

Dear Clients of Wellness for Women,

First, I want to say thank you so very much for joining my practice and allowing me to assist in your healthcare. Your trust, support, and relationship mean a great deal to me. Secondly, I do need to let you know that the viability of Wellness for Women is in jeopardy.

Despite reaching what I feel is an appropriate number of patients, the very low reimbursements from insurance companies, late payments, and the high cost of medical goods (gloves, cleaning supplies, equipment) has placed my practice at a serious crossroad. Over these past 2 1/2 years I have struggled to make ends meet and unfortunately, I need to make a change.

In order to provide you with longer visit times, short wait times, personalized care, same day or next day appointments when needed, and 24/7 access to me, I have decided that I need to create a hybrid model of care.

I want to continue to accept insurance understanding that this is a huge expense for all of us, but my practice and me personally can't survive on this alone. Sadly, I have been unable to pay myself since opening this practice or provide the appropriate compensation for my amazing staff. The medical business model doesn't allow for price increases to offset costs like a traditional small business. When you contract with insurance companies, they will only pay a set amount for each type of visit billed. For example, it doesn't matter if I charge \$100 or \$200, the insurance company will only pay \$50. Therefore, there is no way to increase money coming in to cover the rising costs. Also, Anthem/BCBS which is the largest payer in Maine, has had significantly delayed payments. Wellness for Women went 7 months without any insurance reimbursement. Then when they did pay it was only 40% of what was billed.

Many private practices across the country are in this same boat and many are closing. I have looked at multiple different practice models and have decided to implement a membership/access fee as the least disruptive solution. Just in southern Maine I have found multiple different groups implementing this model with fees ranging from \$300 to \$1800 a year.

What I have decided is a reasonable amount for my practice is \$199.00/year. This will begin September 2022. This fee will be due at your first visit of the year and can be paid by cash, check, or credit card.

Along with same day, next day visits, longer visit times, and 24/7 access to me, this fee will also include the following which are not covered by insurances:

- 25% off aesthetics at Wellness for Women

- Discounts on homeopathic services with Michelle Draghetti

- Discounts on cosmetic services with First Light

- Health and wellness coaching

If I save you one visit to a walk-in clinic or the emergency department, then you will save more than the cost of the membership fee. Because I know you, I can treat things over the phone, email, or portal and save you an office visit copay and time out of work. The benefits will truly work both ways.

I know that this may not be an acceptable option for you, and I do understand. I also hope that you can understand why I must implement this fee. I want to continue to provide you care the “old fashioned” way. I want to spend time with you and really help you obtain and maintain health. I want to be accessible so that when you need something I am able and available to help. This fee keeps all these things possible.

If you are unable to accept this new fee, please let us know at Wellness for Women because we do have a waiting list of women wanting to join the practice. If we don't receive the signed form, we will assume that you are seeking care elsewhere.

Please fill out and return this form (fax, mail or email to wellness4womenmaine@gmail.com) so that we can keep a record of those that accept and agree to this new term and those that don't so we can offer your spot to someone off the waiting list. If there truly is a financial concern with this fee, please let me know so we can work something out.

IMPORTANTLY, please know that we will continue to accept your insurance coverage for reimbursements for your medical care. This fee is only applied to the things that your insurance does not cover.

Thank you so much! I know that together we will continue to keep each other healthy and strong.

Sincerely,

Dr. Lisa Dries

Wellness for Women

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