



# AMERICAN

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SYSTEMS



ABHS's

Comprehensive guide to client  
and staff safety

COVID-19 precautions



# ABHS's Communicable Disease and Infection Control outline

ABHS staff revised the our Standard Operating Procedure Isolation Policy and Communicable Disease and Infection Control Policy on March 16, 2020, and has been distributed to the ABHS management team & staff members for immediate implementation. Below are safety measures we take to mitigate COVID19.

- An abundance of facility and health Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) supplies.
- Hand sanitizer – in addition to the facility, mandatory use of hand sanitizer at pre/post transit in ABHS vans.
- Client No Touch Thermometers.
- Face masks – N95 & other respiratory protection devices. N95 face masks will be used for all staff members that work in the ABHS Chehalis COVID-19 isolation unit.
- Face shields
- Clorox handi-wipes.
- Latex gloves.
- Facility cleaning at regularly scheduled intervals.
- Deep cleaning and wiping down facility multiple times daily – door handles, faucets, countertops, entry areas to buildings.
- Wiping down the facility every hour with bleach and water (10% solution for residential). Outpatient programs wipe before and after with Clorox wipes.
- Transportation safety



# Communicable Disease and Infection control (continued)

- Masks are worn and supplied in every van.
- Hand sanitizer - 60% or more alcohol will be carried in every van, controlled by the staff at all times.
- Assessing incoming clients for Covid 19 symptoms prior to allowing clients into the van. This includes using the BD Veritor System or BiNax Now Instant test for Rapid Detection of SARS-CoV-2.
- All new clients will be screened at the time of pick up. Any client who answers yes to any of the screening questions will be sent back for testing.
- Every time a client exits the van then reenters the van everyone washes their hands with hand sanitizer.
- All testing is reported to DOH.

In addition, ABHS monitors and tracks public health updates and stays current with all DOH recommended guidelines we enforce:

- Daily monitoring for Covid-like-illness for current clients.
- Assess incoming clients for Covid 19 symptoms at front door screening prior to admission.
- Use BD Veritor System or BiNax Now Instant Tests for Rapid Detection of SARS-CoV-2 during pre-intake screening.
- Coordination with local health districts for action based upon symptoms.



# Monitoring and Tracking

*(continued)*

- Staff submits Covid 19 POC Rapid Testing Reports to the Washington State Department of Health weekly to support public health.
- Client logs. The Health Care Coordinators in our residential and withdrawal management facilities keep a running log of every client that has a recorded temperature of 100 degrees or higher and refer immediately to a Provider staff member for possible infection.

## Facility management in protecting clients and staff

- ABHS implemented coordinated medical procedures when an individual within an ABHS facility is presenting with Covid-like symptoms or who is known to have been near a person with COVID-19. ABHS follows its routine infection control policies and procedures for clients with flu-like symptoms and no recent exposure or travel to an area with COVID-19 spread in the last 14 days.
- An integral element of the ABHS communicable disease and infection control program is its Point of Care Rapid Testing for COVID-19.



# Facility management protecting clients and staff (continued)

- ABHS deployed the McKesson Point-of-Care (POC) Immunoassay Analyzer BD Veritor™ Plus and is using the Rapid Test Kit BD
- Veritor™ System Infectious Disease Immunoassay SARS-CoV-2 NasalSwab. Use of the McKesson POC SARS-CoV-2 diagnostic test expanded strategic, evidence-based testing in ABHS residential treatment facilities. While ABHS will be able to identify the
- COVID-19 virus quickly, protect against infections among clients and staff, COVID-19 continues its epidemic spread in Washington State.

## Social Distancing Measures

- We limit client interactions. The intent of social distancing is to limit large group settings.
- Waiting room for the interview should be limited to no more than 8 clients in the room at a time.
- Meals, we limit the number of clients in the dining hall to 30 at a time. Maintain 3 feet between clients. No clients are in the kitchen at any time. If Covid-19 symptoms increase, we established a contingency plan to have clients eat in their rooms.
- We allow NA/AA, Smudge, Church. Maintain in place at this time. We limit group size and ask clients to maintain 3 feet between them and we wash down room and chairs after each group meeting.



# Protecting and supporting Client's Health and Safety

- We Reinforce adherence to Communicable Disease and Infection Control Policies and Procedures.
- Implement respiratory hygiene.
- We Require all facility staff members and clients to wear masks. Facility staff members will also wear face shields.
- We confine symptomatic clients.
- The facility, maintenance, and housekeeping interventions. ABHS deployed air purifying equipment in ABHS facilities.
- We assess incoming clients for Covid 19 symptoms at the front door screening tent prior to admission.
- We use BD Veritor System for Rapid Detection of SARS-CoV-2 during pre-intake screening.
- Provide client education and group counseling on COVID-19 information.
- We conduct and document twice-daily temperature checks for all clients. (100-degree threshold).
- Residents identified by a Provider as at-risk – compromised immune systems - conduct and document
- temperature checks every 6 hours. Only those identified by our medical providers need this level of observation.
- For clients in withdrawal management, we conduct temperature checks hourly.



# Protecting Client's Health and Safety

*(Continued)*

- All Clients are issued a face mask so they can prevent spreading it to others. Any client that is showing some symptoms – cough, congestion, the temperature of 100 or more will wear full PPE until they get assessed by a provider
- Extensive client education in prevention.
- COVID – 19 educational posters & handwashing posters.
- We offer PowerPoint about COVID-19.
- We supply COVID-19 fact sheets for ABHS staff use – for example, Seattle King County Public Health.
- Educate clients and staff on the importance of hand hygiene.
- Respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette.
- We Identify rooms at each residential treatment facility that can be used for the isolation of clients suspected of having the virus. Assess other engineering controls that may support prevention activities. Ensure there are 2-3 rooms and explore sections within each ABHS facility to use for client isolation.
- All clients tested for COVID-19 will be treated as if they are infected until otherwise noted. Clients who are positive have safe and secure housing options, they will be discharged to isolate at home. Those clients that do not have safe and secure housing options will follow ABHS policy.



# Protecting Client's Health and Safety

*(Continued)*

- Use No Touch Thermometers, notes, scan it to a Provider who can follow up as soon as possible. We also conduct temperature checks at least once every 6 hours.
- Despite discontinuing client visitors on weekends and graduations, ABHS implements a procedure to allow clients to use zoom with their counselor for “face time” visits as well as telephone calls to family, significant others, partners, and friends.
- Beginning in May 2021, ABHS arranged with local pharmacies to begin offering ABHS staff members and clients the opportunity to receive COVID-19 vaccinations during the course of behavioral health treatment services. ABHS Chehalis was able to secure sufficient J&J vaccine to conduct the first ABHS COVID-19 vaccination event. Other ABHS facilities are working on arranging vaccination events in their local areas.





# Covid 19 medical services unit

- ABHS Provides substance use disorder behavioral health treatment services in its ABHS COVID-19 Medical Services Program for individuals with confirmed novel coronavirus (COVID-19) infection that are also in treatment for a substance use disorder (SUD). The level of care is described in the American Society of Addiction Medicine's, The ASAM Criteria as Level 3.7, medically monitored intensive inpatient services.
- The COVID-19 program is a safe and secure facility ensuring individuals with COVID-19 are isolated from the general client population and the general public. Services are offered at the ABHS Chehalis facility. The service treats those individuals with confirmed COVID-19.
- ABHS staff members that volunteer to provide behavioral health treatment services to clients with confirmed COVID-19 will be required to wear complete PPE at all times. The staff are trained on how to properly use PPE.



# More education and Resources for COVID19

## Resources for Health care Facilities

- [Centers of Disease Control \(CDC\)](#)
- [Steps Healthcare Facilities Can Take](#)
- [Interim Guidance for Healthcare Facilities](#)
- [Strategies to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19](#)
- [Washington State Governor's Office –  
Resource List for State Businesses and  
Workers Impacted by COVID-19](#)
- [COVID-19 Is in Your Workplace. Now What?](#)
- [Washington State Health Care Authority,  
COVID](#)

