

The Impact of COVID-19 on CSBs and Other Licensed Providers

DBHDS: A Life of Possibilities for All Virginians. .”

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The pandemic has impacted providers across the healthcare system with increased infection control and telehealth costs and reduced revenue due to service disruption, particularly for services that cannot be conducted via telehealth.

Behavioral health and developmental services providers, like other healthcare providers, have had to quickly adapt to the new pandemic environment.

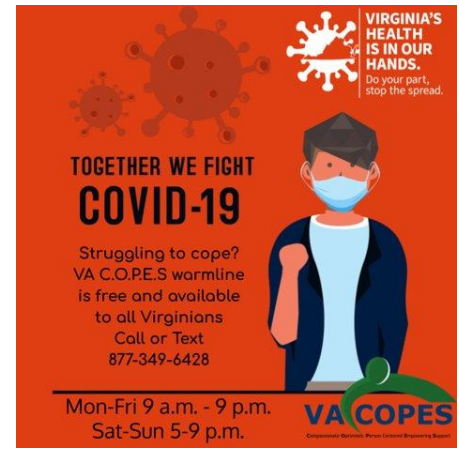
- CSBs continue to provide all of their code-mandated services, while quickly pivoting to telehealth for many services. Expenses like PPE costs and reduced visit revenue have reduced some provider capacity.
- Workforce is a serious challenge. About 50% of CSBs went through some level of staff furlough between April and July. In total, about a quarter of CSBs report they have engaged in some level of staff layoffs.
- The need for behavioral health services will increase. Virginians are increasingly at risk of depression, anxiety, and substance misuse due to the pandemic and its economic impact. Overdose deaths in 2020 were the highest ever.

DBHDS is tracking the impact of COVID-19 on behavioral health and developmental service delivery.

- This includes COVID-related cases, outbreaks, and deaths, posted regularly on the [DBHDS website](#). As of early December, DBHDS-licensed providers had reported over 2,000 cases and over 65 deaths.
- Service disruptions have also been severe – the most widespread disruptions appear among day support and services such as therapeutic day treatment and face to face substance use disorder treatment services.
- DBHDS has partnered with DMAS to ensure any available federal resources (e.g. CARES Act funding) is available to support CSBs and other DBHDS licensed providers.

DBHDS has worked to make sure the system had the guidance, information and collaboration necessary so that Virginians still received needed services.

- We've ensured very active communication with the CSBs, licensed providers, and other state agencies on the safe provision of services and a safe return to a face-to-face setting.
- We've also looked for non-appropriated funding lines to help support CSBs with budget shortfalls.
- DBHDS is partnering with VDH to deliver over 50,000 rapid test kits to CSBs and private providers.
- DBHDS has partnered with Mental Health America-Virginia on a free warmline – VA C.O.P.E.S. – for COVID-related mental health concerns.
- DBHDS formed an Advisory Group with VDH, VACSB, and community provider groups to address critical issues, including prioritization and distribution of vaccines to individuals served and staff.
- Finally, SAMHSA awarded DBHDS a \$2M grant for COVID-19-related mental health and SUD services. Part of this funding is going toward services specifically for frontline healthcare workers.



In April, Virginia received funding and began working with Mental Health America of Virginia on VA COPES. Current grant funding will allow us to operate the warm line through May 31, 2021.

The pandemic continues to put significant pressure on CSBs and other DBHDS-licensed providers. They're incurring additional costs associated with pivoting to digital services, PPE, workforce shortages, and more while maintaining access to services. Simultaneously, DBHDS continues to work with providers to meet the goals of the DOJ Settlement Agreement in addition to STEP-VA, which have put significant pressure on the system. Continued long-term support for the system is critical.

DBHDS works to ensure behavioral health, substance use disorder, and developmental disability services are available to all Virginians who need them in the most community-oriented, integrated setting possible. More information is available at dbhds.virginia.gov/about-dbhds/policy-and-public-affairs/ga2021

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