

**Behavioral Health Services (BHS) - Provider Information Notice**

<b>To:</b>	<b>BHS Contracted Service Providers</b>	<b>April 24, 2020</b>
<b>From:</b>	Behavioral Health Services	
<b>Cc:</b>	Sent on behalf of Heather Parson, LMFT, Interim BHPC-Quality Management, BHS, and Teresa (Terri) Kang, LCSW, Quality Management Supervisor, BHS	
<b>Topic(s):</b>	Training resources for Mental Health & Substance Use Disorder (SUD), Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)	
<b>Title</b>	<b>Additional Telehealth Resources during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency</b>	

During the COVID-19 public health emergency, mental health and substance use disorder (SUD) service providers are strongly encouraged to make use of alternative means of providing medically necessary services for clients to ensure timely service delivery while protecting clients and provider staff from risk of exposure to infection. DHCS [Information Notice 20-009](#), updated April 22, 2020, recommends maximizing the number of services that can be provided by telephone and telehealth.

Provision of services through telehealth during the current COVID-19 public health emergency may utilize any non-public facing platform for communicating with clients that allows for audio-visual two-way real time communication. Please refer to the March 23, 2020 memo: [3-23-20 – Guidance for County Staff and Contractors Regarding Telehealth](#), and the March 19, 2020 provider communication: [Information for Behavioral Health Services Providers Related to Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#) for information on services that may be provided through telehealth. For the most recent updates to the March 19 provider communication, please refer to the [BHS Provider COVID-19 FAQ page](#). Please also see the [BHS Provider Information Notice: Expanded Telehealth Resources through Exodus](#).

A list of free webinars and educational resources for using telehealth in the current environment are available in the March 26, 2020 QM Memo [Telehealth Resources during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#).

The following additional resources are available free of charge for provider personnel to obtain information and training on use of telehealth in the delivery of mental health and SUD services:

**Mental Health and SUD Resources****[CMS General Provider Telehealth and Telemedicine Toolkit](#)**

While directed toward Medicare providers, this toolkit from CMS contains electronic links to reliable sources of information regarding telehealth and telemedicine that are applicable also to Medicaid providers. The information will assist providers who may want to establish a permanent telemedicine program and will also be useful for providers who are seeking to utilize telehealth services during the COVID-19 situation.

**[Telebehavioral Health Training and Technical Assistance](#)**

Presented by SAMHSA, this telehealth training for mental health and SUD providers is divided into six sessions. The training provides the tools and resources necessary to identify and implement a tele-behavioral health program. Each educational session includes a Q&A component with tele-behavioral health experts and associated resources for further exploration and information.

**[Best Practices for Telehealth during COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#)**

This document provided by the National Council of Behavioral Health provides information on the background of use of telehealth in behavioral health services and resources necessary to begin or expand use of telehealth.

### Upcoming and Recorded Webinars

#### [CIBHS Behavioral Telehealth \(Video and Phone\): Skill Development Webinar Series](#)

This 11-week webinar series, Minimizing Disruptions in Care Through the Use of Behavioral Telehealth, began April 29, 2020. The aim of the series is to consolidate learning from the quick transition to behavioral telehealth services in response to COVID 19. It is sponsored by the California Health Care Foundation (CHCF). It is tailored for mental health and substance use providers as well as their supervisors.

#### [Telepsychiatry in the Era of COVID-19](#)

This presentation by SMI Adviser offers learners an overview of how to use telemental health and video visits in the changing landscape surrounding the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic. Topics covered include assessing which telemental health platform to use, licensure, issues around consent, online prescribing, billing and payments, and special situations. This presentation was recorded on March 20, 2020.

#### [Telemedicine-Delivered Buprenorphine Treatment in the Age of COVID-19](#)

This webinar is presented by Providers Clinical Support System (PCSS).

Educational objectives include:

- Recognize key changes in federal regulations and guidance in the setting of Covid-19 and what they mean for telemedicine for opioid use disorders (tele-MOUD).
- Describe evidence-base around tele-MOUD and gaps in evidence.
- Describe potential ways tele-MOUD can address current treatment needs and clinical considerations, including specific patients' characteristics, clinic practices, and local resources.
- Review information on key regulatory/legal requirements and technology considerations.

#### [Telemedicine: Getting Started, Regulations and Privacy Issues](#)

This webinar, hosted by the American Osteopathic Academy of Addiction Medicine through a Opioid Response Network STR-TA grant, discusses changes in regulations, presents ways to incorporate telemedicine into the practice of treating OUD in the time of social distancing and stay at home orders, and reimbursement.

*If you have questions and/or comments on this QM Memo, please direct them to the QI Matters*

Email: [QIMatters.HHSA@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:QIMatters.HHSA@sdcounty.ca.gov) . Please contact your COR with any additional questions. More information on COVID-19 can be found on the [County of San Diego COVID-19 webpage](#), resources and communications specific to BHS providers can be found on the [COVID-19 BHS Provider Resources webpage](#).