Policy Transmittal
Developmental Disabilities Services

Lilia Teninty
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Number: APD-PT-20-015
Issue date: 4/14/2020

Topic: Developmental Disabilities

Transmitting (check the box that best applies):
☒ New policy ☐ Policy change ☒ Policy clarification ☐ Executive letter
☐ Administrative Rule ☐ Manual update ☐ Other:

Due date:

Applies to (check all that apply):
☐ All DHS employees ☐ County Mental Health Directors
☐ Area Agencies on Aging: {Select type} ☐ Health Services
☐ Aging and People with Disabilities ☒ Office of Developmental
☐ Self Sufficiency Programs Disabilities Services (ODDS)
☒ County DD program managers ☐ ODDS Children’s Intensive In
☒ Support Service Brokerage Directors Home Services
☒ ODDS Children’s Residential Services ☒ Stabilization and Crisis Unit (SACU)
☐ Child Welfare Programs ☐ Other (please specify): Residential
Setting Providers and Provider
Organizations; ORA; CPAO; SEIU;
Residential Facilities Ombudsman

Policy/rule title: Provider Expectations- COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Risk Mitigation and Response
Policy/rule number(s): Release number: v.4
Effective date: Immediately Expiration date: TBD
References:
Web address:

Update v4 04/14/2020: Removes reporting of COVID-19 requirements. Reporting requirements can be found in APD-AR-20-049. Removes mention of visitors in residential settings. Visitor restrictions can be found in APD-AR-20-028.

Discussion/interpretation: Providers are expected to take responsive measures in addressing the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) public health event.
Providers are asked to take specific action in response to the current public health risk presented by COVID-19, including:

- Reviewing infection control policies and practices to prevent the spread of infection;
- Taking prudent measures to limit exposure to potential infection in the home, employment, or day support activities setting;
- Ensuring adequate hand hygiene supplies are readily available;
- Encouraging frequent hand washing by staff, individuals, and visitors;
- Planning for the possibility of staffing shortages in the event of an outbreak;
- Implementing quarantine measures at the specific direction of a qualified healthcare professional or public health agency;
- Protecting privacy of individuals.

**Implementation/transition instructions:**

**Review Infection Control Policies and Practices**

Providers are expected to review infection control policies and practices to prevent the spread of infection. Coronavirus infections may appear rapidly and spread, even when persons are not displaying symptoms of the viral infection. Providers need to ensure that staff are familiar with standard, and contact precautions; and eye protection measures.

**Limit Exposure in the Home, Employment, and Day Support Activities Site**

As a precautionary measure, providers are permitted to turn away visitors that appear ill, have signs of the flu, or have had exposure to the Coronavirus. Employment and DSA programs may also have individuals stay at home or return home when individuals are showing symptoms of illness or have been exposed to the Coronavirus.

This guidance shall not be applied or interpreted to restrict the Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) protections of individuals. Providers are expected to apply prudence in assessing safety in the home or community setting and taking reasonable precautions such as limiting exposure of potentially infected persons. An Individually Based Limitation (IBL) is not required in circumstances of restricting potentially infected visitors from visiting a home nor turning away visitors in the event of public health agency directed quarantine.

**Ensuring Availability of Adequate Hand Hygiene Supplies**

Providers are expected to have adequate hand hygiene supplies readily available to individuals, staff, and visitors to a home as part of precautionary measures to limit exposure and outbreak of the Coronavirus.
The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends using alcohol-based hand sanitizer as the preferred method of hand hygiene.

**Encouraging Frequent Hand Washing**
Frequent hand washing is recommended as a foremost effective strategy in limiting viral outbreak. Providers should have specific expectations for staff handwashing, particular to specific tasks and person-to-person contact. When hands are visibly soiled, the recommendation is to wash with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

Individuals should be encouraged to wash hands frequently as well, including upon returning to the home, following personal hygiene tasks, person-to-person contact, and touching their face.

Employment and day settings may have policies in place that address expectations for when handwashing must occur and procedures for proper hand hygiene.

**Planning for the Possibility of Staffing Shortages**
In the event of an outbreak, there may be a possibility that a provider experiences a shortage of available staff. Providers need to reference their required emergency plan that addresses a public health event such as an infectious disease outbreak.

Providers should have reasonable back-up planning in place in the event of staffing shortage due specifically to an illness outbreak. Providers shall evaluate how to address basic safety and care needs of individuals in the event that staffing capacity is reduced.

Providers need to actively plan for the continued operations of a home or program in the event of Coronavirus outbreak.

**Implementing a Quarantine at the Direction of a Public Health Entity**
In the event that a provider or individual is directed under quarantine by a public health entity, the provider will not be cited for minor rule violations that may occur as a result of following the public health entity quarantine conditions.

Providers and SCs are not required to obtain IBLs for control of schedule and activities when an individual’s activities or ability to access community settings is restricted as a condition of the quarantine. Providers and teams should make every effort to support individuals to direct personal schedules in the home and support individuals to maintain contact with community members through the use of technology such as phone, Skype, or other social media platforms or tools.

**Protecting Privacy of Individuals**
Even in the presence of a public health event, individual rights to privacy and protected
health information continue to apply. Providers and their staff may not share information that is considered to be personal or protected health information, other than in those situations allowed for by law, administrative rule, or public policy.

The Department of Health and Human Services has issued guidance on ways individuals information may be shared so that the requirements of HIPAA privacy laws are not violated: https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/february-2020-hipaa-and-novel-coronavirus.pdf

**Share information with individuals:**
ODDS has created a short video to help explain the Coronavirus or COVID-19 in an easy to use manner. This video may be found here: https://youtu.be/MJ8eeC-tVD4. Ideally this will help individuals understand the importance of hand washing, how to engage in social distancing, etc.

**Additional resources may be found at the following sites:**

Oregon Health Authority (OHA) Emerging Respiratory Infections: COVID-19


Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Guidance on Emergency Preparedness and Infection Disease Outbreak:

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Universal Infection Control Training Course:
https://qsep.cms.gov/pubs/CourseMenu.aspx?cid=0CMSUIPC_ONL

Centers for Disease Control (CDC) “Clean Hands Count for Safe Healthcare”:
https://www.cdc.gov/features/handhygiene/index.html

Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Hand Hygiene in Healthcare Settings:
https://www.cdc.gov/handhygiene/index.html

If you have any questions about this policy, contact:

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