



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: October 30, 2020
Subject: DMHAS COVID-19 Provider Update #22

Recently the state of Connecticut has begun to see increases in COVID-19 cases along with an increase in hospitalizations. The Governor announced yesterday that our positive testing rate was now at 6% after being at or below 1% for much of the summer. Our increases and those that are being observed nationally highlight the need for increased vigilance and a renewed focus on those practices that can slow the spread of the disease. It seems clear that we are now moving into the second wave that has been predicted by health experts for some time. I want to use this memo to remind providers of resources that are available to help you better manage the pandemic. Thank you for all you are doing to contain the spread of COVID-19.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Providers may need to replenish your supplies of PPE. DMHAS continues to receive additional shipment of PPE's. If your agency needs additional PPE, please request an order form by sending an email to lauren.simbab@ct.gov. We will try to accommodate requests based on what we have received. Please request only what you need at this time so that we can meet the needs of all providers that need assistance with PPE.

Provider Meetings with the Commissioner Regarding Testing and Contact Tracing

Meetings are being scheduled with providers to discuss your needs as they relate to COVID-19, specifically testing and contact tracing. One meeting occurred today and there is another meeting scheduled for Tuesday November 3rd at 11:00. As part of the meeting information will be presented regarding a new testing option (see below). With any testing for COVID-19 the importance of contact tracing cannot be overstated. If providers need additional information regarding contact tracing, I encourage you to contact your local health department or the state Department of Public Health.

Abbott Labs BinaxNOW Rapid Antigen Test

As part of these meetings, information will be presented about a new COVID-19 testing option, the Abbott Labs BinaxNOW Rapid Antigen test. "Rapid" antigen testing can be helpful and lead to more timely contact tracing because results may be available much more quickly, something

(860) 418-7000

410 Capitol Avenue, P.O. Box 341431, Hartford, Connecticut 06134

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

An Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer

very important for healthcare providers. Additional information regarding testing can be found at the following DPH link:

<https://portal.ct.gov/Coronavirus/Covid-19-Knowledge-Base/COVID-19-Testing> .

More specific information regarding the BinaxNOW test can be found at the following DPH link: https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DPH/HAI/COVID19-BinaxNOW_10142020.pdf

Providers may reach out to Nick Peranzi (nick.peranzi@ct.gov) at the Department of Public Health if you have any questions about BinaxNOW or would like to get more information on requirements to use these tests.

Support Resources for Persons Needing to Isolate or Self Quarantine

The previous provider memo provided information about this resource but it may now be more timely so I am including the information in this memo. Governor Lamont recently announced new resources to assist those individuals who may need to isolate or self-quarantine due to COVID-19. The resources are designed to support individuals who are asked to isolate or quarantine due to a positive test result. These resources can assist essential workers who may require additional assistance such as housing support, food assistance, and cash card. More information regarding these resources can be accessed at the following link:

<https://portal.ct.gov/Office-of-the-Governor/News/Press-Releases/2020/09-2020/Governor-Lamont-Announces-New-Programs-To-Support-Those-Who-Need-To-Isolate-or-Self-Quarantine>

DMHAS COVID-19 Web Pages

I wanted to remind providers of the COVID resources that DMHAS has compiled on our website. These pages contain helpful information regarding a range of resources that may help as you work to maintain operations during the pandemic. Some of these resources have been updated as guidance from CDC or our Department of Public Health have evolved. These resources can be found at the following link: <https://portal.ct.gov/DMHAS/Newsworthy/News-Items/DMHAS-Response-to-COVID-19> . It may be useful to review these resources as we move into a new stage of the pandemic.

Behavioral Health Assistance Program

DMHAS is offering vouchers for staff who work in DMHAS-funded agencies to assist with paying for their own outpatient behavioral health services (e.g., copays, deductibles). All staff at the agency are eligible. The voucher maximum is \$500 and will cover services going back to 3/1/20. For application details, please see here:

http://www.abhct.com/Programs_Services/COVID19-BHAP/

EAP Survey

CEOs of DMHAS-contracted agencies received a request this week from DMHAS to complete a brief survey on their agency's employee assistance program (EAP) resources and capacity. Please complete this survey by Friday 11/6/20. If you have any questions, please contact Julienne Giard at 860-418-6946.

Vote Safely

As we approach Election Day, I want to urge all providers and their staff to vote. It has been reported that over 500,000 votes have already been cast in Connecticut so many of our citizens have already exercised this important right. If you are still looking for information about voting, the Secretary of State's website has valuable information which can be found at the following link: <https://portal.ct.gov/SOTS/Election-Services/Voter-Information/Voter-Fact-Sheet> .

You and your staff have contributed greatly to our efforts to manage the virus. Recent trends being observed in Connecticut and the nation underscore the fact that we are moving into a new stage of the pandemic. This means that we must redouble our efforts to maintain those practices that serve to contain the virus. I want to thank you again for all that you have done and ask that you remain vigilant so we can continue to manage the pandemic. 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