

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 16, 2020
TO: ACBH Staff and Providers
FROM: Aaron Chapman, MD, Medical Director, Chief Medical Officer
SUBJECT: GUIDANCE FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROGRAMS – COVID-19

As Alameda County Behavioral Health (ACBH) continues to closely monitor the emerging Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) situation, ACBH is issuing guidance to our staff and partner providers to assist them in providing essential health care services in a timely fashion for our shared clients.

I have received numerous inquiries and have spoken with a number of you. We understand that you may also be receiving requests for clarification regarding the provision of direct clinical services. Although the guidance that we are able to provide may not sufficiently eliminated all concerns that you are facing, we are hoping that you can keep this advisement in mind as we strategically approach our service delivery.

The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) has issued guidance to counties to assist us in providing timely care for our beneficiaries impacted by COVID-19.

At the present time, ACBH will be following DHCS guidelines for matters related to COVID-19.

Please find attached to this email the following documents, which will be published on the DHCS website soon:

1. Information Notice 20-009: COVID-19 Guidance for Behavioral Health Programs
2. COVID-19 FAQ for Behavioral Health
3. COVID-19 FAQ for Narcotic Treatment Programs
4. COVID-19 FAQ for Mental Health Rehabilitation Centers and Psychiatric Health Facilities

These documents provide the latest medical thinking and helpful guidance regarding:

- How should behavioral health programs reduce transmission of COVID-19
- The management of clients presenting with respiratory symptoms
- Can a facility admit a patient who has tested positive for COVID-19
- When to refer a symptomatic client for medical care
- What to do if a current of former client (or staff) is diagnosed with COVID-19
- What services may be provided by telephone or telehealth
- How providers can ensure that clients do not run out of necessary medications

Please stay up to date on this rapidly evolving situation by visiting our public health [website](#) and offer nCoV@acgov.org for questions that are not addressed by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), California Department of Public Health (CDPH), or ACBH Provider website.

Should you have questions or concerns regarding delivery of care, please do not hesitate to contact me, (510) 567-8111.

