



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. *MDR*

Date: March 16, 2020

Subject: DMHAS COVID-19 Staff Update #1

I would like to start off thanking all of the DMHAS family for your professional and compassionate response to the COVID-19 response. At a time of great uncertainty, I am in awe of the staff I see coming together to care for the people we serve and each other. I know we are all concerned about our families and our personal health while juggling the work that is so important to the behavioral health community.

As the DMHAS Incident Command Team and I work to identify operational response steps to the pandemic, I feel it is of the utmost importance that we communicate with you on a regular basis. The communication plan we have put in place has several components. These components include daily summaries of DMHAS activities related to the virus, memos specific to pressing issues, a weekly newsletter, updates to the DMHAS social media accounts and a DMHAS COVID-19 webpage that can be accessed at <https://portal.ct.gov/DMHAS-COVID-19>.

Updates for today include:

- Pursuant to [*Governor's Executive Order 7c*](#) the Commissioner of the Department of Mental Health and Public Health are authorized to limit entrance into psychiatric facilities in order to protect vulnerable residents, patients and staff. A Commissioner's Order related to this new policy will be forthcoming.
- Public meetings and trainings held at Connecticut Valley Hospital have been canceled or moved to other locations until April 30, 2020.
- A communication clarifying how telework will work in these challenging times is in process and will be sent system-wide as soon as it is available.
- Staff and patient COVID-19 screening tools have been implemented at DMHAS facilities. The most recent versions of the tools are posted on the DMHAS COVID-19 webpage.
- Staff attendance is being monitored to identify trends of concern.

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- A new training, *Personal Protective Equipment and Hand Hygiene*, Class ID: 0000105740, provides information related to appropriate use of personal protective equipment that may be utilized during the pandemic and is now available on the LMS.
- External COVID-19 signage for facilities was sent to facility CEOs electronically. Copies of signage are available on the DMHAS COVID-19 webpage.

Please make an effort to remain apprised of the State's emergency management plans as they evolve. Information, resources and guidance on COVID-19 and the State's response is available at ct.gov/coronavirus. Thank you for your ongoing support and commitment to the people we serve.