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DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH
DIVISION OF CLINICAL AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES
LICENSING DIVISION –
COVID EMERGENCY BULLETIN #20-05
MAY 21, 2020

COVID-19 Infection Control and Other Requirements in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

This bulletin, and the attachments hereto are issued pursuant to Department of Mental Health (DMH) regulations 104 CMR 27.03(5)&(8), which provide that DMH “may establish clinical competencies and additional operational standards for care and treatment of patients admitted to facilities licensed pursuant to 104 CMR 27.00, including for specialty populations.”

The attached Infection Control Competencies/Standards were developed to establish consistent infection control practices in DMH licensed facilities and consistent practices for the admission and treatment of patients whose status regarding infection with COVID-19 is either pending test results, presumed positive or confirmed positive. The Standards are divided into two Tiers. Tier 1 establishes baseline infection control standards with which all DMH licensed facilities are expected to comply. Tier 2 establishes infection control standards and guidelines for facilities that have the capacity to admit and provide ongoing management for patients who are presumed or confirmed to be infected with COVID-19.

DMH is also requiring daily COVID-19 reporting, as outlined in this bulletin.

Attestation: To be considered in DMH’s initial designation of Tier 1 and Tier 2 facilities, all DMH licensed facilities, including DMH licensed units within general hospitals, are required to attest to their compliance with the Infection Control Competencies/Standards by May 27, 2020 at 11:59 p.m., as follows:

- All facilities are required to attest to their compliance with Tier 1 requirements by submitting the attached Tier 1 Attestation form. Items for attestation include:
 1. The inpatient psychiatric facility will meet daily COVID-19 reporting requirements as outlined in this bulletin.
 2. The inpatient psychiatric facility will not close a pediatric or geriatric unit without prior approval from DMH (104 CMR 27.03(23)d).
 3. The inpatient psychiatric facility will comply with [DMH Bulletin 20-04](#), dated May 20, 2020.

DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

DMH Licensing Bulletin #20-05

May 21, 2020

Page 2

4. The inpatient psychiatric facility will agree to complete facility-wide COVID-19 testing of all staff and patients in the event DMH determines such testing to be necessary.
- Facilities with the capacity to admit and treat patients who are confirmed to be positive for COVID-19 are required to attest to their compliance with Tier 2 requirements by submitting the attached Tier 2 Attestation form, in addition to the attached Tier 1 Attestation form. Additional items for attestation include:
 1. The inpatient psychiatric facility will accept patients confirmed to be infected with COVID-19 from outside the facility's own medical system.
 2. The inpatient psychiatric facility shall actively work with Tier 1 facilities to accept patients confirmed to be infected with COVID-19.
 3. The inpatient psychiatric facility will partner with DMH to flex COVID-19 capacity as needed.
 - On or before May 29, 2020 at 5:00 p.m., all facilities shall submit the following documentation supporting their respective attestations:
 - Identification of the medical facility for partnership
 - Testing plan
 - Cleaning plan (whether in house or contracted)
 - Policies / procedures and training logs around COVID-19 training for symptom checks, donning and doffing PPE, caring for patients infected with COVID-19, including checking for worsening of symptoms
 - Staffing contingency plan
 - Staff cohorting approach
 - Information on Infection Control Specialist
 - Contingency plan for assuring adequate PPE

Facilities not meeting the May 27 at 11:59 p.m. deadline may be considered for designation on a rolling basis, based on need for capacity for inpatient psychiatric services that can care for people who have tested positive for COVID-19 in the Commonwealth.

Designation: DMH will create a publicly available list of facilities designated as Tier 1 and Tier 2. Determination of facility designation as Tier 1 or Tier 2, will be based on the facility's attestation and supporting documentation as well as the facility's history of partnership in working with the Commonwealth; history of working with other facilities, history of helping with patient placement, and whether the facility meets a capacity need for treating patients who have tested positive for COVID-19, as noted above

Tier 1 and Tier 2 status are subject to ongoing compliance with all requirements outlined in this bulletin and the Infection Control Competencies/Standards, DMH Bulletin #20-04, and may be adjusted based on the capacity needs in the Commonwealth for treating patients with COVID-19.

Reporting: Starting May 27, 2020, DMH licensed facilities must submit daily COVID-19 reports by noon to DMH in a form prescribed by DMH. As of the date of this bulletin, the data elements

DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

DMH Licensing Bulletin #20-05

May 21, 2020

Page 3

to be reported are still being finalized. The survey form will be sent to all facilities by May 22, 2020, and will be linked to this bulletin for future reference as Attachment D. Required data elements are subject to change; any revisions to required data elements will be issued in a subsequent bulletin.

Verification of Compliance: A provider that attests to their compliance with the criteria established in the attached Infection Control Competencies/Standards may be subject to unannounced site visits with or without cause.

This Bulletin shall remain in effect until modified or terminated by DMH.

Attachments:

A - Tier 1 Infection Control Competencies/Standards

B - Tier 2 Infection Control Competencies/Standards

C - Tier 1 and Tier 2 Attestation Form

D - Data Reporting Form (Survey Monkey summary to be released May 22, 2020)