



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 Staff

From: Miriam E. Delphin-Rittmon, Ph.D.
Commissioner

Date: December 21, 2020

Subject: DMHAS COVID-19 Staff Update #28

As COVID-19 positive cases continue to increase across our state, I would like to recognize and thank you for all of your hard work, flexibility, and dedication during this trying time. As I think about our service system, it is important to recognize how our own staff are on the frontlines every day. Whether it is in one of our inpatient facilities, residential programs, or at a client's home in the community, we are essential to the individuals we serve. Many of these individuals are extremely vulnerable with complicated behavioral health and medical problems. I am so grateful to our direct care and all staff, who worked to play a role in enabling us to continue with the important work that we do every day.

If you or a family member are struggling and feel you could use some support, please remember that the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is available and offers a range of benefits and services to help you in your time of need. You can reach out to Solutions EAP by calling 1-800-526-3485. For more information about EAP, please visit the [DMHAS EAP webpage](#).

Additional resources for support are as follows:

- [State of CT Coronavirus Website Mental Health Resources](#)
- Speak to a DMHAS chaplain at 860-999-1629 from 9am to 9pm
- [DMHAS' COVID-19 web page](#)

DMHAS continues to work vigorously to control the spread of COVID-19 in our inpatient and residential facilities. Your vigilance and hard work have enabled us to remain nimble and flexible in addressing any challenges to date. I would like to note some important updates to several documents on the website that continue our efforts towards this end.

The [DMHAS Covid-19 website](#) continues to be updated with new information and guidance. Please review the website, with particular attention to the new [Admission Protocol](#) and the updated [DMHAS COVID-19 Protocol for Quarantine and Isolation](#). If you have any questions related to these documents, please contact your facility medical director.

(AC 860) 418-7000
410 Capitol Avenue, P.O. Box 341431, Hartford, Connecticut 06134
www.ct.gov/dmhas
An Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer

Testing

We will soon be implementing weekly COVID-19 testing of staff to further ensure safety of clients and staff in our facilities. The Agency will be utilizing the Quest Diagnostics self-test kits at all DMHAS facilities for weekly testing. Facilities will be phased into the weekly testing structure, which will begin for some facilities as early as this week. Staff who will be undergoing weekly testing will be notified by their facilities. Impacted staff for weekly testing include those who work in a hospital setting; work on a 24/7 unit and/or program with inpatient beds; or work overtime in any hospital or a 24/7 program.

Vaccination

The executive team has been in ongoing talks with Griffin Hospital to administer staff vaccinations at DMHAS facilities. While there have been no discussions yet around availability of vaccines to clients, DMHAS will continue to advocate towards this end.

I want to thank you for your efforts and support during this time. We have faced a considerable number of challenges and have managed them relatively well. I recognize the importance of self-care and I encourage you to take advantage of the resources available.

During the holiday season, I tend to reflect on new beginnings, which is regrouping to set the course for the New Year. Never has that hopeful outlook been more important than it is now. However you choose to honor the season, please accept my wishes of peace, serenity, and comfort to you and the people you care about, today, and in the year to come.