



PROVIDER ALERT

Treat First Providers Needed for Behavioral Health Support for Residents of Long Term Care Facilities

Date: 5/5/20

There is a growing behavioral health crisis in long term care facilities.

The COVID-19 crisis is taking a heavy toll on the residents of long term care (LTC) nursing and assisted living facilities. The prolonged social isolation, fear of becoming ill, and separation from family members and other loved ones is leading this very vulnerable population to experience increased depression, anxiety, agitation, and some reports of failure to thrive.

BHSD is calling for Treat First behavioral health providers who are willing to step up and help address this crisis.

BHSD is working to match a complete list of LTC facilities in the state with the Treat First providers in the same county. But we want to do more than just provide facilities with a list of possible providers – we want to hear directly from providers who are interested in engaging with this project, so that we can ensure meaningful connections are established and work collaboratively to support individuals, providers and facilities.

NOTE: We anticipate these services will be rendered via **telephone or telemedicine**. All of the LTC facilities in the state have received tablets and/or laptops, and HIPAA restrictions have been lifted during the crisis, so clients should have access to necessary technology.

BHSD has resources to support you in this effort.

You – or your agency – may be interested in helping, but may not have much experience working with the elderly population. BHSD is here to support you.

- We are currently working with the UNMH Department of Geriatric Psychiatry to develop a training webinar and possible Project Echo weekly consultation.
- See below for an initial list of other resources (listed below) that will be helpful for providers seeking information about working with older adults.
- BHSD will also host a learning community so that providers can share experiences and develop best practices together.

Not a Treat First provider but want to help?

If you are interested in becoming a Treat First Agency, there are just a few required steps for you to take:

- **Step One:** Go to our website: <https://treatfirst.org> Listen to all the modules which explain the benefits of the approach and advice from your colleagues on how to implement.
- **Step Two:** The final module instructs you to electronically submit two forms:

1. Participation Agreement
 2. Attestation
- Step Three: Once you submit those signed forms, BHSD's Treat First Coordinator will contact you personally to review the approach and provide support in helping you with implementation.
 - Step Four: Once you have submitted your forms on line, and spoken with the State Coordinator, you will receive a Certificate Acknowledging you as a Treat First Agency.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Treat First Coordinator: Betty.Downes@state.nm.us

Please let us hear from you if you are willing to help.

Please contact Jackie Nielsen, the BHSD coordinator for this project, at (505) 709-5622 or Jacqueline.nielsen@state.nm.us to register your interest.

Resources

The American Psychological Association website has a section entirely dedicated to geropsychology, with a wide array of online courses (mostly free) that have continuing education credits. <https://gerocentral.org/training-career/seminarsce/>

The National Institute on Aging has free training materials, clinical practice tools and other resources for treating patients with Alzheimer's Disease and dementia. <https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/alzheimers-dementia-resources-for-professionals>

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) has on-line training curriculum for primary care providers working with patients with dementia. <https://bhw.hrsa.gov/grants/geriatrics/alzheimers-curriculum>

The Alzheimer's Association has a wealth of resources that address cognitive health, cognitive impairment and Alzheimer's Disease. <https://alz.org/professionals/public-health/core-areas/educate-train-professionals/public-health-curriculum-on-alzheimer-s>

The New Mexico chapter of the Alzheimer's Association also has a May 8th webinar on the challenges and benefits of providing primary care to older adults using telemedicine. Contact the organization at 1-800-272-3900 or register online at <https://alz.org/professionals/public-health/core-areas/educate-train-professionals/public-health-curriculum-on-alzheimer-s>

The CDC Nursing Homes and Assisted Living (Long-term Care Facilities)
<https://www.cdc.gov/longtermcare/index.html>

Article on Mental Illness in Long Term Care Facilities
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3565566/>

CEUs Related to Long Term Care

<https://www.pdresources.org/course/index/4/1213/The-Social-Worker-in-Long-Term-Care>

<https://ce4less.com/Aging-and-LongTerm-Care-Ceu>

<https://aspirace.com/social-worker-continuing-education/continuing-education-for-social-workers/>

https://www.speedyceus.com/ceus-courses/material_detail.php?id=23