April 2020

Strategies and Resources for Maintaining Sobriety During COVID-19

Susan Halpin M.Ed.
University of Massachusetts Medical School

Et al.

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.
Follow this and additional works at: https://escholarship.umassmed.edu/ner

Part of the Library and Information Science Commons, and the Public Health Commons

Repository Citation

Creative Commons License
This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 License.
This material is brought to you by eScholarship@UMMS. It has been accepted for inclusion in National Network of Libraries of Medicine New England Region (NNLM NER) Repository by an authorized administrator of eScholarship@UMMS. For more information, please contact Lisa.Palmer@umassmed.edu.
Welcome to the Webinar

Connect to the Audio

1) Your audio box may look like this when you enter the WebEx session.

2) Click the arrow to expand the section you need (phone or computer).

3) If you want the system to call your phone, enter your phone number.

4) Test your computer audio and then click *Call Using Computer*.
Welcome to the Webinar
Strategies and Resources to Maintain Sobriety During COVID-19

This Webinar is being recorded.
To view the captions for this event click on the URL in the chat box.
Important Info About This Webinar

• Closed captioning is available, click on the Captioning link in the Chat box

• **This webinar is being recorded.** You will receive an email with a link to the webinar recording and presentation materials in about a week. You will be able to access all of the resources mentioned in this webinar as they will be included in the information we will share with the recording link.

• You will have an opportunity to ask questions during the last 15 minutes. Please use the Chat

• Medical librarians can receive 1 CE credit for attending this webinar. Completing an evaluation at the end of this webinar is required to receive CE credit.

*Anyone receiving continuing ed credits is required to complete an evaluation in order to receive CEs*

*Use the enrollment code COVID to receive CEs.*
Your Webinar Host

Susan Halpin, M.Ed.
susan.halpin@umassmed.edu
NNLM NER, Education & Outreach Coordinator
University of Massachusetts Medical School
Worcester, Massachusetts
About National Library of Medicine (NLM)

https://www.nlm.nih.gov/

Physical library is Bethesda, MD part of the NIH campus.

Largest biomedical library in the world

One of the federal government’s largest providers of digital content

The library is open to everyone

**NLM’s mission**

*Advance the progress of medicine and improve public health by making biomedical information accessible to everyone.*
NLM Outreach Program

NLM Carries Out its Mission
Through the National Network of Libraries of Medicine (NNLM)

https://nnlm.gov/

- Nationwide network of health sciences libraries, public libraries & information centers
- Each region has a partnership with a regional medical library
- Outreach provided through
  - Free access to online health & medical resources
  - Free Training & Professional Development
  - Grant funding opportunities for your community

77,000 people received training from NNLM last year!
Who is Joining Us Today?

Use the Chat Box set the “chat” to “all participants”

Name?

Where are you located?

What do you hope to learn today?
Opioid Abuse and Addiction Treatment

Summary

What are opioids?
Opioids, sometimes called narcotics, are a type of drug. They include strong prescription pain relievers, such as oxycodone, hydrocodone, fentanyl, and tramadol. The illegal drug heroin is also an opioid.

A health care provider may give you a prescription opioid to reduce pain after you have had a major injury or surgery. You may get them if you have severe pain from health conditions like cancer. Some health care providers prescribe them for chronic pain.

Prescription opioids used for pain relief are generally safe when taken for a short time and as prescribed by your health care provider. However, opioid abuse and addiction are still potential risks.

What are opioid abuse and addiction?
Opioid abuse means you are not taking the medicines according to your provider's instructions, you are using them to get high, or you are taking something else's opioids. Addiction is a chronic brain disease. It causes you to compulsively seek out drugs even though they cause you harm.

What are the treatments for opioid abuse and addiction?
Treatments for opioid abuse and addiction include
- Medicines
- Counseling and behavioral therapies
- Medication-assisted therapy (MAT), which includes medicines, counseling, and behavioral therapies. This offers a "whole patient" approach to treatment, which can increase your chance of successful recovery.

https://medlineplus.gov/opioidabuseandaddictiontreatment.html

Strategies & Resources to Maintain Sobriety During COVID-19

UMass Memorial Medical Center

Scott Pelletier, M-CTTS, LADCII, Behavioral Health Coach

Amy Nichols, CARC, CPS, Recovery Coach

John Monfredo, MA, MSW, LCSW, Sub Use Clinician

Everyday Miracles

PARTNERSHIP FOR DRUG-FREE KIDS/CENTER ON ADDICTION

Pat Aussem, Dir of Clinical Content & Development

Mass Organization Addiction Recovery MOAR

Athena Haddon, Regional Coordinator, Central Massachusetts

Michael Earielo, LADAC/CADAC, Prog Dir

Joseph Tobin, Peer Coordinator
STAY-AT-HOME RECOVERY

MANAGING AND SUPPORTING RECOVERY DURING THE COVID 19 PANDEMIC
BEHAVIORAL COPING DURING QUARANTINE  
(FROM PRESENTATION BY DR. WENDY NICKERSON)

- Structure your day
- Limit the news
- Develop sleep hygiene
- Move your body
- Stay emotionally connected
- Listen to healing music
- Morning journal
- Eat healthy meals
THE POWER OF MEDITATION
(FROM PRESENTATION BY DR. WENDY NICKERSON)

• Enhances immune system
• Increases blood flow
• Provides a sense of calm and inner peace
• Helps control thoughts
• Increases energy
• Reduces stress, depression & anxiety
MINDFULNESS MEDITATION

- Various approaches to meditation
- Online resources and apps
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sJH6_ZbgeWQ
  - www.mindful.org
  - Headspace (app)
- Refuge Recovery has online meetings and resources
  - www.refugerecovery.org
- Boundless Way Zen in Worcester has daily practice periods on Zoom
  - https://worcesterzen.org/boundless-way-zen/
THE POWER OF PHILOSOPHY

• During these difficult times philosophy as well as spirituality can offer comfort and support
  • “Prayer does not change God, but changes him who prays.”
  • “Life can only be understand backwards; but most be lived forwards.”

- Soren Kierkegard

• Stoic philosophy can offer ways to cope with stress and anxiety during the pandemic
STOIC PHILOSOPHY

“People are not disturbed by things, but by the views they take of them.”

-Epictetus
BASICS OF STOIC PHILOSOPHY

• Focus on internal locus of control
• Use of daily journaling for reflection
• Emphasis on reason and rationality
• Importance of self-discipline
• Serenity Prayer contains Stoic elements
STOIC PHILOSOPHY RESOURCES

- *Meditations* by Marcus Aurelius
  (Gregory Hayes translation)
- Stoic Apps and Websites
  - Daily Stoic  [www.dailystoic.com](http://www.dailystoic.com)
  - Stoic Mental Health Training (App)
    - [www.modernstoicism.com](http://www.modernstoicism.com)
    - [https://donaldrobertson.name/](https://donaldrobertson.name/)
      - (Online Class “How to Think Like a Roman Emperor”)
RELAXATION TECHNIQUES

• Progressive Muscle Relaxation

• Tai Chi
  • https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZxcNBejxlzS

• Qui Gong
  • https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ku3nO42k5I4

• Yoga
  • https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nw2oBlrQGLo

• Visualization Exercises
  • https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r-zA7v7aYYqY
So the opposite of addiction is not sobriety. It is human connection.

Johann Hari

So... What now?
Physical distancing will slow the spread of the virus, but research also suggests maintaining social contact and social support will have a big impact on the ultimate outcomes of this pandemic. I think a lot of sociologists wish we had a term that better conveyed that.
Tips for managing ourselves during this period

- Prepare, don’t panic.
  - From the news to social media, a lot of information is circulating about the new coronavirus.
  - Some is true, but much of it may be misinformed or only partly correct, especially as information rapidly changes.

- Equip yourself with information from credible, reputable sources
  - The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) offers information and frequent updates on COVID-19’s spread, severity, risk assessment, etc. [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)
  - The World Health Organization (WHO) [En Español] is the leading international public health organization. They direct global health responses and offer lots of resources on COVID-19. They also provide many of their resources in a variety of languages.

- Set limits on when and for how long you consume news and information, including through social media.
Safety Planning for Mental Health and Addiction

- Safety Plans (relapse prevention plans, recovery plans) provide people who are experiencing suicidal ideation, mental health issues or cravings with a specific set of concrete strategies to use in order to decrease the risk of suicidal behavior.
- The safety plans includes coping strategies that may be used and individuals or agencies that may be contacted during a crisis.
- Plans should be shared with supports.
- Plans can change and develop.
- Keep in places you will see it.
Safety Plans

Safety Plan Questions Examples:

- Warning signs (thoughts, images, mood, situation, behavior) that a crisis may be developing
- Internal coping strategies - Things I can do to take my mind off my problems without contacting another person (relaxation technique, physical activity)
- People who provide distraction
- People whom I can ask for help
- Professionals or agencies I can contact during a crisis
- Making the environment safe
- The one thing that is most important to me and worth living for is

Safety Plans


Who are your 3? Is it your sister, your therapist, or your neighbor down the street? Download this app to ensure that your 3 are there to help you when you need them most.

- Create your support system: Simply add the contact information for those who know and care about you and want to help in your time of crisis.

- Build your safety plan toolbox: List some coping strategies, people or places that can provide some distractions or comfort.

- Access the National Suicide Hotline 24/7: A crisis prevention specialist is available to help 24 hours a day 7 days a week. [https://my3app.org/#top](https://my3app.org/#top)
Personal Recovery Plan

- Personal triggers that put me at risk for using:
- How I will address each trigger:
- Ways I will increase my self-care:
- Coping skills I will learn or improve and how I will do this:
- My Relapse Prevention Strategies:
- Additional commitments that will help me stick to my Recovery Plan:
- Consequences that I agree to accept, should I break any of the above promises:
INCREASED RISK OF HARM DUE TO COVID-19

As many of us are practicing social distancing and quarantine, there are many additional risks for survivors and their safety, such as:

- **Isolation**: Abusers can use this time to further isolate survivors from their loved ones. They may also use this as a time to further restrict a survivor’s movement in person, controlling where they go and when. They might also control a survivor’s interactions online, limiting their access to the outside world.

- **Restricting Access to Information**: Abusers may also restrict access to the news and other outlets, making themselves the source of all information.

- **Increased Abuse**: The abuse may worsen during this time as survivors may be spending more time in contact with their abusers. Survivors may also experience new or different types of abuse during this time.

- **In-Person and Digital Stalking**: Abusers might try to exert their power by trying to monitor, control and stalk survivors in person and digitally.

- **Financial Abuse**: Many individuals are experiencing financial burdens due to being unable to work, and abusers may further financially exploit survivors during this time.

- **Parenting**: Survivors who co-parent their children with their abusers may be facing unique challenges during these times, such as barriers to visitation and/or increased exposure to the abuser due to lack of accessible childcare. For example, in order for a survivor to work, he/she/they may need to utilize their abuser for childcare.
SAFETY TIPS FROM SURVIVORS

1. Buddy System Code Word
2. “Safest Room”
3. Planning with Children
   - Code Words:
   - Emergency Numbers
4. Notifying the Police Before an Emergency
5. Exit Plan
6. Supplies, Food & Medication
7. Emergency Bag
8. Important Documents
9. Seeking Social Support
10. Creating a “Peaceful Space”
11. Holding onto Your Plan

https://sanctuaryforfamilies.org/safety-planning-covid19/
https://www.thehotline.org/2020/03/13/staying-safe-during-covid-19/
Multilanguage https://www.respondcrisistranslation.org/covid19-resources
Because it attacks the lungs, the coronavirus that causes COVID-19 could be an especially serious threat to those who smoke tobacco or marijuana or who vape.

People with opioid use disorder (OUD) and methamphetamine use disorder may also be vulnerable due to those drugs’ effects on respiratory and pulmonary health.

Additionally, individuals with a substance use disorder are more likely to experience homelessness or incarceration than those in the general population, and these circumstances pose unique challenges regarding transmission of the virus that causes COVID-19.
### Improving Our Physical Wellness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Think About</th>
<th>Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nutrition</strong></td>
<td>• Do you have access to fresh, healthy food? • Are you in a position to eat at home so you can better track what you are putting into your body? • Are you improving your diet by setting small goals for small changes each day, week, or month?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Check out local food co-ops if one is in your area for good, affordable food. • Visit USDA’s Choose My Plate (<a href="http://www.choosemyplate.gov">http://www.choosemyplate.gov</a>) or Food Pyramid.com (<a href="http://www.foodpyramid.com">http://www.foodpyramid.com</a>). • Meet with dietitians and nutritionists if you need help, or try programs like Weight Watchers. • Explore self-help support groups and organizations, like TOPS or Overeaters Anonymous.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical Activity</strong></td>
<td>• Are you getting regular physical activity whenever you can, and making it fun? • Have you been taking “shortcuts” to exercise, like parking further away from the store and taking the stairs instead of the elevator or escalator? • Have you identified your healthy Body Mass Index and begun working toward it, one day at a time?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Join and visit local gyms, YMCAs, and fitness clubs, or join a neighborhood pool. • Look through fitness and other magazines for exercises you can do at home. • Check out free resources, such as YouTube, to learn how to do yoga or other exercises. • Search for tracking tools like <a href="http://www.myfitnesspal.com">http://www.myfitnesspal.com</a> that will show how far you’ve come.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thinking about quitting Smoking?

The World Health Organization states:

- Smokers are likely to be more vulnerable to COVID-19 as the act of smoking means that fingers (and possibly contaminated cigarettes) are in contact with lips which increases the possibility of transmission of virus from hand to mouth. Smokers may also already have lung disease or reduced lung capacity which would greatly increase risk of serious illness.

- Smoking products such as water pipes often involve the sharing of mouth pieces and hoses, which could facilitate the transmission of COVID-19 in communal and social settings.

- Conditions that increase oxygen needs or reduce the ability of the body to use it properly will put patients at higher risk of serious lung conditions such as pneumonia.
Help to Quit Smoking

- **www.makesmokinghistory.org** - Resources and statewide information, including on e-cigarettes/vaping
- **https://www.becomeanex.org/** The Truth Initiative® offers a quit smoking website and online community.
- **http://smokefree.gov/smokefreetxt/default.aspx** Mobile text service that provides 24/7 encouragement, advice, and tips to stop smoking for good (13 years and older).
- **Smokefree.gov** The National Cancer Institute (NCI) created Smokefree.gov to help you or someone you care about quit smoking. Smokefree.gov is a part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ efforts to reduce smoking rates in the United States, particularly among certain populations.
- **NICOTINE ANONYMOUS: 12 STEP FELLOWSHIP** [www.nicotine-anonymous.org](http://www.nicotine-anonymous.org)
  - Nicotine Anonymous welcomes those seeking freedom from nicotine addiction, including those using nicotine withdrawal aids & cessation programs. The fellowship offers group support and recovery using the 12 Steps as adapted from Alcoholics Anonymous to achieve abstinence from nicotine. On-line and in-person meetings are available.
Take Advantage of Online (and tele) Resources and connections

- Staying connected during the COVID-19 pandemic is one of the best things you can do for your mental health.
- Fortunately, technology and online resources make it easy to interact with people.
- Online meetings, forums, and chat apps are a great way to engage with other people, including those who are also in recovery.
- Support Groups and providers have made great steps in moving meetings and services online and increasing tele services.
Support Groups for individuals struggling with substances

- **Narcotics Anonymous** - NA is a fellowship or society of men and women for whom drugs had become a major problem. [https://www.na.org/meetingsearch/text-results.php?country=Web&state=&city=&zip=&street=&within=5&day=0&lang=&orderby=distance](https://www.na.org/meetingsearch/text-results.php?country=Web&state=&city=&zip=&street=&within=5&day=0&lang=&orderby=distance)


- **Alcoholics Anonymous** - a 12-step based program that focuses on alcohol addiction, but many people who have struggled with other substances attend this program as well. [http://aa-intergroup.org/directory.php](http://aa-intergroup.org/directory.php)

- **Recovery Dharma** - peer-led organization that support individuals on their path of recovery from addiction using Buddhist practices and principles [http://recoverydharma.online](http://recoverydharma.online)

- **Women for Sobriety** - Organization dedicated to helping women discover recovery from Substance Use Disorders [https://wfsonline.org/](https://wfsonline.org/)
Support Groups for individuals struggling with substances

- **Life Ring** - Organization of people who share practical experiences and sobriety support. [https://www.lifering.org/online-meetings](https://www.lifering.org/online-meetings)

- **Moderation Management** - a behavioral change program and national support group network for people concerned about their drinking and who desire to make positive lifestyle changes. [http://www.moderation.org/online/listserv.html](http://www.moderation.org/online/listserv.html)

- **Cocaine Anonymous Online** - Fellowship who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others recover from their addiction. [https://www.ca-online.org/](https://www.ca-online.org/)

- **In the Rooms** is another website that has a range of online support groups. Some of the support groups they have are Narcotics Anonymous, Dual Diagnosis, Marijuana Anonymous, Codependency Anonymous, Alcoholics Anonymous, and many more. [https://www.intherooms.com/home/](https://www.intherooms.com/home/)
Tip Sheet, created by SAMHSA, describes resources that can be used to virtually support recovery from mental/substance use disorders. It also provides resources to help local recovery programs create virtual meetings.

https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/virtual-recovery-resources.pdf
Support Groups for Loved Ones

- **Nar-Anon** - a worldwide fellowship for those affected by someone else’s addiction. [https://www.naranonchat.com/](https://www.naranonchat.com/)

- Forum you can talk to other individuals who are involved with Nar-Anon: [https://www.nar-anon.org/forum/](https://www.nar-anon.org/forum/)

- **Al-Anon** - 12-step based and focus on loved ones who have alcohol use disorder. However, many times these individuals have loved one who struggle with other substances than alcohol. [https://al-anon.org/al-anon-meetings/electronic-meetings/](https://al-anon.org/al-anon-meetings/electronic-meetings/)

- **FAMILIES ANONYMOUS** is a 12 Step fellowship for the families and friends who have a loved one who struggles with drugs, alcohol, or related behavioral problems. Virtual meetings consist of E-Meetings (LISTSERV styled) and Online Meetings [https://www.familiesanonymous.org/meetings/virtual-meetings/](https://www.familiesanonymous.org/meetings/virtual-meetings/)

- **SMART Recovery Friends and Family** - SMART Recovery Family & Friends is a science-based, secular alternative to Al-Anon and Johnson Intervention. [https://www.smartrecovery.org/community/](https://www.smartrecovery.org/community/)

- **Learn to Cope** hosts an online support forum for families, friends, and loved ones who are dealing with someone in their lives who is struggling with addiction. [https://www.learn2cope.org/](https://www.learn2cope.org/)
Support Groups for Individuals with Mental Illness

- Crisis Lines offer one-on-one support and advice in times of crisis. National suicide prevention hotlines are 800.273.8255 or 800.784.2433. For Spanish speakers, call 888.628.9454. The Crisis Text Line is 741-741. County crisis lines can also be helpful (see e.g. https://namimainlinepa.org/crisis-numbers/).

- Child and Family Connections Offers online and telephone parent support group for parents who have a mental illness. www.childfamilyconnections.org

- Depression and Bipolar Support offers online support groups 3 day a week for people with mood disorders. www.dbsalliance.org

- Depression Forums is a website and bulletin board with information, links, live chat and more for people who have mood disorders. www.depressionforums.org

- Depression Understood offers forums and chatrooms for people with depression www.depression-understood.org

- GovTeen is a forum for and by teens with mental health problems and other topics. www.govteen.org

- GriefNet offers dozens of email support groups for adults and children. www.griefnet.org and www.kidsaid.com

- National Alliance on Mental Illness offers discussion groups and blog for people with mental illness and family members. www.nami.org

- OK2Talk is online blog for teens and youth to share their feelings about mental illness. www.ok2talk.org

- Psych Central Community Connection offers many different online forums related to mental health. http://forums.psychcentral.com/

- ReachOut Sponsored by SAMHSA and Inspire USA Foundation, reachout.com is a teen site with facts, real stories, support and forums. www.reachout.com

- Recovery International offers telephone and online meetings as well as online forums www.recoveryinternational.org

- Survivors of Incest Anonymous offers on-line and phone meetings for adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse www.siawso.org

- Vital Cycles offers online and phone meetings to aid in healing from trauma www.vitalcycles.org

- Warm Lines offered by counties provide one-on-one support (see e.g https://namimainlinepa.org/services-in-sepa-2/intro-to-services/help-lines-and-warm-lines/). Nationally, NAMI offers information, referrals and support through their helpline (1.800.950.NAMI or info@nami.org; https://www.nami.org/Find-Support/NAMI-HelpLine).
Support for Family Members

- Crisis Lines offer one-on-one support and advice in times of crisis. National suicide prevention hotlines are 800.273.8255. County crisis lines can also be helpful (see e.g. https://namimainlinepa.org/crisis-numbers/)

- Depression Forums is a website and bulletin board with information, links, live chat and more for people who have mood disorders. www.depressionforums.org

- National Alliance on Mental Illness offers discussion groups and blog for people with mental illness and family members. www.nami.org

- Psych Central Community Connection offers many different online forums related to mental health. http://forums.psychcentral.com/

- Warm Lines offered by counties provide one-on-one support (see e.g. https://namimainlinepa.org/services-in-sepa-2/intro-to-services/help-lines-and-warm-lines/). Nationally, NAMI offers information, referrals and support through their helpline (1.800.950.NAMI or info@nami.org; https://www.nami.org/Find-Support/NAMI-HelpLine).
Other Virtual Connection Examples

- Recovery Centers of America Alumni Association Updated List of Online Meetings & Self-Care Activities
  
  http://www.cvent.com/events/updated-schedule-of-online-recovery-meetings-and-activities/event-summary-046a3d8dfc642318eaf807eb0d7cca1.aspx?mkt_tok=eyJpIjoiWm1NME9XTmpaamhoWVRZeIsInQiOiJvYlh2eTB6Z2hvNWVVV1dZa01pdkdaM1FiWFBQQTlUUWZcL1did2UyU1lIqFlFThkVYl2hcXV2QXA0a2hScVF1Z1N4Y3oxRGhGeTA1S2xwOTBtbmw2ZkE9PSJ9

- “Unite and support employees through the COVID-19 crisis with mission-critical solutions that replace isolation with recognition, connection, and celebration. Discover Workhuman® Cloud for Free for one year.”
  

- Lists of Recovery Bloggers
  
  - https://www.thefix.com/my-top-10-recovery-blogs
  - https://thisnakedmind.com/top-25-recovery-bloggers/
Wellness Recovery Action Plan® (WRAP®) is a simple and powerful process for creating the life and wellness you want.

- Discover simple, safe, and effective tools to maintain wellness
- Develop a daily plan to stay on track with your life goals
- Identify what throws you off track and develop a plan to keep moving forward
- Gain support and stay in control even in a crisis

[https://mentalhealthrecovery.com/wrapapp/](https://mentalhealthrecovery.com/wrapapp/)
Mood Tracker allows users to monitor their moods on six pre-loaded scales (anxiety, stress, depression, brain injury, post-traumatic stress, general well-being). Custom scales can also be built. Users rate their moods by swiping a small bar to the left or to the right. The ratings are displayed on graphs to help users track their moods over time. Notes can be recorded to document daily events, medication changes and treatments that may be associated with mood changes, providing accurate information to help health care providers make treatment decisions.

The quitSTART app is a free smartphone app that helps you quit smoking with tailored tips, inspiration, and challenges.

The quitSTART app helps you:

- Get ready to quit with tips and information to prepare you for becoming smokefree
- Monitor your progress and earn badges for smokefree milestones and other achievements
- Get back on track if you slip and smoke
- Manage cravings and bad moods in healthy ways
- Distract yourself from cravings with games and challenges
- Store helpful tips, inspirations, and challenges in your Quit Kit
- Share your progress and favorite tips through social media

https://smokefree.gov/tools-tips/apps/quitstart
In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the challenges that many Americans will face in the coming months, FCC recently announced the **Keep Americans Connected Initiative**. In order to ensure that Americans do not lose their broadband or telephone connectivity as a result of these exceptional circumstances, he specifically asked broadband and telephone service providers, and trade associations, to take the Keep Americans Connected Pledge. So far, more than 700 companies and associations have signed the Chairman's pledge to Keep Americans Connected.

**For the next 60 days to:**

- not terminate service to any residential or small business customers because of their inability to pay their bills due to the disruptions caused by the coronavirus pandemic;
- waive any late fees that any residential or small business customers incur because of their economic circumstances related to the coronavirus pandemic; and
- open its Wi-Fi hotspots to any American who needs them.

[https://www.fcc.gov/keep-americans-connected](https://www.fcc.gov/keep-americans-connected)
Are There Programs Available to Help Make Internet Service More Affordable?

- **Free Comcast Xfinity internet**
  - Comcast Xfinity is currently offering its [Internet Essentials](https://www.xfinity.com/internetessentials) program free for two months to new customers. The internet provider is also automatically increasing speeds for all Internet Essentials customers.
  - Comcast Xfinity Wi-Fi hotspots are also open and free to use by anyone. [http://wifi.xfinity.com/](http://wifi.xfinity.com/)

- **Free internet for students from Charter Spectrum**
  - Households with students K-12 or university students can sign up for a new Charter Spectrum internet account to get the first two months of internet with speeds up to 100 Mbps for free. Installation fees will be waived for those who qualify for the offer. Call [1-844-488-8395](tel:1-844-488-8395) to enroll.
  - Spectrum Wi-Fi hotspots are also currently open and free to use.

- **Free internet for students from Altice**
  - Altice internet providers Suddenlink and Optimum are offering 60 days of free internet service for households with K-12 or college students. Internet speeds are up to 30 Mbps if you do not already have access to a home internet plan. To sign up, call [1-866-200-9522](tel:1-866-200-9522) if you live in an area with Optimum internet service, or call [1-888-633-0030](tel:1-888-633-0030) if you live in an area with Suddenlink internet service.

- **Free low-income internet from Cox**
  - Until May 12, 2020, Cox is offering the first month of its low-income internet program, [Connect2Compete](https://www.cox.com/services/c2c), for free. The internet service is also providing free phone and remote desktop support for technical support during that time.

Source: [https://www.highspeedinternet.com/resources/are-there-government-programs-to-help-me-get-internet-service](https://www.highspeedinternet.com/resources/are-there-government-programs-to-help-me-get-internet-service)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provider</th>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Who qualifies</th>
<th>Offer</th>
<th>How to get it</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Altice Optimum</strong></td>
<td>Internet up to 30 Mbps</td>
<td>New customers with K-12 or college students in household</td>
<td>No cost for first 60 days</td>
<td>Call 1-866-200-9522</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Altice Suddenlink</strong></td>
<td>Internet up to 30 Mbps</td>
<td>New customers with K-12 or college students in household</td>
<td>No cost for first 60 days</td>
<td>Call 1-888-633-0030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Charter Spectrum</strong></td>
<td>Internet up to 100 Mbps and no installation fees</td>
<td>New customers with K-12 or college students in household</td>
<td>No cost for first 60 days</td>
<td>Call 1-844-488-8395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Comcast Xfinity</strong></td>
<td>Internet Essentials package with speeds up to 25 Mbps</td>
<td>New Xfinity customers who are eligible to public assistance programs</td>
<td>No cost for first 60 days ($9.95/mo. after)</td>
<td>Learn more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cox</strong></td>
<td>Internet up to 15 Mbps through Connect2Compete program</td>
<td>New Cox customers with at least one K-12 student in household who qualifies for public assistance programs</td>
<td>No cost for first 30 days ($9.95/mo. after)</td>
<td>Learn more</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Phone resources

- Lifeline is a federal program that lowers the monthly cost of phone and internet. [https://www.lifelinesupport.org/](https://www.lifelinesupport.org/)

- Lifeline National Verifier [https://nationalverifier.servicenowservices.com/lifeline](https://nationalverifier.servicenowservices.com/lifeline)
Economic Impact Payments

**Coronavirus Tax Relief and Economic Impact Payments**

- Information changes daily.

- Money as a Trigger.
  - Plan for it
  - Talk to your therapist (and supports)
  - Make a budget
  - Planning for an emergency.
    - Smart about Money https://www.smartaboutmoney.org/
    - https://www.consumer.gov/
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS DUE TO THE EFFECTS OF COVID-19

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act provides financial assistance for both individuals and small businesses.

Need Help Paying Bills: needhelppayingbills.com

- Information on assistance programs, charity organizations, and resources that provide help paying bills, mortgage and debt relief (financial, rent and governmental assistance)

Aunt Bertha: www.auntbertha.com

- Online resource that connects users to free and reduced cost local resources such as medical care, food, housing, transportation, etc. Website can be converted to Spanish.

211 / 211.org

- Referrals to agencies and community organizations that offer emergency financial assistance
- To access: Dial 211 from any phone, or Visit 211.org and search for contact information by zip code Website can be converted to Spanish.

HelpWhenYouNeedIt: www.helpwhenyouneedit.org

- Nationwide listings of private and public resources for food pantries, stores that accept food stamps, assisted living facilities, domestic violence and homeless shelters, mental health and substance use treatment, free clinics and legal and financial assistance

Help with Bills: usa.gov/help-with-bills

- Information about government programs that help with bill payment, temporary assistance, jobs/unemployment, credit, etc. Website and Helpline also offered in Spanish.
Basic Human Needs Resources – including food and clothing banks, shelters, rent assistance, and utility assistance.

Physical and Mental Health Resources – including health insurance programs, Medicaid and Medicare, maternal health resources, health insurance programs for children, medical information lines, crisis intervention services, support groups, counseling, and drug and alcohol intervention and rehabilitation.

Work Support – including financial assistance, job training, transportation assistance and education programs.

Access to Services in Non-English Languages - including language translation and interpretation services to help non-English-speaking people find public resources (Foreign language services vary by location.)

Support for Older Americans and Persons with Disabilities – including adult day care, community meals, respite care, home health care, transportation and homemaker services.

Children, Youth and Family Support – including child care, after-school programs, educational programs for low-income families, family resource centers, summer camps and recreation programs, mentoring, tutoring and protective services.

Suicide Prevention – referral to suicide prevention help organizations.

www.211.org
COVID-19 Resources for Families

Patricia Aussem
Director of Clinical Content and Development

Center on Addiction
Partnership for Drug-Free Kids
Connect with a Specialist

Get one-on-one help

Learn more about our Parent Helpline and how we can help.

Servicio disponible en Español.

TEXT 55753
Text your question to 55753
You will receive a response within 24 hours.

Send an Email
Request help over email
You will receive a response within 24 hours.

Call 1-855-378-4373
Speak with a Specialist
M-F: 9am - Midnight ET,
Weekends: 12pm - 5pm ET
Work with a Peer Parent Coach

• Peer-to-peer program, by which a parent seeking help is paired with a specially-trained parent volunteer with lived experience.
• Five, one-hour telephone calls over 5 to 6 weeks
• Support, education, parenting skills and resources
• Accessed through the helpline

"I wish I would have found this program years ago. It's so isolating when you can't talk to anyone -- no one in my life is going through this -- and my Parent Coach was an amazing resource.” Parent Coaching participant
Text COVID to 55753

- Text messages of emotional support, education, and resources
- “Learn”, “Use”, “MAT”, and “Treat” to further personalize experience. Examples include:

Your child may still be leaving the house to get their substance of choice, even during this time. Spend time with them and discuss ahead of time some of the consequences if they choose to go outside. Deciding on those consequences depends on your family and what's best for you. If you are concerned about this, text "CHAT" to speak with a specialist. If you suspect or know this is happening but have little control over the situation, do everything you can to protect them when they leave the house.

If there is an overdose, emergency transportation may be quite limited due to coronavirus. Naloxone is a life-saving medication that reverses the effects of an opioid overdose. Find pharmacies and prices near you: https://helphope.net/2xNI8mr and click here to learn more about naloxone https://helphope.net/2X2oRbD.
Join our Online Support Community

• One-hour Zoom meetings hosted by clinicians and specially trained parent coaches.
• Support and connection as well as guidance on addressing substance use in the home, accessing treatment and ensuring continuous care during this crisis.

Mondays, 7pm ET / 4pm PT: All Parents & Caregivers
Tuesdays, 7pm ET / 4pm PT: Parents & Caregivers of Adult Children
Wednesdays, 8pm ET / 5pm PT: Parents & Caregivers of Teen Children
Saturdays, 12pm ET / 9am PT: All Parents & Caregivers
• **How to Use Naloxone**  
The stress of COVID-19 can increase the risk of an overdose. It’s important to have naloxone (also known as Narcan), a medication designed to rapidly reverse opioid overdose, on hand.

• **Help Accessing Critical Medications for Your Loved One**  
If your loved one is considering or using pharmacotherapy to treat their opioid use disorder, we have guidance to help ensure there is no lapse in care or medication due to COVID-19 circumstances.

• **Special Considerations When Seeking Substance Use Treatment During COVID-19**  
Many treatment programs are still open and accepting patients. We’ve compiled a list of important questions to ask any potential providers in light of COVID-19.

• **COVID-19 is a Good Reason to Help Your Child Quit (or Never Start) Vaping**  
Some experts have drawn a connection between vaping and COVID-19. If you’ve previously asked your child to quit or cut back without the result you’d hoped for, now is a good time to try again.
COVID-Related Articles (drugfree.org)

• **In a Time of Disruption, Protecting Your Child from the Risks of Substance Use**
  What can parents and other caregivers do to reduce the potential that children – who are feeling frustrated, isolated and bored – might engage in substance use?

• **Welcoming An Adult Child Back Home Because of COVID-19**
  Is your adult-aged child back home unexpectedly? We recommend a conversation about shared expectations.

• **Online & Remote Resources for Addiction Support**
  Our digital age enables connection and support to continue in this time of social distancing. We’ve compiled a list of support options for individuals and families alike, offered by a variety of other organizations and institutions.
Stay Tuned – Upcoming Articles

• COVID + substance use = a recipe for more anxiety
• When the family becomes the treatment provider
• Finding quality telehealth for SUD
• More symptomatic? Addressing co-occurring disorders
• Is alcohol use spiking in your home?

Email: paussem@centeronaddiction.org
The Importance of Peer Recovery During COVID-19

Michael Eariello,
Program Director
Everyday Miracles, Worcester, MA

Joseph Tobin
Peer Coordinator
Everyday Miracles, Worcester, MA

Everyday Miracles
http://www.everydaymiraclesprsc.org/

See their FaceBook page for virtual activities available to everyone:

• Book Club
• Recovery Meetings
The MOAR Mission:
To organize recovering individuals, families and friends into a collective voice to educate the public about the value of recovery from alcohol and other addictions.

The MOAR Vision:
MOAR envisions a society where addiction is treated as a public health issue and recovery is recognized as valuable to all our communities.
Setting Up A Centralized Platform

- Setting support coordination for recovery / homeless service programs
- Rental assistance for people in sober homes
- Assistance with food, laundry, security, transportation
- Support for people who work in treatment, moved away from family so not to infect them
- Support for families, who may be caring for the person, children, grandchildren
- IT Support and training for Virtual Recovery and Support Meetings for recovery centers and groups like MOAR
Homelessness, Addiction, and Mental Health

A support hotline for those experiencing homelessness and their providers to offer information, coordination maybe through MassHelpline (has been done in Kings County WA)

More overnight shelters equipped to help those who are still using

More overnight shelters to support those in early recovery with nowhere to go (such as the current plan of using hotels, unused medical space)

Training in mental health and addiction for workers
Treatment

- Expedited training and support for needed new workers in non-traditional sites
- Expedited training and support for needed workers in traditional sites (Need funding to support)
- COVID-19 specific detox, CSS, TSS, and residential screening, initiating and maintaining people on medications offering access to recovery support services.
- Individual and Family Recovery Support Service Linkage
- Linkages to MOAR and the recovery centers are serving to provide at minimum virtual support – which shows how important they are
- Expedited workforce training and support from on the ground harm reduction to recovery coach to counseling
Treatment

With actual hands on training of how to cope from CORI to relationships,

Recovery Support linkage from detox to CSS to TSS to residential

Phones and internet support for people to be in touch with recovery support

State coordination offering free mental telehealth (this is being done in NY)

All support services paid for by health insurance, public and private

Integrated care team support of health, addiction, mental health inclusive of recovery coaching support services.

Mental Health and Addiction Training for all
Questions for the Panel

Address your question to one or all of our panelists.

Use the Chatbox
Contact Information
for Webinar Presentation Panel

Scott Pelletier  scott.pelletier@umassmemorial.org

Amy Nichols   amy.Nichols@umassmemorial.org

John Monfredo  John.monfredo@umassmemorial.org

Micheal Earielo  michael.earielo@spectrumhealthsystems.org

Joseph Tobin  joseph.tobin@spectrumhealthsystem.org

Pat Aussem  paussem@centeronaddiction.org

Athena Haddon  Athena@moar-recovery.org
Thank you to our Webinar Panel Scott, John, Amy, Michael, Joseph, Pat and Athena

For MLA and Nursing continuing education credit, you must complete a webinar evaluation. For Nursing CE credit check this link bit.ly/2xIGm6o

We value your feedback, please help us continue to improve by completing the evaluation.

enrollment code: COVID
How to Claim CE Credit with MLA Enrollment Code

At the end of the class, we shared a URL to the class evaluation. After you complete the evaluation, you will be asked if you want CE credit. If you say Yes, an enrollment code will display on the page along with a direct link to MEDLIB-ED, the Medical Library Association’s (MLA) clearinghouse for CE classes and credit. Follow the link to MEDLIB-ED, log in (or register if this is your first time), and claim your credit. Complete instructions are below. You don’t have to be a member of MLA to create an account and claim credit.