

MEMORANDUM

TO: Representative Landwehr and KanCare Oversight Committee Members

FROM: Laura Howard

DATE: April 15, 2020

SUBJECT: KDADS Status Report

The Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services continues to meet the needs of Kansans. More than 1,900 state hospital employees are working a full onsite schedule and are adhering to safety guidelines put in place by their respective superintendents and agency recommendations. During the first two weeks of social distancing, approximately 20 employees from the agency's central office were identified as essential and worked from home. This past week, 96 percent of KDADS's central office workforce began teleworking or working staggered schedules in offices to optimize social distancing.

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KDADS and CMS have collaborated and have sent surveyors to conduct infection control surveys in five remaining Life Care Centers in the state with plans to enter Burlington this week.

The staffing number includes the agency's Abuse, Neglect or Exploitation Hotline that continues to take reports as usual and staff that are prepared to go into facilities for investigation when necessary using CDC-approved screening questions and proper personal protective equipment (PPE). Surveyors are also available, and most have been fitted for PPE. KDADS and CMS have completed Infection Control surveys on the Life Care Centers in the state. Federal and state surveyors plan to begin infection control surveys at the Burlington facilities this week. We have continued processing name-based background checks for long-term care and health care workers in nursing facilities and HCBS settings in the required two-day timeline.

The agency, using recommendations issued by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services along with internal recommendations, has developed guidance for its healthcare workers, stakeholders, constituents and partners to aid them in implementing social distancing as well as temporary protocols to follow during service provision.

Within the first few days of the pandemic, more than 20 Guidance documents were generated for community-based organizations alone. To date, that number has increased to

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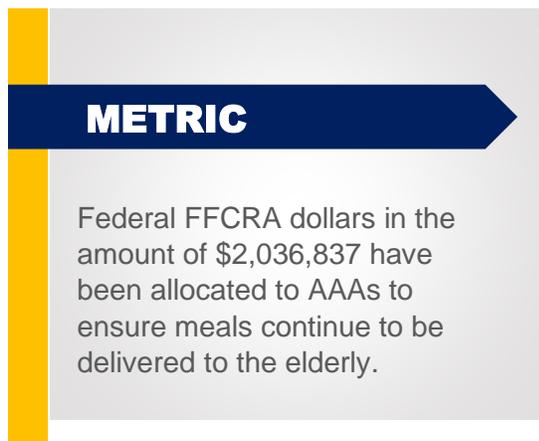
To date, 31 Guidance documents have been developed and posted for stakeholders.

more than 30. Additional guidance continues to be posted on the agency’s website which was created solely to communicate guidance measures and revisions and/or updates. We have recommended every entity adopting KDADS guidance keep a copy of either the state or federal guidance they choose to follow on record for future audits or reviews. Our goal with state guidance is to allow for as much local decision-making as possible in its implementation.

I. COVID-19 GUIDANCE

☐ *AGING AND DISABILITY COMMUNITY SERVICES AND PROGRAMS COMMISSION*

Throughout the COVID-19 emergency period, to encourage social distancing and stop the spread of the pandemic, the agency directs that providers and participants terminate participation in congregate settings or activities and implement protocols in accordance with the program-specific



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Federal FFCRA dollars in the amount of \$2,036,837 have been allocated to AAAs to ensure meals continue to be delivered to the elderly.

COVID-19 guidance provided at the agency’s website, to include:

Nutrition Services

- Senior Nutrition Services
- Senior Nutrition Services FFCRA
- Senior Nutrition Services CARES
- Senior Nutrition Services FAQs

The 11 Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) Directors and KDADS staff are in daily communication regarding nutrition services for older Kansans. The AAAs and their nutrition providers are responding quickly to the ongoing changes spurred by the pandemic. As congregate meals sites have closed in support of social distancing, nutrition providers and AAAs are transitioning to “grab-and-go” meals which allow for quick pick up. In addition, as the demand for home delivered meals has increased, the nutrition providers and AAAs are focusing on delivering frozen meals, multiple meals and shelf-stable meals. The goal is to deliver as many meals as possible, as efficiently as possible. That said, meal programs are built on volunteers. Most volunteers are the youngest of the old. As such, many of the volunteers are opting to stay safe at home. In response, the AAAs and nutrition providers are transitioning to paid employees (including hiring individuals unemployed by COVID).

Specific to funding, KDADS staff worked quickly to identify and allocate (as per a Guidance document) the additional funding awarded to Kansas from the FFCRA federal dollars. The additional federal dollars will assist in supporting the increase in the number of meals and the increase in meal costs. KDADS is expecting the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act Notice of Grant Award to be received as early as next week.

HCBS Waivers

- Brain Injury Measures
- IDD Services Measures
- Frail Elderly

- PD Waiver Measures
- TA Wavier Measures
- Autism
- All Waiver Measures
- Eligibility Assessments and Reviews
- Background Check Measures
- SED Waiver Measures
- HCBS Services with Telemedicine
- Congregate Settings Closure

Within days of the pandemic, KDADS staff began working on the CMS Appendix K document. Appendix K is the federal Emergency Preparedness and Response document designed for 1915(c) home and community-based waivers. The document is not intended to accommodate a request for multiple waivers, however, CMS created an addendum “check list” for purposes of COVID-19 requests. KDADS and KDHE collaborated and approval was received this week. As of today, KDADS anticipates amending the Appendix K document to include retainer payments for allowed HCBS services. This request is consistent with other states.

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KDADS received approval of its Appendix K request for all HCBS waivers on April 1.

Additional Specific Guidance

- Specialized Medical Care
- Home Visit Measures (Home Workers)
- Conflict of Interest for ADRCs/AAAs/MCOs – Meals
- Client Assessment, Referral and Evaluation (CARE)
- Level of Care Assessments Aging and HCBS
- OAA SCA CARE QA

☐ SURVEY, CERTIFICATION AND CREDENTIALING COMMISSION

Training Programs

- Certified Nurse Assistants

☐ BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES COMMISSION

- Telephonic and Telemedicine Expansion for Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Providers
- SUD Providers Verbal Consent
- Temporary Additions to Formulary for Community Support Medication Program
- Nursing Facility for Mental Health and Community Mental Health Center (CMHC)
Continued Stay Screens Suspended

- CMHC Verbal Consent
- Community Run Organizations Employee Wages
- Kansas Coalitions Program and Budget Reallocation in Light of School Closing

☐ *Community Service Providers*

- Performing Essential Functions

II. BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

KDADS applied last week for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Emergency COVID-19 grant. This \$2M opportunity for states is designed to support additional behavioral health services to individuals impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The KDADS application targeted multiple hotspots in Kansas where COVID-19 has shown significant community spread already and establishes a fund to support the provision of services to target populations of uninsured or underinsured individuals, including health care workers. These funds will be utilized to provide referrals, assessments, crisis services and evidenced-based therapy through community-based providers. While the application is under review at the federal level, KDADS anticipates receiving funds for the program before the end of May in order to support these new additional services during this time of emergency.

III. COVID-19 COMMUNICATIONS

- March 16, a press release was issued statewide from Governor Laura Kelly, Kansas Department for Health and Environment (KDHE) Secretary Dr. Lee Norman and Kansas KDADS Secretary Laura Howard announcing enhanced measures for state nursing facilities to protect residents from the COVID-19 outbreak.
- March 18, 2020, KDADS issued a statewide press release announcing that visitation at all four state hospitals had been restricted effective immediately as a measure of precaution to reduce exposure of COVID-19 to residents and staff.
- March 27, an announcement was made statewide via press release that Kansas had received just over \$2 million in U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) grants from the Administration for Community Living (ACL) to help communities provide meals for older adults.
- April 6, KDADS issued a statewide press release reporting that three staff members and one resident at Parsons State Hospital and Training Center (PSHTC) had tested positive for COVID-19 in the previous week. Those were the first confirmed positive cases at any of the four state hospitals. (See STATE HOSPITALS below for update.)

IV. STATE HOSPITALS

- KDADS has been emphasizing publicly that all four of the state hospitals are open and filling positions. Deputy Secretary of Hospitals and Facilities Scott Brunner reported April 1 recruiters have filled several vacant Mental Health Development Disability Technicians

(direct care staff) positions at Larned State Hospital and a class of new employees starts training April 6.

- All four hospitals have followed infection control processes as directed by medical staff at each hospital, infection control nurses, KDHE and CDC guidelines. This includes having all staff in masks while they are working with patients or unable to maintain a 6-foot distance.
- All four hospitals have identified and prepared isolation units on their respective campus for patients that are screened positive for COVID -19 or while screening them for COVID-19 symptoms.
- All four hospitals are screening staff at the beginning of each shift for fever and respiratory symptoms.
- PSHTC has 15 active COVID-19 cases confirmed through testing; seven residents and eight staff. The resident cases are isolated in one cottage. The medical director is in regular communication with the Labette County Health Department to coordinate testing of suspected cases and verifying best practices for infection control. The staff cases have generated a great deal of concern among those continuing to work at the hospital. The hospital leadership stay in daily communication with the staff providing updates on current cases, infection control and staff support. We have counselors on campus to provide support to the staff struggling with workplace stress.