PRESENTED BY
The Frontline of Behavioral Health:
How Local Mental Health Authorities Are Adapting to COVID-19

Presented by
Texas Health Institute
September 30, 2020
10:00 AM – 11:00 AM
We are an **independent, non-profit, non-partisan** public health institute in Texas.

**OUR VISION**
Healthy People, Healthy Communities

**OUR MISSION**
To advance the health of all
The Frontline of Behavioral Health: How Local Mental Health Authorities are Adapting to COVID-19

Kenneth Smith, PhD
Texas Health Institute

Lee Johnson, MPA
Texas Council of Community Centers

Greg Hansoh, LMSW
National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Texas
• Highlights from the Issue Brief

• Insight and Perspective from the Field

• Opportunities for Q&A

COVID-19 in Texas: An Analysis of Behavioral Health Needs to Advance Response Efforts

September 28, 2020

Kenneth D. Smith, Ph.D.
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During late June, 40% of U.S. adults reported struggling with mental health or substance use.

Source: Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, 69(32), 1049

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Household Pulse Survey, 2020
PTSD is one of the largest risk factors for anxiety and depressive symptoms, initiation or increase of substance use, and suicide ideation during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 4. Top Ten Sociodemographic Characteristics of Adults Reporting Suicide Ideation During the COVID-19 Pandemic (%)


Note: Data are based on a web-based survey of 5,412 (54.7%) of 9,896 eligible invited adults administered June 24–30, 2020. Quota sampling and survey weighting were employed to improve cohort representativeness of the U.S. population by gender, age, and race/ethnicity.
Trauma and Long-Term Effects of COVID-19

- Increased reports of intimate partner violence and child maltreatment
- COVID-19 associated increase in adverse childhood experiences (ACEs)
- ACEs are associated with an increase in risky behaviors and poor physical and mental health outcomes over the life cycle.
- Long-term mental health effects of survivors of COVID-19

**TAKEAWAY 1:** A shift in the demand for behavioral health services in the short and long-run

**Credit:** Robert Wood Johnson Foundation; **Source:** CDC
TAKEAWAY 2A: Barriers to Access

Many behavioral health providers, including those in mental health shortage areas, will only accept payment in cash.
TAKEAWAY 2B:

Barriers to Access

• Mental Health Stigma
• Importance of Cultural and Linguistic Competence
• Need for behavioral health workforce diversity

“There is this concept of people not wanting to be identified as being less than or insufficient or not being as mentally well as they could be because they need help.”

-CHNA Key Informant Interviewee
RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Utilize peer support specialists for outreach and education
2. Remove barriers to telehealth and increase Medicaid reimbursement rates
3. Implement best practices known to reduce COVID-related morbidity and mortality
4. A call to action to address mental health stigma and increase the diversity of the behavioral health workforce
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Community Centers of Texas

1. ACCESS
2. Andrews Center Behavioral Healthcare System
3. Austin Travis County Integrated Care
4. Betty Hardwick Center
5. Bluebonnet Trails Community Services
6. Border Region Behavioral Health Center
7. MHMR Authority of Brazos Valley
8. Bowie
9. Carrizo Real Community Services
10. The Center for Health Care Services
11. Center for Life Resources
12. Central Counties Services
13. Central Texas Center
14. Coastal Plains Community Center
15. MHMR Services for the Concho Valley
16. Metroplex Services
17. Denton County MHMR Center
18. Emergency Health Network
19. Gulf Bend Center
20. Gulf Coast Center
21. Harris Center for Mental Health & IDD
22. Heart of Texas Region MHMR Center
23. Helen Fariboe Centers
24. Hill Country Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Centers
25. Lakes Regional MHMR Center
26. USAPath Services
27. StarCare Speciality Health System
28. Behavioral Health Center of Harris County
29. Houston Valley Centers for Handicapped & Developmental Disabilities
30. Permian Basin Community Centers
31. Community Healthcare
32. Splendora Center
33. MHMR Tarant
34. Texans Center
35. Texas Panhandle Centers
36. Texas Community Center
37. Tre County Services
38. Tropical Texas Behavioral Health
39. West Texas Centers
Number of Encounters by Encounter Type: Adult Mental Health

- Telephone (Audio Only)
- Telemedicine/Telehealth (Video)
- Face-to-Face

Texas Council of Community Centers
TEXANS
Crisis Counseling Program
RECOVERING TOGETHER

Texas Health and Human Services
COVID-19 Mental Health Support Line

If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed by the COVID-19 pandemic, help is available.

Speak with a mental health professional for help dealing with anxiety, depression, stress, grief or worry 24/7.

Call the toll-free COVID-19 Mental Health Support Line at 833-986-1919.
The following resources were shared by panelists and participants during the Q&A portion of the webinar. Thank you!

1. Discussion about expanded broadband access
2. Evidence-based suicide screening tools (ZEROSuicide)
3. Screening for and Assessing Suicide Risk (ZEROSuicide)
4. Texas Health & Human Services Mental Health Support Webpage
5. Texas Health & Human Services COVID-19 Mental Health Support Line - Flyer
OUR TEAM

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JOIN US FOR UPCOMING COVID-19 WEBINARS:

- **OCTOBER 8:** Applying a Health Equity Lens to Inform COVID-19 Response and Action in Understanding Transgender and Gender Diverse Health Experiences in Texas
- **OCTOBER 15:** COVID-19 in Texas: The Opportunity to Improve the Oral Health System in Texas

www.TexasHealthInstitute.org/COVID19-Series
We believe everyone should have an equitable opportunity to achieve optimal health.