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April 7, 2020

Dear Community Partners,

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced many changes that have been felt throughout the community, including Substance Use Disorder (SUD) services. Many of the treatment services provided in Contra Costa County have been severely impacted in observance of Shelter in Place and Social Distancing Guidelines. In partnership with our community-based providers, Alcohol and Other Drug Services (AODS) has been working diligently to ensure that continuity of essential Substance Use (SU) treatment services remains for those residents in the community who are at highest risk: Intravenous (IV) Users, Pregnant Women, Pregnant & IV, Active Opioid Disorders, Severe SU and Mental Health disorders. All SUD providers have implemented various strategies to mitigate risk and exposure intended to prevent transmission of COVID-19 to staff and clients. These practices tend to delay service delivery but do not halt them.

Please note:

The **Access Line** continues to assist with referrals to SUD treatment and ancillary services. The Access Line counselors are also spending additional time with family members who are concerned with access to treatment for their loved ones, providing necessary referrals and information for families. The Access Line number is **(800) 846-1652**.

The **SUD Transitions Team, AODS** has re-purposed a team of county SUD counselors to provide telephonic support to clients waiting to enter treatment. We understand that placements are taking longer than usual due to the COVID-19, our team of counselors are reaching out and providing individual counseling and case management services by telephone to each client on a regular basis. The SUD Transitions Team, is currently filling the gap of concurrent outpatient treatment requirements for clients in Recovery Residences. This unit has also been providing referrals to basic community resources and recovery support based on the individual needs of the client, including food, clothing, housing, transportation, etc.

Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) providers continue to prescribe methadone and buprenorphine, while trying to implement safe practices to prevent COVID-19 spread. Individuals with Opioid Use Disorders can still be admitted into MAT services with few restrictions. Our BAART programs have implemented various innovative practices to continue to support our residents via telehealth and telephone.

Residential Treatment are providing services for those currently in treatment but have limited new intakes. Intakes are being handled on a case-by-case basis. We have been able to place some high priority clients, both men and women, but the wait times are longer and there are additional steps before entry.



Outpatient Services have also limited intakes but are slowly adding new clients as they begin to utilize telehealth and telephonic sessions, both group and individual. This addition in the way they deliver services has proven effective in reaching clients that are also trying to observe “shelter in place” restrictions.

Recovery Residences have been cautious in admitting new clients into housing but are continuing to allow clients in on a case-by-case basis. Recovery Residences are also temporarily allowing clients who have a requirement to attend concurrent outpatient services to meet those requirements using telephonic counseling.

Similar to Outpatient Services, **Driving Under the Influence (DUI)** providers are starting to gradually utilize telehealth and telephonic sessions, both group and individual and open their programs for business.

All SUD service providers have implemented new procedures that allow more latitude for clients that miss appointments or who can't make sessions. Case management is taking place across the county to supplement decreased services. AODS staff are continuing to monitor the SUD system, adjust, adapt and make additions wherever possible.

Despite school closures, **Primary Prevention** services are now focusing on social media to continue their efforts to reduce access and availability of underage marijuana and alcohol use, and coalitions are slowly returning to activities via telephone and video devices.

We appreciate all our partners and the work they do in this difficult time. We at AODS are dedicated to continuing SUD services to the community and will provide updates as they occur. Together, we will manage through these trying times.

Sincerely,

Alcohol and Other Drug Services
Behavioral Health Division