



STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES
Bureau for Behavioral Health

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Christina R. Mullins
Commissioner

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 18, 2020
TO: West Virginia Opioid Treatment Programs
FROM: James A. Matney, State Opioid Treatment Authority
RE: COVID-19

This correspondence is in regard to the COVID-19 pandemic and guidance from the Bureau for Behavioral Health (BBH). BBH has been working with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to come up with a solution that will help control the spread of the virus, while continuing to provide services in a safe manner. First and foremost, the safety of clients is our main priority. The state and SAMHSA view OTP's as essential public healthcare facilities, meaning at this time they will continue to provide these vital services.

The steps below are aimed to reduce the number of daily clients who will be coming into your facilities. Please do **not** submit exception requests to the OTP Extranet for review as this will flood their system. Also, please make sure you have an adequate supply of Methadone on hand before implementation of these procedures. All clients who are given these exceptions will be given a Naloxone kit before leaving the clinic. We will work with the University of Charleston's School of Pharmacy provide Naloxone as soon as possible. However, until you have Naloxone on site, we ask that your Physician co-prescribe Narcan for all patients in these exception categories.

The following can be implemented immediately:

1. West Virginia Opioid Treatment Programs will not be allowed to suspend client admissions at this time.
2. New admissions should be staggered to limit client flow.
3. No face to face counseling or groups will be permitted for any clients, unless a client is in Crisis.
4. Counseling can be conducted telephonically or via telehealth during this time.
5. Those clients who are deemed extremely unstable, whereas any extra take home medication would be unsafe, are to report to the program daily.
6. All Clients over age of 60 or who have respiratory disease or another chronic disease that puts them at risk, may receive a 14-day supply of take-home medication.
7. Clients who have tested positive or have symptoms of COVID-19 can receive up to 28 days of take-home medication.

8. Client who are considered stable by the Medical Director may receive up to 28 days of take-home medication.
9. Clients who are considered less stable but who the Medical Director feels can properly handle the medication will be allowed up to 14 days of Medication.
10. For clients who will be included in each of these categories, these exceptions will be documented in their medical record and a list will be maintained at the facility that will be available for review.
11. A limited number of clients are permitted to be in the building at any given time to help contain possible exposure. The limit that we will be allowing in the building at any given time is 5 clients.
12. OBMAT patients can be given 30-day prescriptions with up to 3 refills.


James A. Matney
State Opioid Treatment Authority

3-18-20
Date

JAM:dm