



## State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
DIVISION OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES  
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*Commissioner*

ROBYN WRAMAGE-CAPOROSO, MA, OT  
*Chief Executive Office*

April 2, 2020


Dear Family Member/Guardian,

As you are aware, on March 9, 2020, Governor Philip D. Murphy declared a public health emergency and State of emergency in New Jersey under Executive Order 103, followed by the federal government declaring a national emergency on March 13, 2020, regarding the rapidly evolving COVID-19 pandemic. The Department of Health's (DOH), Division of Behavioral Health Services (DBHS) has been preparing for the impact of COVID-19 on our State Psychiatric Hospitals. It is of the utmost importance to secure the safety of our employees and patients while providing continuity of care to our patients during this public health, State and national emergency.

Currently, the impact of COVID-19 has reached each of our State Psychiatric Hospitals with confirmed positive test results. Individuals in the hospitals that test positive for COVID-19 are being quarantined and/or isolated pursuant to the guidelines established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The DBHS in coordination with the NJ Department of Health and the hospitals have developed COVID-19 guidance for our hospitals, employees, and for care of patients. For example, there is established guidance for piloting Telehealth in order to maintain continuity of mental health and medical services for patients with their State Psychiatric Hospital providers. Further, the hospitals have increased sanitation procedures at the hospitals and started rotating employees offsite to the extent possible to minimize unnecessary contact with patients/patient units while still providing continuity of care. They have also obtained additional masks for use in the hospitals.

The DOH/DBHS and hospital employees remain dedicated to serving our patients during this COVID-19 public health, State and national emergency, particularly as we serve some of the State's most vulnerable populations. We continue to closely assess this emergency on a daily basis at this time and we will make changes to our guidance as needed based on the most updated information from the CDC to ensure employee and patient safety and provision of care.

Sincerely,

  
Robyn Wramage-Caporoso, MA, OT  
Chief Executive Officer