



Notes from 4.20.20 Weekly COVID TA Call

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State Dept. Representative Updates

- None at this time.

Alliance Updates

- Testing out the poll feature in Zoom: Only for those that are online. If you have multiple people from an agency online, please let your ED vote or designate someone from your agency to vote. We cannot see who responds, please follow up with an email to Josh if necessary.
- Alliance Quick Survey sent to members on 4/13-14: COVID-related estimated utilization/revenue percent decreases.
 - Transportation decreased an average of 95.7%; Ranging from 75-100% (15 responded)
 - Group Respite decreased an average of 86%; Ranging from 40-100% (5 responded)
 - Personal Care decreased an average of 70%; Ranging from 45-100% (4 responded)
 - Case Management decreased an average of 12.5%; Ranging from 5-35% (5 responded)
 - Enhanced Homemaker decreased an average of 67.5%; Ranging from 45-95% (3 responded)
- Alliance PPE Survey Results:
 - Only about 8-9 members responded to this survey.
 - How many masks? (#) 3160, and additional 860 surgical, 150 N-95, 100 cotton reusable and Strong Protection Masks 50 PC/BOX Disposable Medical Sanitary Surgical Face Masks/ Hypoallergenic Thick 3-Ply Cotton Filter Mask (25 boxes)
 - Other: Gowns, gloves, hand sanitizer and face shields
 - Urgent replies: 1500 gloves and 1900 masks and gowns
 - Poll: Is your agency expecting to run out of PPE soon? 55 voted
 - Yes, we will run out within 1 week if we don't receive more (6) 11%
 - Yes, we will run out within 2 weeks if we don't receive more (12) 22%
 - No, we have plenty for the next few weeks (22) 40%
 - Unsure (15) 27%
 - Chat note: We are only lacking a sufficient supply of masks. We are working with our local Health Department, but they do not have enough either.
 - Abbie Koenig: If anyone is still in need of hand sanitizer, feel free to reach out, as we have a good connection for that now, who donated a bunch to us and sounds like they are willing to reserve amounts for disability services at pre-COVID prices.

- Chad Wietrick: Hand Sanitizer: We received some great donations from Leopold Brothers Distillery and Mystic Mountain Distillery. Many distilleries are making 80% WHO solution and it's working out great, most will donate to our industry.
 - Randy Brodersen: In the poll I said we were ok the next few weeks. The reason for this is that we are closed so very few people in the office and no in-person day program. If we were "open" we would be out of PPE within a week.
- National Press: a reporter for RouteFifty.com may be reaching out to members. It is a publication for state and local governments. The reporter is doing a story on how COVID is impacting our services, and will include what, if anything, states are doing to support our member's critical services.
- Mark your calendars:
 - **Next TA Call: Monday, April 27th at 9:00am vs 11:00am.** Time change is due to the ANCOR Virtual Conference.
 - May 4th TA Webinar will go back to 11am.
 - A-Team news will likely resume on May 5th.
 - Next Alliance BOD Meeting and Alliance State Forum is May 21st.
 - 2020 Alliance Virtual Summit: June 17 & 18 9am-noon
 - Please send recommendations for speakers/breakouts ASAP to Josh or Kylie.
- Alliance Executive Committee Meeting, State Forum, BOD Notes from last week will be posted on the Member Portal this week. Great meetings! Feedback welcome on how we can improve the virtual meeting.
- Staff is meeting this week on legislative strategies then will meet with Randy and the GRACE Committee.
- Update from Emma Hudson Consulting and Colorado Legislative Strategies:
 - Emma spoke with Robin Smart last week and good news is that for now she is hoping to keep the 399 emergency resources in her recommendation for the budget. It may or may not hold.
 - CU released a revenue forecast. They do one annually to see if their predictions match up with the state's thinking. They are providing their information to the legislative council and the economists and the administration. Shows \$400M shortfall for this fiscal year, so there is only one quarter left to make those fiscal cuts or to take money from the reserve, but if they do that, out of the \$12.5M of GF they have to find around \$2.3B in deductions.
 - Q: in addition to the 399 resources, have you heard anything about protecting current rates?
 - IDD rates are still part of the overall common policy, so if things get dire, which they already have, we should prepare ourselves for a common policy reduction. JBC is going to try hard to avoid that and sweep the cash fund.
 - Q: When you say you're hearing that JBC wants to avoid reductions to common policy, are you referring to this year only or this year AND next year?
 - Next year's budget.

CO Dept Updates

- HCPF:
 - Updated FAQs on Weds – new LTSS COVID page: <https://www.colorado.gov/hcpf/long-term-services-and-supports-covid-19-response>
 - No new operational memos last week from HCPF. New guidance coming soon on:

- sick time for CDASS attendants
- notice of action changes
- changes to the (professional medical information page) PMIP requirement
- updated changes to benefits & services (in terms of legally responsible people rendering services)
- reporting of COVID cases
- temporary changes to PASRR clarity
- Friday webinar highlights:
 - Additional funding via rate increases coming next week. Will be tied to Providers complying with departmental guidance.
 - Amended appendix K: ability to modify staffing ratios, relax/suspend some staff training requirements; retainer payments for residential; sick time for CDASS attendants; not requiring the PMIP.
 - Still need to determine which of these to implement even though they have approval for all of them.
 - Lots of questions about billing retainer payments – not a ton of specific guidance offered. Expect more information to come.
 - Do we need to share info on this again?
- COVID Training Webinar Free Code **Extended**: <https://covidcert.nextstep.careers/>
 - Available through April 24th for free with code:
 - COCOVIDCERT (enter at checkout)

Federal Updates

- The House and Senate could vote this week on a new interim coronavirus aid package that is being negotiated by the White House and Congressional negotiators. Initial reports of the deal include \$300 billion for the Small Business Administration's Paycheck Protection Program, \$50 billion for the Economic Injury Disaster Loan program, \$75 billion for hospitals, and \$25 billion for testing. Meanwhile, Congressional leaders continue work on another package that could be voted on in early May.
 - **MEMBERS: Take action to advocate for IDD funding:** <https://www.ancor.org/amplifier>
 - **We will send out an Action Alert later today**
- Polis/Bennet/Gardner authored a letter to Senate leaders asking them to support Colorado priorities in the next COVID emergency funding package, including:
 - Expansions of the Paycheck Protection Program, including increased loan amounts and expanded eligibility
 - More funding for the Economic Injury Disaster Loan program
 - More funding through the Public Health and Social Services Emergency Fund to support health care providers, including HCBS providers!
 - More funding to states and local governments
 - Increases to SNAP benefits
 - The letter specifically states, “We must also ensure that there is a transparent and evidence-based process in place to provide relief to rural hospitals and health clinics, Medicaid providers, including **home and community-based services providers**, children’s hospitals, nursing homes, providers treating undocumented patients, and safety net hospitals and clinics who provide critical, life-saving care to underserved populations and

were not addressed in the Department of Health and Human Service's initial \$30 billion tranche of funding from the CARES Act."

- SSI beneficiaries will automatically get stimulus checks. If anyone that receives SSI has dependents at home, they may need to fill out a form from the IRS webpage to get the funds for children.

Member Discussion:

- Feedback requested for Disability Law Colorado
 - Poll: How are group homes faring?
 - Good so far 68%
 - Having trouble maintaining staff 32%
 - Having trouble accessing PPE 18%
 - Other issues (send in chat or unmute) 7%
 - Poll: Have providers gotten the training they need to manage during this?
 - Yes, we have the information we need to manage. 75%
 - Somewhat – we could use more help in some areas. 25%
 - No, we feel unprepared and need more training (send suggestions in chat or unmute) 0%
 - Looks like most are feeling like they have the information they need!
 - Poll: Are staff members/people served getting tested?
 - Yes, we've been able to access testing when needed
 - Yes, but testing is taking too long
 - Somewhat – depends on the situation
 - No, we're having trouble getting testing for our staff/people we serve
 - The results here were a little more evenly distributed.
 - Testing is generally only occurring when they fit "criteria" which seems to differ from hospital to hospital. Generally we've only seen testing after an admission (for group home, host home, employees, and host home providers.
 - Most agencies serve a large number of medically fragile individuals and we need guidance on venues for testing providers and clients from HCPF
 - We have not had the need for testing yet. Where do you go to get tested now?
 - There may be mobile testing sites being set up around the state. We also understand that you should contact your local health departments for information on this.
 - <https://covid19.colorado.gov/testing-covid-19>
 - Residential services - Are residents complying with social distancing? If not, what happens?
 - Been sending reminders and encouraging staff to follow guidelines. Some staff have not been following the shelter-in-place guidelines and they were put on a 14-day suspension because they work in group homes and want to reduce risk of exposure in group homes as much as possible but it has been a struggle to require this guidance be followed.

- Families taking their loved ones home is problematic from a revenue standpoint. We have allowed this, but we are not allowing people back to their group home until CDC/Polis and our own internal restrictions are lifted.
 - Families taking people home for long periods of time are a financial issue for all residential settings.
 - Many individuals we support are refusing to practice shelter in place... putting other people in the home in jeopardy. Restrictions, etc.. don't seem to be an option since they are not agreeing to them.
 - We have some challenges with those living in their own apartments who don't fully understand the consequences of their failure to follow the stay at home orders. we continue to work on educating these individuals while also documenting problems in GERS or notes.
 - We have a couple of non-family guardians demanding to come into host homes for not very legitimate reasons.
 - Group homes are simply not set up for social distancing. Trying to encourage folks to stay in their rooms as much as possible while combating feeling isolated, depressed.
 - Alliance has posted some plain language guides on our COVID site and hopefully they will help.
- Q from DD Council: Are providers doing anything to help people get access to Wi-Fi who can't afford it? Are there any resources available to help people with this?
 - Family Support is a good resource.
- Relative for the need for masks, how are people interpreting Gov. Polis' executive order from last Friday? DSPs only? Office workers?
 - Most responses were that face masks are required for everyone, office staff and DSPs alike.
 - One member replied: We are providing surgical masks to all employees, and also 2 cotton masks for employees to use outside of work. As of now, direct care locations we are mandating use of surgical masks. If people we support will tolerate wearing a mask, they can do so as well.

Poll: Should Alliance continue hosting weekly TA calls?

- Only as needed, if a lot of new information comes out
- For one more week
- For two more weeks
- For three more weeks
- Other (send via chat or unmute)
 - **Comments:**
 - I really would like to see these meetings continue for at least programs start to reopen. Its valuable to get clarification and updates from Alliance team and learn what other PASA's are addressing different issues. It's a great way for me to start the week.
 - As we go through rolling openings (of day program or whatever) it would be helpful to keep having these meetings to see what people are doing and if it's safe.
 - These meeting are extremely valuable.

- Thank you for your leadership and information.
- This has been extremely helpful during this time.