.

For feedback/concerns involving the Howard Brown Health Patient Portal, please contact our IT department directly via email at *Portal@HowardBrown.org*.

Our IT staff are available to help Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

PAYMENT OPTIONS

Insurance

Howard Brown Health accepts many private insurance plans in addition to Medicaid and Medicare. For a list of insurances that we accept visit:

howardbrown.org/patient-resources/insurance-payments/

Pharmacy

Howard Brown has many in-house pharmacies as well as a network of over 30 participating pharmacies across the city. Uninsured Howard Brown patients receive a discount at our network of more than 30 pharmacies and can save up to 70% on most medications. If you're insured, using a pharmacy in our network helps Howard Brown earn revenue to serve other patients who are unable to pay for services.

Howard Brown Health Sliding Fee Scale

Howard Brown sees all patients regardless of their ability to pay. Howard Brown Health offers discounted medical care, psychiatry, dentistry, and mental health counseling to patients who are uninsured and have low income. We also provide discounted mental health counseling for patients with low income who have medical insurance that does not cover mental health counseling. The amount a patient pays is based on the federal income levels. Each year the federal government sets a Federal Poverty Line (FPL) and new income levels that qualify patients for discounted care. The income levels are based on a patient's gross income (how much money you make each year before taxes are taken out).

Special Charges for Patients with HIV/AIDS

The Ryan White Program is a federal grant that helps Howard Brown Health cover some healthcare costs for patients living with HIV/AIDS. Patients living with HIV/AIDS are eligible for the Ryan White Sliding Fee Scale based on their annual gross income. The Ryan White Sliding Fee Scale is almost identical to Howard Brown's Sliding Fee Scale for HIV negative patients. The one exception is that patients with HIV/AIDS at or below 100% of the FPL are not charged for any service they receive at Howard Brown.

Patients with HIV/AIDS cannot be on the Ryan White Sliding Fee Scale if they are eligible for another benefit that would pay for their healthcare at Howard Brown (like Medicaid). Patients must have proof of their HIV/AIDS diagnosis on file at Howard Brown to qualify for the Ryan White Sliding Fee Scale.

Charge Limits for Patients living with HIV/AIDS

The federal Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program grant does not want people living with HIV/AIDS to be overwhelmed by healthcare costs. To manage the sometimes high cost of healthcare, the federal government sets a limit on what someone with HIV/AIDS can spend on their healthcare at agencies that accept the Ryan White Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program grant funding. Based on a patient's annual gross income, Howard Brown has set a maximum amount patients can be charged for eligible services in one calendar year (January 1 to December 31). After a patient's charges meet the maximum amount, patients themselves will pay \$0 for eligible services until January 1. If a patient with HIV/AIDS has insurance, Howard Brown will continue to bill a patient's insurance for those services, but patients will not be required to pay their co-pay. Eligible services include medical care, labs, and mental health counseling; walk-in testing services are not included. Bills from outside of Howard Brown can also count towards patients' maximum amounts. Patients who have healthcare bills from other agencies or pharmacies, should bring those bills to Howard Brown. Howard Brown

will not pay those bills, but they will count those costs towards patients' maximum amounts. Patients can submit bills for healthcare outside of Howard Brown to count towards their Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program grant maximum charge per year. Examples include bills for prescriptions, doctor's appointments, mental health counseling, co-pays and hospital costs. Patients will be asked and encouraged to bring in receipts to keep track of their annual expenses. Patients must give Howard Brown copies of bills from other places that they would like included in their maximum amounts or Howard Brown can't count those costs. For example, if a patient had an annual gross income that was 175% of FPL, the patient's maximum charges per year would be equal to 5% of their annual gross income. After the patient had been charged 5% of their annual gross income for healthcare costs (within and outside of Howard Brown), they would pay \$0 until January 1st. Howard Brown would still charge any insurance, but the patient would not be responsible for their co-pay.

Referrals

A referral is a written order from your primary care provider for you to see a specialist for a specific medical service. Without a referral, costs from a visit to a specialist may not be covered by insurance. Different types of insurance, such as HMOs or PPOs, have different rules regarding referrals. To obtain a referral, make sure you bring your current insurance information with you and share this with your provider. If you are unsure whether you need a referral, please consult with your insurance provider.

OUR DIVISIONS

Center for Education, Research and Advocacy

The Center for Education, Research and Advocacy (ERA) conducts rigorous community-based medical and behavioral research, cultivates responsive healthcare professionals, and advances policies that affirm the lives of LGBTQ+ people and their families.

ERA seeks to transform the world beyond our clinics, making exceptional and affirming LGBTQ+ healthcare accessible everywhere. Through Howard Brown, ERA develops and disseminates community driven, high-quality best practices in LGBTQ+ health.

Brown Elephant

Howard Brown operates three Brown Elephant resale shops, in Chicago's Lakeview and Andersonville neighborhoods and the suburb of Oak Park. Brown Elephant is consistently voted best resale shopping in Chicago. For hours and locations, visit brownelphant.com.

All proceeds benefit LGBTQ+ health and fund care for the uninsured and under-insured at Howard Brown Health.

Broadway Youth Center

BYC works to improve the quality of life experienced by youth (12-24) who are LGBTQ+, underserved, and/or experiencing homelessness through the provision of youth-centered integrated healthcare and social services. BYC sees anyone, regardless of ability to pay.

BYC provides basic needs assistance, resource advocacy, mental wellness supports, and education/vocational services. BYC is a one-stop shop for Chicago youth to meet as many of their needs as possible.



Center for
Education, Research
& Advocacy

A DIVISION OF HOWARD BROWN HEALTH



The Brown Elephant



**BROADWAY
YOUTH CENTER**

Frequently Asked Questions

What do my race, ethnicity, language, sex assigned at birth, and current gender identity have to do with my health?

Howard Brown Health understands that categories for race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, sex assigned at birth, and current gender identity do not adequately capture our individual identities. At the same time, differences in access to things such as transportation, health insurance, quality of culturally competent services, and other factors impact our patients' health. Together, we can work to reduce these differences in individual patients and community health. By collecting demographic and identity information, we can advocate for additional resources and make sure everyone receives high quality healthcare. As a community health center, we are also obligated by our funders to collect certain information (such as race, language, and current gender identity) about our patients.

How will Howard Brown Health use this information?

Information you give us about your race, ethnicity, language, sex assigned at birth and current gender identity will help us provide better services and programs to everyone. For example, with this information, we provide health information in the languages spoken by our patients and offer culturally competent programs that reflect the diversity of our patient population.

Who will see my information?

Your information is kept private and confidential and is protected by law (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act HIPAA 1996). The only people who will see your information are members of your healthcare team and others who are authorized to see your medical record.

OUR LOCATIONS

Howard Brown operates clinics across Chicago. For a current list of clinic locations and hours, please visit howardbrown.org/locations/

For hours of operation of services at the Broadway Youth Center, visit howardbrown.org/byc

Disclaimer

This health center receives HHS funding and has federal Public Health Service deemed status with respect to certain health or health-related claims, including medical malpractice claims, for itself and its covered individuals.