



# COVID-19 Behavioral Health Task Force

## April 10, 2020

# Agenda BH Task Force

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1. AHCCCS Resources: Sara Salek, CMO, AHCCCS
2. Hospital ED and Medical Floor Capacity: Jill Rowland, CCO, AHCCCS
3. Crisis and 211 Updates: Justin Chase, CEO, CRN
4. Finalizing BH Task Force Strategic Priorities and Action Steps: Sara Salek




# Where do I find the latest information about COVID-19?

- AHCCCS updates the FAQ document daily to reflect the latest guidance for providers, members and plans.
- Please find guidance at: <https://azahcccs.gov/AHCCCS/AboutUs/covid19FAQ.html>
- These are in English and Spanish.

The screenshot shows the top navigation bar of the AHCCCS website. It includes links for 'State Agencies', 'State Services', 'Visit OpenBooks', and 'Ombudsman-Citizens Aide'. On the right, there is a search bar labeled 'AZ.Gov' and the 'az.gov' logo. Below the navigation bar is a yellow banner with the text 'Learn more about coronavirus (COVID-19)' and a large red arrow pointing to the right. To the left of the banner is the AHCCCS logo, and to the right is a Google Custom Search box with a search button and the text 'Advanced search'.

# COVID-19 Information

AHCCCS is responding to an outbreak of respiratory illness, called COVID-19, caused by a novel (new) coronavirus. Health officials urge good hand washing hygiene, covering coughs, and staying home if you are sick.

On March 11, Governor Doug Ducey issued a [Declaration of Emergency](#)  and an [Executive Order](#)  regarding the COVID-19 outbreak in Arizona, and subsequent [Executive Orders](#)  with further administrative actions.

On March 17, 2020, AHCCCS [submitted a request](#) to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to waive certain Medicaid and KidsCare requirements in order to ensure ongoing access to care over the course of the COVID-19 outbreak. As of March 23, AHCCCS has received federal approval to implement programmatic changes to help ensure access to health care for vulnerable Arizonans.

To address Medicaid-related questions from providers and contractors about COVID-19, AHCCCS has developed a list of Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), updated regularly as more information becomes available.

[COVID-19 FAQs](#)

Learn how to protect yourself and stop the spread of COVID-19. Visit [azdhs.gov/COVID19](https://azdhs.gov/COVID19)  and [cdc.gov/COVID19](https://cdc.gov/COVID19) .

If you are an AHCCCS member who is experiencing flu-like symptoms, please call the 24-hour Nurse Line for your health plan (listed below):

## 24-Hour Nurse Line Numbers by Health Plan

Health Plan

Nurse Line Number

# Sections of the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) include:

Billing & Claims

Clinical Delivery

General COVID-19 Questions

Health Plan & AHCCCS Fee-For-Service Programs Guidance

Health Plan Requirements and Deliverables

Pharmacy & Supplies

Provider Enrollment and Requirements

Rates

Telehealth Delivery and Billing

# FAQ Example

**Question:** Arizonans are understandably stressed and anxious right now. What mental health resources do you recommend?

**Answer:** AHCCCS covers a full array of [behavioral health services](#) for members, and [crisis services](#) are available to anyone in Arizona, regardless of insurance coverage. In addition, we have added behavioral health resources offered by the CDC and SAMHSA on the [COVID-19 webpage](#).

# AHCCCS COVID19: Current BH Resources Linked

The outbreak of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) may be stressful for people and communities. Fear and anxiety about a disease can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions in adults and children.

The Centers for Disease Control offers these resources for mental health and coping during an infectious disease outbreak: [Mental Health and Coping During COVID-19](#), which includes:

- [Supporting yourself](#)
- [Information for parents](#)
- [Information for responders](#)
- [Information for people released from quarantine](#)

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA) provides additional information:

Taking Care of Your Behavioral Health: [Tips for Social Distancing, Quarantine, and Isolation During an Infectious Disease Outbreak](#)

The World Health Organization offers these mental health considerations as support for mental and psychological well-being during COVID-19 outbreak. [Mental Health Considerations during COVID-19 Outbreak](#)

# Summary of AHCCCS COVID-19 Information/Resources

- AHCCCS COVID-19 Information:  
<https://azahcccs.gov/AHCCCS/AboutUs/covid19.html>
- AHCCCS FAQs Regarding COVID-19:  
<https://azahcccs.gov/AHCCCS/AboutUs/covid19FAQ.html>
- AHCCCS Federal Authorities Request:  
<https://www.azahcccs.gov/Resources/Federal/PendingWaivers/1135.html>



# Follow up: Hospital ED and Medical Floor Capacity

Jill Rowland, CCO, AHCCCS

## Hospital/ED Data Received to Date: Evaluating Scope of Members awaiting BH level of care/services in order to be discharged

- AHCCCS has been receiving Medicaid specific data from Mike Boylan/Crisis Preparation and Recovery (CPR)
- CPR is contracted with:
  - a. Banner Health (all locations in Maricopa and Pinal)
  - b. Honor Health (all locations)
  - c. Steward Health ( all locations)
  - d. Abrazo Health (all locations)
  - e. AZ Generals (all locations)
  - f. Mayo Hospital
  - g. Wickenburg
  - h. Dignity (Westgate and Glendale)
  - i. Phoenix Children's Hospital
  - j. Valleywise (MIHS all locations)

## Hospital/ED Data Received to Date: Evaluating Scope of Members awaiting BH level of care/services in order to be discharged/CPR

- Number of patients being seen in ED has dropped significantly
- Number of crisis interventions requested by hospitals has decreased significantly
- BH hospitals have quite a few empty beds, so ED patients are transferring quickly and hold times are shorter
- EDs are NOT testing patients for COVID unless they are symptomatic

# Crisis and 211 Updates

Justin Chase, CRN CEO

## COVID-19 Hotline - Call Summary Data Report

Report Dates: 3/20/2020 through 4/10/2020

	Call Summary
COVID-19 Hotline Inbound Calls	22,051
COVID-19 Hotline Calls Handled by Agent	5,288
Transferred to Poison Control	5,377
Maricopa County: 1 (844) 542-8201 (Poison Control)	2,649
All Other Counties: 1 (520) 626-4160 (Poison Control)	2,728

Report Dates:	3/30/2020	through	4/5/2020
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\* Primary Reason for Call is documented on calls handled by agents

Primary Reason for Call	Total
Other	1,204
Information about COVID-19 (symptoms, how it's contracted/spread, vulnerable populations, statistics, prevention)	1,406
Resources: Financial assistance (eviction prevention, utility assistance, etc.)	794
Best sources of information	333
Travel, events, group gatherings	331
Testing information and availability	384
Resources: Housing and homelessness	60
Supplies availability - masks, sanitizer, cleaner	69
Resources: Food assistance	52
Treatment	42



# COVID19 BH TaskForce: 4 Strategic Priorities

Sara Salek, CMO, AHCCCS

# COVID19 BH Task Force: 4 Strategic Priorities

1. Implement efforts to increase resiliency amongst all Arizonans, with specific targeted strategies for populations at risk of/with behavioral health needs
2. Ensure access to crisis, outpatient, and other BH services/levels of care
3. Evaluate and enhance first responder and health care provider support services
4. Provide best practice resources for BH providers on how to minimize risk of COVID transmission



# Increase Resiliency of Arizonans

1. Address the needs of all Arizonans experiencing life changes due to COVID-19
  - ADHS and ASU Center for Mindfulness, Compassion and Resilience-daily webinars for continuing mindfulness practice and support
1. Address the needs of school aged children and their families
  - PAXIS Institute: PAX GBG and other efforts to support teachers
  - BH in schools: leveraging telehealth, remaining socially connected while physically distancing
1. Address the needs of Arizonans experiencing loss during COVID-19
  - Compassion and end of life support: HOV is offering bereavement webinars and tips to memorialize and celebrate loved ones
1. Suicide prevention: targeted efforts for at-risk groups-ADHS and AHCCCS partnership

## Ensure Access to Crisis, Outpatient, and other BH Services/Levels of Care

1. Maintain Statewide BH Crisis System with enhanced targeted approach to address concerns re COVID-19
  - Addition of COVID-19 Hotline
1. Maintain access to outpatient BH services while physically distancing to limit the spread
  - Expanded services available via telehealth/telephonically

# Evaluate and Enhance Support Services for First Responders and Health Care Providers

1. “For Doctors, By Doctors” group of psychiatrists staffing peer hotline for fellow physicians
2. Exploring application for FEMA’s Crisis Counseling and Assistance and Training Program (CCP)

# Provide best practice resources for BH providers on how to minimize risk of COVID transmission

1. Disseminate ADHS and County resources
2. Disseminate BH specific resources
  - Arizona specific developed protocol
  - National resources including SAMHSA

Thank You.