



Southeast MHTTC Newsletter

Volume II, Issue III - August 2020

Upcoming Events

- **Mental Health Administration Consultation Office Hours**
Tuesday, August 11 | 10 AM ET
- **Webinar: Use of Community Assessment for Public Health Emergency Response (CASPER) for Assessing Behavioral and Mental Health**
Tuesday, August 11 | 1 PM ET

Be sure to visit [our website](#) for event topics and dates scheduled in 2020.

Past Events

Did you miss a recent Southeast MHTTC Event? Click on the links below to access our webinar recordings and download slide deck presentations.

- Keeping & Building Connections through Online Peer Support
- Elevating Language through COVID-19 Part 1 & Part 2
- Compassion Fatigue: Managing During Troubling Times
- Suicide Risk Assessment Part 1 & Part 2
- View from the Field: Providing Community Mental Health During (and After) COVID 19
- Building Psychological Resilience for the Public Health Workforce during the COVID-19 Pandemic
- The Behavioral Health System and Its Response to COVID-19: A Snapshot Perspective
- Impact of COVID-19 Realities on IPS Supported Employment
- Financing School-Based Mental Health Services during a State Budget Crisis
- Using Technology to Improve Access and Quality of Child Mental Health Care

COVID-19 & Its Impact on the Mental Health System

In the face of widespread physical distancing measures, mental health systems have adjusted quickly to meet the demand for mental health service delivery. In this issue, we share how mental health systems, providers, and patients have faced challenges and responded during COVID-19. We also share resources that may be useful in addressing these challenges.

Systems Level Challenges



Technology Shift

In response to physical distancing measures, changes were made to make telepsychiatry more accessible. [Access our Telepsychiatry during the COVID-19 Pandemic infographic](#) to read about these changes and tips related to:

- Equipment
- Platform
- Licensure
- Prescribing
- Billing & payment



Staff Attrition

In our [Mental Health Workforce Fact Sheet](#), we discuss how Region IV has been dealt with a mental health work force shortage. When coupled with the pandemic, mental healthcare organizations may face issues with staff attrition related to multiple factors such as:

- Getting sick with COVID -19
- Being exposed
- Fear of being exposed
- Needing to care for children

Provider Level Challenges



Response Planning

It's important to have a plan in place during a public health emergency. To learn more about how to prepare for a health crisis, view our [*Mental Health Systems' Response to Public Health Emergencies Infographic.*](#)



Professional Adjustments

Mental health professionals have adapted quickly to changes in their professional setting. Some of these changes included:

- Learning new technology/environment
- Reduced opportunities for in-person supervision
- Decreased opportunities for colleagues to bond or discuss cases
- Lack of information/guidance



Interpersonal Adjustments

As a result of the pandemic, mental health professionals have also encountered interpersonal challenges such as:

- Coping with emotions and uncertainties
- Navigating relationships with patients, family, and friends
- Compassion fatigue which is characterized by deep physical and emotional exhaustion and reduced ability to empathize

To learn more about common challenges faced by providers, view our [*Navigating the Mental Health Impacts, Challenges, and Coping Strategies during COVID-19 Infographic.*](#)



Coping Strategies

Practicing self-care is a good way to manage compassion fatigue, but our wellness routines may have been modified as a result of COVID-19. Access our [*Compassion Fatigue: Managing during Troubling Times Infographic*](#) to learn more.

Patient Level Challenges



Connectivity

Patients may experience similar challenges navigating life and the mental health system as a result of the pandemic. Not only may they be experiencing difficulty staying connected with their loved ones but also with their mental health provider. Challenges patients may face include:

- Learning new technology
- Feeling uncomfortable with changes in modality (i.e. in-person vs virtually)
- Finding space and privacy for sessions


Check out our [*Staying Connected with Peers during Physical Distancing Infographic*](#) to find ways to continue supporting each other.


Thank you for reading the Southeast MHTTC Newsletter!


The Southeast MHTTC Newsletter is published quarterly bringing you updates on our center and information and resources related to public mental health.


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