



Team Alliance Call on COVID-19

3.23.20

News to report:

CO Updates:

- Office of Early Childhood EI Update (11:00-11:10am)
 - Christy Scott:
 - FAQs are on website and updated daily. Also linked on the Alliance COVID-19 website. Will always update with the most current information. Questions are welcome and will be answered as best they can.
 - CDHS has regular check-ins with OEC. If any CCB EI programs have any major changes, please let OEC know as they occur.
 - Questions:
 - *Will DHS consider new enrollments to EI virtually?* Yes. Guidance should come out today and tools to be used.
 - *Do we need to change PARS to bill for teletherapy?* That is still being worked on by HCPF. Sounds like they need to change the system to accept this without having to change PARS.
 - *For EI evaluations, are CCBs doing them via telehealth or are they on hold for now?* They are being done via telehealth.
 - Have the OEC and CDE sent out joint communications about Child Find activities? Yes hopefully today.
 - *Do we anticipate any funding issues for the near future or is it business as usual?* Business as usual right now. They are seeing a decline in families wanting to get their services virtually. It's likely they will see an uptake again as the weeks pass when they realize this is the way services are being provided. Keeping an eye on this.
 - CDPHE Update:
 - PPE: Please contact either your local public health agency or county emergency manager, so the county emergency manager can put a detailed request into the EOC. They need to submit a very detailed request: number of masks, etc. Please let CDPHE or Alliance know if you run into any issues with this system. It is the only way to unlock state resources. If any of these health care organizations cross counties, there is an email they can send a request to for their entire system. That email is: CDPS_CHOPS@state.co.us. The EOC prefers it come from counties so they can prioritize PPE on a county level but realize it may not be possible.
 - *Karin Dolph – VitalCare: when we called Tri-County Health Department last week, we were told to call back when we were out of supplies.*

- *Kelly Bianucci - The Child and Family Therapy Center of Denver: On the topic of PPE – Loxo, a Denver-based software company, has built software to help manage and distribute PPE needs. Here is a quick 3 minute demo: www.loom.com/share/75ac098f982d41fc8fc3e1695046aa04; Matt Chambers is the contact, matt@loxo.co.*
- Update from CDHS: APS
 - APS continues to respond to reports and cases but will be managing those virtually to the extent possible.
 - Reports that indicate an emergency situation will be managed through 911 or through a live contact by APS
 - APS will honor CMS' request to prohibit visitors into LTC facilities
 - APS may respond in person at state-run facilities in an emergency
 - The CAPS Check Unit continues to process CAPS background checks
 - Current results are being returned next business day
- Alliance Updates & Announcements (Standing Agenda Item)
 - HCPF Friday Webinars and Alliance Question Collection (3.27.20 and 4.3.20)
 - All questions you have for HCPF are due to Josh by 10am each Wednesday before the meeting dates above. If you are interested in reviewing the questions we have collected so far, please contact Josh.
 - Weekly webinar schedule: Times TBA
 - CCBs/SEPs Case Management
 - HCBS non-residential
 - HCBS residential
 - Nursing Facilities/ICF/PACE providers
 - Disability Community (advocacy based organizations)
 - Alliance June Summit postponed
 - Looking at dates in the fall of 2020, but we may just have to wait until Sept 2021.
 - Alliance COVID-19 Communication Plan Update
 - Check our COVID webpage daily
 - Alliance email update almost every day (these emails are only sent to members, but they are posted publicly on our COVID website)
 - Monday TA (Team Alliance) call/web and notes (TA calls are for members only; notes will be posted on the COVID Website)
- State Updates
 - Guidance issued by HCPF last week – posted on our COVID-19 website; please take a look online:
 - Flexibility for behavioral supports – use of telehealth/alternative settings
 - [Critical Incident Reporting for CMAs/CCBs](#)
 - Guidance issued by CDPHE last week:
 - [CDPHE guidance to those with COVID-19 symptoms including when to call health care providers and 911 \(3.21.20\)](#)
 - Outlines what to do if you have mild, serious, and severe symptoms.
 - [CDPHE Guidance on when to Isolation and Quarantine \(3.20.20\)](#)
 - Outlines the differences between isolation and quarantine.
 - Screening tool examples added to Alliance COVID page – this was asked for on our call last week

- DDRC sent us their tools and CDHS also sent their guidelines to us so we posted them on our Alliance COVID website.
 - Screening Tool Examples: [DHS Screening Form](#) DDRC [Screening Form](#) & [Screening Log](#) Examples
 - Governor Orders
 - [3.22.20 Order](#): The Governor announced all non-critical workplaces to reduce their in-person workforce by fifty percent. Identified critical workplaces that are exempted: Health care operations, organizations that provide for disadvantaged people, Vendors that Provide Critical Services or Products including logistics, childcare, tech support, or contractors with critical government services.
 - *Travis Blevins – BSOTR: will a statement be released regarding us being essential workers? – Yes. Alliance is working on this today!*
 - Colorado General Assembly
 - Highly unlikely at this point that the General Assembly will be back on March 30.
 - One legislator (Rep. Michaelson-Jenet) has tested positive and is recovering.
 - JBC has announced they will not reconvene until April 7 or later- JBC will put our budget-making on pause while we get a clearer picture of where things stand
 - Emma Hudson: waiting to see what the Supreme Court says re: if the 120-day legislative session needs to be consecutive days or if the Supreme Court will allow Colorado to use a, so-far unused rule, that specifically says if the Governor declares a state of emergency due to a pandemic then the 120 days could be nonconsecutive. If the Supreme Court agrees, we could go back into session when things clear up. The JBC does have to pass/complete the budget by June.
 - Members, be sure to read Emma’s Capitol Chronicles and CLS’s Capitol update emails! They will be posted online at www.alliancecolorado.org/communications or email Kylie if you are not receiving the Capitol Chronicles emails from Emma.
 - CO COVID Relief Fund -more info coming soon as we continue to research options
 - <https://secure.donationpay.org/milehighunitedway/colorado-covid-relief-fund.php>
 - Federal Updates:
 - Update on Families First Coronavirus Response Act
 - Provides paid leave to workers who have to miss work because of symptoms or positive COVID-19 results, or who are taking care of family members/children that are out of school.
 - Info on what exactly is in the bill has been trickling out. More will come soon.
 - There is an exemption from the paid leave requirements for healthcare providers and the law does not specify that DSPs are included in the definition of healthcare provider but the federal DOL has the authority to issue regulations determining additional workforce categories to fit the definition in order to be exempt from the paid leave requirements.
 - ANCOR is in discussions with federal DOL to make sure DSPs are included in the definition during this crisis and we are monitoring all the info that comes out to understand how it affects you.
 - Paid leave can be recouped via a tax credit (if employer pays more out in paid leave than it would otherwise have paid in payroll taxes for employees, it can get the difference refunded as a tax credit).

- We realize this is not the cleanest way to do this because you have to wait until 2021 to get that tax credit.
- Update on 3rd Funding Relief package from Congress
 - Hopefully will include provisions specific to paying for OT, hazard pay and sick leave, specifically for DSPs.
 - We have been sending members Alliance Action Alerts for you to urge our members of Congress to include the necessary language.
 - ANCOR has two additional action alerts that we may forward to members.
 - One is an updated general action alert with their email tool to contact your members of congress to pressure them to include this language in the funding bill.
 - The other action alert from ANCOR is specific to DSPs and it is designed for DSPs to take action and urge our government officials to consider them essential personnel, etc. PLEASE SHARE.
- Small Business Loan program accepting applications <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela/>
 - 3 step process. Share tips if you have already filled out an application.
 - Travis Blevins: BSOTR: Small Business Disaster Loans (3.25% covers 8 weeks payroll) application takes a long time and they need all tax returns for the last three years. You must select “economic disaster loss”. Website is overloaded and slow.
 - Carmen Sample – Sample Supports: There is also an income cap for our service industry. In the event the agency revenue is over \$12 million, I believe we do not qualify.
- Working with ANCOR on DSP Campaign
 - Discuss workforce issues in different states
 - ANCOR is creating a DSP Job Resources page with links to state jobs boards
 - [Alliance Jobs Board](#)
 - Outreach to National Governor’s Association urging them to urge Governor’s to include DSPs being essential personnel
 - Alliance is also working on a letter to the Polis administration to urge the same. Like other types of healthcare workers that have been considered essential on the federal level, this would provide the same coverage for DSPs to be able to travel during curfew or other shelter in place-type laws that restrict others to travel. We plan to send this letter today.
 - New “DSPs are Essential” Facebook Frame
 - Alliance has posted on our COVID-19 page, under Resources for Providers, some templates you can customize for your agency, including a letter that employees can carry, a badge-type paper that would identify them as essential. Take a look and have something ready to go for your employees in case it is needed.

Items for clarification/discussion:

1. Guidance re: notifying when a staff person or person served is advised to self-quarantine.
 1. CDPHE just released the guidance on that this week so that should help. It is posted on our COVID-19 webpage.
 2. If you have symptomatic staff but their physician does not recommend COVID testing, they should isolate themselves just in case. Other staff members should not be notified

of any illness unless the person tests positive and then the question remains as to how to keep it confidential but still inform staff.

3. Mosaic has been asking if they employee wants the information shared so others can watch for symptoms and all have agreed to share.
4. Some members have staff going to get tests but there are no tests, so they have to self-quarantine. Presumed vs positive.
2. How do retention payments need to be outlined in the person's plan?
 1. ANSWER: it should still be documented by the CMA because it needs to be known that it's the choice of the person in services and their team. It doesn't need to be a formal revision – it can simply be a log note by the case manager.
3. What are agencies doing with employment supports?
 1. Given that we have not received guidance from HCPF around whether you can bill retainer payments for supported employment, we are wondering what agencies provide SE and what they are currently doing.
4. I have a question on best practices regarding individuals that work in the community and live at Group Homes that have roommates that are over 65. One of the individuals works at Walmart and cleans the restrooms 3 hrs a day x 4 days. The others work at fast foods were bussing tables but now the managers want to switch and have them do dishes and help in the kitchen with the takeout orders. Any thoughts on what others are doing?
 1. Email Josh innovative things you are doing around issues like this.
5. What are your biggest issues? Workforce, PPE, etc.?
 1. Workforce:
 1. Laradon is not hiring at all right now. All efforts are directed at retaining and paying current staff. HCPF continuing retainer payments is vital.
 2. Imagine! is still hiring some essential staff. Easing up on the I-9 requirements would be helpful.
 3. Rehabilitative Rhythms is an all-therapy provider and they don't know if they can bill for services that are not occurring that are approved beyond peoples PAR so caseloads are dropping. Would love guidance on whether or not therapies can bill for services that are not occurring, so they don't have to lay off staff.
 4. Cottonwood - Clarity on if there will be a retainer option on residential as well for individuals in staff settings and families have opted to take them home and that is jeopardizing their staff.
 5. BSOTR – hiring behavioral analysts with telehealth experience.
 6. Mountain Valley is hiring but caught up in how to provide quality training to the new employees.
 7. Envision is hiring but concerned how to onboard people.
 8. Bethesda is hiring DSPs and fully prepared to offer onboarding online and doing all the necessary pieces remotely.
 9. Belk Model is hiring and doing orientation remotely.