



ABH Committee Meetings

ABH will continue to hold check-in calls with our services committees to hear questions and feedback that you have, answer as many questions as we can and seek answers to those we cannot. These calls are for ABH members only.

If you are not a member of one of our Committees but you would like to join, ABH invites you as a member to participate.

Please review the [Committee Descriptions](#), identify which ABH Committees you would like to join, and contact Meg Socha, Member Engagement and Event Coordinator at msocha@abhmass.org.

Please note that the Children's Services CEO Leadership Committee, Senior Leadership Committee on Partnering with Underserved Populations, and ACCS Policy Committee are for CEOs and their direct reports only.

To join one of these committees, please contact us directly.

Mental Health Center Transformation Incentive Payments

MassHealth announced \$94 million in stabilization funding for mental health centers "to support eligible providers as they transition from delivering in-person services to MassHealth members to using other care delivery modalities in response to the COVID-19 emergency."

This is in addition to \$10 million in temporary rate increases for certain BH services that were previously announced as well as temporary increases for Evaluation & Management services available to many provider types, including BH providers.

Details on the funding, including eligibility, requirements, and reporting are available in [MassHealth Mental Health Center Bulletin 32](#). ABH is awaiting clarification as to payment timelines as well as payment formula.

ABH is grateful to the Baker-Polito Administration for recognizing behavioral healthcare as essential to the COVID-19 response and supporting providers in continuing services.

Additional \$44M in Congregate Care Support

As you know, The Collaborative (ABH, The Association of Developmental Disabilities Providers (ADDP), The Children's League of Massachusetts, and The Providers' Council) worked with EOHHS to detail our extraordinary staffing, PPE, interim staff housing, cleaning and other COVID-19 related costs and the need for human service provider staff to receive premium pay consistent with other human service employees.

As a result of our meetings with EOHHS and the data provided by Collaborative members, EOHHS announced an additional \$44 million dollars will be provided to congregate care programs for extraordinary COVID-19 related costs for the months of May and June. One of the goals of EOHHS was to preserve provider flexibility in how agencies addressed their additional staffing and other related costs.

As you are aware, the Commonwealth's initial COVID-19 investment is providing four months of emergency payments to congregate and in-home human service providers equaling 10% of their average contracted billing amounts. In addition to these payments, congregate care providers will receive an additional 15% for a total of 25% above contracted amounts for the months of May and June.

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... Additional \$44M in Congregare Care Support

Along with this funding will come reporting requirements to ensure that it is used for staff wages, infection control, PPE and other direct staff supports. A uniform reporting template and more details are forthcoming. We are very grateful for our partnership with EOHHS and their understanding and responsiveness to provider needs.

Daily State Updates

Massachusetts releases current COVID-19 statistics daily at 4 p.m. To access the daily dashboard, click [here](#). The dashboard includes daily and cumulative confirmed cases; cases by hospital, county, and age/sex/ethnicity; testing by date; deaths; hospital capacity; nursing home data; and PPE distribution. An archive of the daily dashboards and daily cases is available [here](#).

In addition, you can text COVIDMA to 888-777 for alerts about COVID-19 to be sent to your phone. (Manténgase informado sobre la enfermedad COVID-19 en Massachusetts. Envíe COVIDMAESP al 888-777).

Exposure Training

The Pediatric Anxiety Research Center and Judge Baker Children's Center are partnering on a new initiative to provide therapist training and organizational support for integrating and enhancing the use of exposure in practice. Exposure is a highly effective component of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) for anxiety that involves helping clients gradually face their fears. This RFA seeks applications from agencies interested in an early opportunity to partner on this project, which will be reviewed for funding from the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) in Fall 2020. Most project activities, including training time, would be compensated.

The application deadline has been extended to May 15, 2020. The Request for Applications is available [here](#). Any questions can be directed to Dr. Kristen Benito at Kristen_Benito@brown.edu.

Curious about exposure? Check out this video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JCXitNs_JEc.

FAQs on Families First Leave

Hirsch Roberts Weinstein LLP has prepared these [linked FAQs](#) on the Families First Coronavirus Response Act ("FFCRA") for Collaborative members. We hope that you will find them to be useful. The documents answers some of the most commonly asked questions about the two types of leave under FFCRA : (1) the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act ("EPSLA") (which provides up to 80 hours of leave for qualifying purposes); and (2) the Emergency Family and Medical Leave Expansion Act ("EFMLEA") (which amends the FMLA to include up to 12 weeks of partially paid child care related leave). There is also a link to model leave request form.

We sincerely thank our partners at Hirsch Roberts Weinstein for the development of this document at no cost in order to help providers manage the response to the pandemic.

Self Care Strategies and Tools for Frontline Staff

Please find below strategies and tools for frontline staff to take care and sustain themselves during the COVID-19 pandemic. The website includes the following sections: Resiliency Strategies, Mindfulness Tools, Counseling and Behavioral Health Services, and Stress Management.

Website - [Frontline MA](#)

Please know that ABH applauds all that behavioral health staff are doing during this pandemic!

ABH COVID-19 Landing Page

ABH has created a COVID-19 resource page where we are collecting the guidance most relevant to ABH members:

<https://www.abhmass.org/newsroom/announcements/guidance-on-covid-19.html>.

National Council COVID-19 Relief Fund

The **National Council COVID-19 Relief Fund** was created to place resources directly in the hands of community behavioral health providers on the frontlines. The fund is now accepting applications from members who would like to request in-kind or financial donations. To apply, please complete this very [brief application](#).

If the National Council is unable to provide your organization with the full extent of your request, they will make every attempt to circle back to you if/when further resources are secured. Together, we are America's behavioral health network. The National Council is committed to helping you move forward.

To help, the National Council worked with their partners to develop a wide range of technical resources for different behavioral health stakeholders and settings. Please check out their [resource page](#) for tools, news and learning opportunities that can help you during these challenging times.

In-Kind Services

The following companies have generously offered to provide access to their services for free to National Council members. Specific information about the services offered and access opportunities is below. Please note that this list will be updated as more companies offer in-kind services:

[MTM Consulting Services](#) – Offering ten hours of general Internet-based consultation to Transformational Change Grant recipients

[Innovatel](#) – One month of free psychiatric care for organizations looking to add to their clinical team during these challenging times

[Livongo](#) – Free access to COVID-19 and Mental Wellness resources from Livongo for Behavioral Health powered by myStrength

[Motivo Online Clinical Supervision](#) – Free, 60-day trial to supervisors, non-profit agencies and universities who need to transition in-person supervision online

[Credible Behavioral Health Electronic Health Record](#) – 90 days of free access during COVID-19 Crisis

[Netsmart Technologies](#) – Providing used laptops for telehealth services (more information can be found in the application)

The National Council would like to recognize its corporate financial sponsors whose generosity is matched only by their commitment to advancing behavioral health care: [MHRRG/Negley](#) and [Relias](#)

If you have any questions or need any support completing the application, please contact Jeremy Attermann at JeremyA@thenationalcouncil.org.

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Hill Day 2020 at Home

This year, the National Council's Hill Day will look a little different due to COVID-19.

The National Council is partnering with 25 national advocacy organizations to bring you **Hill Day at Home!** How can you make a difference and continue to advocate for behavioral health? On Tuesday, June 23, you'll be able to log on to their online event portal for the 2020 Virtual Policy Institute. A link to the portal will be sent to registrants ahead of the event.

This four-hour learning event will include keynote speakers, the latest legislative updates, immersive breakout sessions and all the great content you've come to expect from Hill Day. Hill Day at Home will culminate on Wednesday, June 24, with a series of digital advocacy events and outreach opportunities to urge lawmakers to invest in lifesaving funding for mental health and addiction programs. **[REGISTER TODAY!](#)**

Mass General COVID-19 Simulator

Mass General Hospital has developed a COVID-19 simulator, an interactive tool to inform COVID-19 intervention policy decisions in the United States. The tool evaluates the spread of COVID-19 in individual states as well as on a national level and looks at the impact of social distancing measures. The goal is help policymakers understand consequences such as the rate of new cases, potential strain on the healthcare system, and projected deaths. To try the simulator, click [here](#).

Looking to Make a Mask

Now that the CDC is recommending that all individuals wear a face covering when they are out in public and social distancing is not possible, here are some easy ways to make a face covering, including using an old t-shirt or a bandana.

[https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html)

[coverings.html](#). TIME has additional mask making instructions/resources available here:

<https://time.com/5816956/how-to-make-a-face-mask-coronavirus/>.

Social Emotional Resources for Families

[How to Talk to Children about the Coronavirus](#) (Harvard Medical School)

[Talking to Teen/Tweens about Coronavirus](#) (New York Times)

[Psychological Tips for Children and Adolescents' Emotions](#) (HEMOT)

[Talking to Children about COVID-19](#) (National Assoc of School Psychologists)

[Managing Stress & Anxiety](#) (Centers for Disease Control)

[How to Talk to Your Children about Coronavirus \(video\)](#) (Boston Children's Hospital)

[Answering Your Young Child's Questions About Coronavirus](#) (Zero to Three)

[Supporting Parents of Young Children During the Coronavirus](#) (The Chicago Parent Program)