



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: April 22, 2020
Subject: DMHAS COVID-19 Provider Update #13

Governor Lamont continues to underscore the importance of continuing all we are doing to maintain social distancing and good hygiene in his daily briefings. I am sure we will continue to be challenged but I am hopeful that with our efforts related to the pandemic we will see progress. I cannot say thank you enough for all you and your staff have done for our clients during this outbreak. Together we are making a difference. Today's Update includes additional resources we have become aware of which may be of benefit to your agency.

Heroes Work Here

On Monday I shared an update to DMHAS staff that recognized the heroic contributions they are making on a daily basis. I wanted to use this update to say thank you to all of you. You and your staff come to work each day in spite of the personal concerns you have about the virus. Your organizations have patients and staff that have contracted the virus and are in various stages of recovery. Some of you may have family members who have the coronavirus and others may have lost a loved one. Some of you are struggling with the loss of a staff member. And yet, you and your staff continue to provide compassionate care to our clients. I wanted to express my gratitude to all your collective continued contributions in our fight against the coronavirus.

FCC Telehealth Grant Opportunity

We learned last week about a grant opportunity related to telehealth released through the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). The COVID-19 Telehealth Program will provide \$200 million in funding, appropriated by Congress as part of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, to help health care providers provide connected care services to patients at their homes or mobile locations in response to the novel Coronavirus 2019 disease (COVID-19) pandemic. The Program will provide immediate support to eligible health care providers responding to the COVID-19 pandemic by fully funding their telecommunications

(860) 418-7000

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

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services, information services, and devices necessary to provide critical connected care services until the program's funds have been expended or the COVID-19 pandemic has ended. The link to the grant is <https://www.fcc.gov/covid-19-telehealth-program>. Note that the COVID-19 Telehealth Program is limited to **nonprofit and public eligible health care providers** that fall within the categories of health care providers in section 254(h)(7)(B) of the 1996 Act. For more information, see Question 8 of the [FAQs](#).

CVS Rapid Testing Site in New Haven

Governor Lamont announced on Friday, April 17th the launching of the state's first rapid COVID-19 Testing Center which is based in New Haven. This is a joint venture with CVS Health and the city of New Haven and additional partners. The Governor's Press Release regarding the testing center can be found at <https://portal.ct.gov/Office-of-the-Governor/News/Press-Releases/2020/04-2020/Governor-Lamont-Announces-Launch-of-Connecticuts-First-Rapid-COVID19-Testing-Center-in-New-Haven>

The link to the actual registration site is below <https://www.cvs.com/minuteclinic/covid-19-testing>. This may be a way to rapidly test staff that have been exposed. However, persons interested must meet certain criteria and register for a test time. Information can be found at the link provided.

Use of Facemasks or Cloth Face Coverings

Governor Lamont signed Executive Order No.7BB on April 17, 2020. The order addressed several issues but a major component of the Order was a requirement to wear facemasks or cloth face coverings beginning Monday April 20th at 8:00 PM. The Order states that "any person in a public place in Connecticut who is unable to or does not maintain a safe social distance of approximately six feet from every other person shall cover their mouth and nose with a mask or cloth face-covering. In addition, individuals shall use a mask or cloth face covering when using the services of any taxi, car, livery, ride-sharing or similar service or means of mass public transit, or while within any semi-enclosed transit stop or waiting area". CDC Guidance regarding the use of cloth masks can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>. A CDC-developed YouTube video regarding how to make your own masks/face coverings can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tPx1yqvJgf4>.

You continue to provide critical services to our clients in a very challenging environment. 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.