



May 1, 2020

To: Community Developmental Disabilities Programs (CDDPs),  
Brokerages, Providers and ODDS Stakeholders

From: Lilia Teninty, Director, Office of Developmental Disabilities Services

The Office of Developmental Disabilities Services (ODDS) recently put together a fact sheet on "[Knowing Your Rights during COVID-19](#)." This fact sheet helps people know they have the same rights to medical treatment as anyone else:

- You can go to a doctor or hospital just like anybody else. If you have COVID-19 symptoms call your doctor and get direction on what to do. Call back if you get worse.
- You do not have to sign anything at the hospital that you do not want to.
- You cannot be denied medical treatment because you have a disability.

It also includes some helpful tips for preparing for a medical visit or treatment. It gives tips for preparing for a medical appointment, such as making sure the person has documented their wishes for treatment, and tools the person may need to communicate.

There is also an [accompanying resources sheet](#). Please share these fact sheets widely. It is also available in multiple languages on the [ODDS COVID-19 web page](#) under resources for individuals and families.

It is important for people to know their rights. Make a plan in advance for what may happen if someone in your home needs to go to the hospital. People with intellectual and development disabilities should communicate with friends, family and people who help support them about their wishes in case they become sick.

In addition, the Oregon Health Authority recently released [updated visitation guidance](#) for people who are in the hospital. This guidance considers guardians or caregivers for people with disabilities as essential visitors if the person needs support to facilitate treatment or to keep the person or hospital staff safe.

Let's continue to work together to keep everyone safe!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lilia". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "L".

Lilia Teninty  
Director  
Office of Developmental Disabilities Services

*Previous Director's Messages are available at*  
<http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/SENIORS-DISABILITIES/DD/Pages/messages.aspx>

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You can get this document in other languages, large print, braille or a format you prefer. Contact the Oregon Office of Developmental Disabilities Services at 503-945-5811. We accept all relay calls or you can dial 711.