

Community Mental Health Program Response to COVID-19 and the Road Ahead

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ASSOCIATION OF OREGON COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS

The Role of Community Mental Health Programs

Responsible for Oregon's essential behavioral health safety net services for their counties

Every CMHP is a contractor for behavioral health services, both with their local CCOs for OHP members and with OHA for non-Medicaid services

24/7, 365 days a year, from prevention to crisis services, and including housing, transitions between levels of care, employment and school supports

While we prioritize people with the highest behavioral health needs and risk, we are the behavioral health safety net for our whole communities, and serve any community member in crisis, regardless of insurance coverage.

Prioritizing Marginalized and Underserved Populations

CMHPs have always been on the front lines of serving marginalized populations



The COVID-19 crisis has magnified the need for all services, including cultural/language-specific care



Infrastructure gaps and health disparities among populations have become more apparent

COVID-19 Impact on Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Services

CMHPs have adapted by

- ◇ Moving about 80% of services to telehealth/telephone
- ◇ Using limited PPE to provide face-to-face, critical, essential services to people for whom telehealth services are inadequate
- ◇ Creating isolation rooms in clinics and screening/testing before entry when possible
- ◇ Enhancing warmlines for adults and families, Senior loneliness lines, and initiating phone and in-person check-ins and brief, low barrier counseling
- ◇ Increasing outreach to families and creating virtual clinical groups for children and youth

Meanwhile...

We grapple with behavioral health system bottlenecks exacerbated by COVID-19, for example, restoration of Aid & Assist clients:

How did we get here?

- Methamphetamine rates rising since 2012 – *(Related deaths up 400%*)*
- Affordable housing crisis – *(Median rent increased by 74% in last 17 years, while median income only increased by 47%**)*
- Underfunding of addiction and community restoration services

What are the solutions?

- Low barrier housing
- Augment substance use disorder and peer services
- Enhance community-based restoration and other services for Aid & Assist clients
- Strategically invest in secure residential treatment facilities in communities

*Oregon-Idaho HIDTA Program Drug Threat Assessment 2020

**Census Bureau Data

Behavioral
health
demand
expected to
double and
CMHPs will
need:

