



March 20, 2020

What We Are Doing to Protect Our Patients and Staff

As a part of the community health safety net, LifeSpring understands the important role we play in ensuring access to quality primary care and behavioral health services and treatment. During a public health emergency it is important that these services remain easily accessible and that the community knows they can rely on LifeSpring. LifeSpring's top priority during this time is to protect our patients, staff, and the communities we serve. At this time, all services are operating as normal.

In order to protect our staff and patients and continue to provide the best care, the following steps are being taken:

- **An internal taskforce has been created to develop and implement strategies and initiatives to address the evolving COVID-19 situation.** This taskforce is meeting frequently to ensure that we have the most current and accurate information in order to best serve our clients and community.
- **The use of telemedicine is being implemented when appropriate.**
- **General wellness exams are being rescheduled for a later time** to reduce risk of infection, protect our healthy patients and ensure providers are able to attend to those with more immediate needs.
- Additional cleaning supplies and personal protective equipment have been distributed to each LifeSpring location. Staff have been given updated training on proper use. Additional signage about proper handwashing techniques and sneezing methods have been put in waiting rooms.
- **Visitation to all residential facilities has been suspended**, including supervised group living homes and Turning Point Center, until further notice.
- Trainings and large meetings have been postponed or moved to teleconference. All of our non-essential staff members are conducting business offsite.

How can you limit your exposure to the virus?

The best way to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is to avoid being exposed to the virus, which at this time is thought to spread mainly person-to-person.

Precautions should include:

- Wash your hands with soap and warm water – frequently and for at least 20 seconds each time
- If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer *that contains at least 60% alcohol*
- Avoid touching your face
- Maintain “social distancing” between others (about six feet apart)
- Avoid contact with people who are sick
- Cover your mouth and nose if you cough or sneeze (and immediately wash or sanitize your hands)

If you believe you may have COVID-19, have been exposed to COVID-19, or may have symptoms of COVID-19, isolate yourself at home and tend to your symptoms. Call your doctor for help if your symptoms worsen. If you are showing symptoms, please give us a call before coming in for an appointment and let us know you are concerned you might have COVID-19 so we can give you specific instructions about how to receive care.

How can you protect your mental health?

Infectious disease outbreaks, like COVID-19, can produce a range of psychological and behavioral effects. Common responses may include insomnia and anxiety, fears of illness, and unhealthy coping such as increases in alcohol and tobacco use.

Below are ways to manage our responses:

- Remember self care such as getting enough sleep, healthy eating, exercising, and staying connected to family and friends.
- Stay updated on the latest information. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention updates information daily and LifeSpring will provide updates to the public as we receive them.
- A caution to the above is to limit exposure to media, including social media, too much contact with the 24-hour news cycle can increase distress.
- Control what we can by following guidelines (such as frequent handwashing, not touching your face, staying at least 6 feet away from those coughing/sneezing, etc.), but realize we cannot control everything.
- Most importantly, utilize your supports: talk to family and friends, and don't hesitate to discuss anxieties and fears with your therapist or healthcare provider.

If you are experiencing anxiety, please give us a call at 812-280-2080 or 800-456-2117. Additionally, we encourage you to access phone and chat services available from the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-273-8255 or the Crisis Text Line by texting HOME to 741741.

LifeSpring is working closely with our local health departments, emergency management agencies and other resources. Please closely follow the instructions from state and federal authorities so you and your families are best protected. As always, do not hesitate to contact us if you have questions or concerns.

