



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES
A Healthcare Service Agency

NED LAMONT
GOVERNOR

MIRIAM E. DELPHIN-RITTMON, Ph.D.
COMMISSIONER

MEMORANDUM

To: DMHAS Private Non-Profit Providers
From: Miriam E. Delphin-Rittmon, Ph.D.
Date: May 20, 2020
Subject: DMHAS COVID-19 Provider Update #18

Our update today contains information regarding several very important areas. The first relates to provider reimbursement for COVID-19 expenses. While the exact details will be shared in a separate communication, I wanted providers to be aware that relief will be made available to providers who have incurred expenses related to COVID-19. I also wanted to remind providers that we continue to access Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) on behalf of our contracted providers. This will continue to be important as we modify how we work with our clients. Finally, we will discuss DMHAS' planning as it relates to resuming business operations. I am sure you are all focused on how we can re-introduce clinical operations that have been modified. This will remain a significant focus for our provider system in the coming weeks and months.

Reimbursement of COVID Expenses

The Department is working closely with the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) to review the needs identified by providers due to the current public health emergency. Direct care organizations statewide have been impacted by the pandemic, necessitating changes in volume and methodology of service delivery and the need for other unplanned expenditures related to COVID-19. OPM will be providing an allotment from the federal Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) for DMHAS' contracted human services providers. Providers may receive a supplemental payment up to 20% for residential services and up to 10% for other services. More detailed information will be forthcoming from the DMHAS Fiscal Office once details are finalized.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

DMHAS received another shipment of PPE this week which **included gowns, coveralls, face shields, gloves, N95s, surgical masks, sanitizer, disinfectant and infrared thermometers**. If you would like an order form, please send an email to lauren.siembab@ct.gov. Please understand that we may not be able to fulfill your exact request based on the number of provider agencies we are trying to support, so do your best to approximate what you need for the next 2-4 weeks.

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<https://portal.ct.gov/dmhas>

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FCC Lifeline Program

DMHAS is passing along information regarding a cell phone program for low income clients that you may serve. Some of our clients may be getting access to cell phones through the Department of Social Services. We wanted to ensure you were aware of this very important resource. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Lifeline program provides monthly discounts on phone and broadband service to qualifying low-income consumers. For more information on the program and how to apply, please visit <https://www.lifelinesupport.org/>.

Re-Open Connecticut

As Connecticut takes cautious steps to resume business operations, DMHAS teams are meeting regularly to plan for re-introduction of on-site office and clinical operations. We will follow the guidance of the CDC, Connecticut DPH and the Governor's office as we do so. I know that you will be doing the same and would like to support you in any way that we can. DMHAS will be convening meetings with providers to solicit feedback regarding re-opening as it relates to your organizations. Our intent is to use these meetings to identify areas of concern as well as areas where providers would like more direct guidance from DMHAS regarding the re-opening.

At DMHAS, our focus will continue to be on screening and testing of staff and clients, social distancing, hand hygiene, cleaning and disinfecting surfaces and appropriate use of PPE in office and clinical settings. Our priority is the safety and health of the persons we serve as well as the health and safety of our staff. While our inpatient clinical services continue to run with modifications we are strategizing about the slow and safe resumption of face to face services in the upcoming months. Our response will continue to be nimble and will be adjusted based on the health status of the residents of our state and at our facilities.

We will continue to share our thinking about our approach in the Commissioner's updates. The Commissioner meets regularly with our sister state agencies, and to the extent possible, with our different target populations, we will try and be consistent in our messaging.

Under Governor Lamont's leadership, the state has begun to slowly re-open sectors that have been closed. Daily updates that are being provided show that we continue to make progress in our fight against the virus. Our collaborative efforts are having positive effects. Thank you again for all you are doing. As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to me at Miriam.Delphin-Rittmon@ct.gov or Deputy Commissioner Nancy Navarretta via email at Nancy.Navarretta@ct.gov.