

# COVID-19 RESPONSE PLAN



## **PREFACE**

Bridges of Indiana supports people who are vulnerable to Coronavirus (COVID-19) due to co-morbidities. Employees should start preparing now. Through education and the implementation of best practice guidelines, Bridges of Indiana can impact due to illness and stop or slow the spread of COVID-19 if it arrives at one of our service locations.

## **PERSONAL PREPARADNESS**

1. Clean your hands often with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60-95% alcohol or wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Soap and water should be used if hands are visibly dirty or touching other contaminated objects when you can't immediately wash your hands.
2. Practice Social Distancing by keeping a distance of 6 feet from others when possible. Avoid public gatherings such as movies, concerts, and church or community meetings when possible. Isolation and quarantine are also part of social distancing. They are standard healthcare practices used to control the spread of a contagious disease such as pandemic flu by limiting people's exposure to it.
3. Routinely clean all frequently touched surfaces in the workplace, such as workstations, countertops, and doorknobs. Use the cleaning agents that are usually used in these areas and follow the directions on the label.

## **SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS**

COVID-19 can be challenging to distinguish from other viral respiratory tract infections on clinical signs alone. People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

1. Cough
2. Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
3. Fever
4. Chills
5. Muscle pain
6. Sore throat
7. New loss of taste or smell
8. Children have similar symptoms to adults and generally have mild illness. This list is not all-inclusive. Other less common symptoms have been reported, including gastrointestinal symptoms like nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.

Clinical signs and symptoms may worsen with progression to lower respiratory tract disease in the second week of illness; all patients should be monitored closely. Possible risk factors for progressing to severe illness may include but are not limited to older age and underlying chronic medical conditions.



# COVID-19 RESPONSE PLAN

## MONITORING AND SURVEILLANCE

### Monitoring Employees

When possible, it is strongly recommended employees screen themselves prior to attending every shift for fever of 100 degrees or higher. This only applies to Consumers whom Bridges of Indiana is responsible for managing the individuals' healthcare. If an employee presents a temperature of 100 degrees or higher, the employee should report to their supervisor immediately, who will be responsible for finding coverage for the shift. The employee will be put on a 14-day unpaid leave to self-quarantine to ensure the safety of our Consumers and other employees who also work in the home. Regional Operations Director should inform Director of Risk Management of any employee who is put on the unpaid 14-day quarantine.

### Monitoring Consumers

In the event a Consumer presents any Symptoms of COVID-19 (CV-19), the Regional Operations Director should contact the Consumer's primary care physician to consultant and discuss findings. In addition, Regional Operations Director should also contact [covidhelp@bridges.us](mailto:covidhelp@bridges.us) and disclose the following information:

1. Symptoms present in Consumer
2. When they occurred (should be reported immediately but if there was any delay in communication, please disclose this information)
3. Complete the Consumer/Employee Direct Exposure Tree form. All employees that have worked in the house of a Consumer showing symptoms should be isolated to only work with that Consumer. In addition, no new employees should be introduced to the home. Isolation continues for at least 14 days or until the Consumer is able to get tested for CV-19 and presents negative results.
4. All test results positive or negative for CV-19 should be sent to [Covidhelp@bridges.us](mailto:Covidhelp@bridges.us) upon receipt.

### SHIFT PROCEDURES (upon the start of service and beginning of a shift)

Bridges of Indiana provides a variety of services in several different settings. COVID-19 impacts the following services and subsequent staffing:

1. Residential Support (Community Integration and Habilitation Waiver)
2. Intermittent Services (Family Support Waiver/Aging and Disabled Waiver/Traumatic Brain Injury Waiver)
3. Therapy Services in each waiver
4. Intake and admissions
5. Transportation Services

### Residential Supports (Community Integration and Habilitation Waiver)

1. Direct Support Professionals (DSP) releasing oncoming DSP's to work their shift conducts the following on the Bridges of Indiana's screening form.
  - a. On Shift, DSP asks oncoming DSP the following questions
    - i. Is the incoming DSP's temperature above 100°?

# COVID-19 RESPONSE PLAN



- ii. Have you been around anyone with symptoms?
  - iii. Have you been around anyone positive for COVID-19?
  - iv. Are you symptomatic (refer to symptoms listed above)?
- b. Screen form is completed during every shift change for the oncoming DSP ONLY.
  - c. Screen forms are obtained from the residential homes by the Consumer Services Field Supervisor and sent to the Director of Risk Management for further review/storage.
  - d. If the oncoming DSP answers "Yes" to any of the above questions, the Consumer Services Field Supervisor/Regional Operations Director or on-call phone if after hours must be contacted immediately.

## **Intermittent Services - Family Support Waiver (FSW), Aging & (A & D Wavier), TBI Waiver**

1. Oncoming Direct Support Professionals (DSP) need to question the appropriate personnel (family members, parents, Consumers, etc.) if anyone in the home has present symptoms related to COVID-19.
  - a. Is the incoming DSP's temperature above 100°?
  - b. Have you been around anyone with symptoms?
  - c. Have you been around anyone positive for COVID-19?
  - d. Are you symptomatic (refer to symptoms listed above)?
2. If symptoms are reported to be present, the DSP needs to call their Consumer Services Field Supervisor (CSFS)/Regional Operations Director or on-call if after hours immediately before initiating services.

## **Transportation Services**

1. Van drivers providing transportation services for Bridges of Indiana consumers must complete the COVID-19 screening form before transporting.
  - a. COVID-19 Screen Form
    - i. Is the Consumer's temperature above 100 degrees?
    - ii. Has the Consumer been around anyone with symptoms?
    - iii. Has the Consumer been around anyone positive for COVID-19?
    - iv. Is the consumer symptomatic (refer to symptoms listed above)?
  - b. The screening form is completed on every Consumer during every transport by the van driver on shift.
  - c. Screening forms are obtained from the vans from the Consumer Services Field Supervisor and sent to the Director of Risk Management for further review/storage.
  - d. If consumer answers Yes to any of the above questions, the Consumer Services Field Supervisor is contacted immediately.

# COVID-19 RESPONSE PLAN



## **Therapy Services (Music and Behavior Support)**

1. When at all possible, telehealth tools should be used to provide therapy services.
2. Bridges of Indiana Personnel need to ask the following questions before initiating services
  - a. Has anyone in the home presented symptoms related to COVID-19
  - b. Is the Consumer's temperature above 100 degrees?
  - c. Has the Consumer been around anyone with symptoms?
  - d. Has the Consumer been around anyone positive for COVID-19?
  - e. Is the consumer symptomatic (refer to symptoms listed above)?
3. If Symptoms are present, all services should be canceled that Bridges of Indiana provides until the household is asymptomatic for 72 hours.
  - a. Therapists are required to document the answers provided to them in their progress notes.

## **Intake Meeting**

1. When at all possible, telehealth tools should be used to conduct intake meetings.
2. Bridges of Indiana Personnel need to ask the following questions before initiating services
  - a. Has anyone in the home presented symptoms related to COVID-19
  - b. Is the Consumer's temperature above 100 degrees?
  - c. Has the Consumer been around anyone with symptoms?
  - d. Has the Consumer been around anyone positive for COVID-19?
  - e. Is the consumer symptomatic (refer to symptoms listed above)?
3. If symptoms are present, all intake meeting should be rescheduled until the household is asymptomatic for 72 hours.

## **BOI Health Care Coordination**

Bridges of Indiana provides health care coordination for people throughout Indiana. Where Bridges of Indiana is the health care coordinator, and in response to a single case of influenza or an illness similar or influenza in a person supported, staff should do the following:

1. The staff on duty should immediately contact on-call and notify the manager on duty of the emerging symptoms.
2. The CSFS and/or ROD shall contact the primary healthcare provider and tell them that the individual has or may have COVID-19.
3. Isolate the infected person supported and minimize interaction with other people supported and staff.
4. Seek prompt medical attention if the illness is worsening (e.g., difficulty breathing).
  - a. Before seeking care, call your healthcare provider and tell them that the individual may have, or are being evaluated for, COVID-19. If a Consumer needs to be seen, have them put on a facemask



## COVID-19 RESPONSE PLAN

before they enter the facility. These steps will help the healthcare provider's office to keep other people in the office or waiting room from getting infected or exposed.

5. If they have a medical emergency and need to call 911, notify the dispatch personnel that the individual may have, or are being evaluated for, COVID-19. If possible, put on a facemask before emergency medical services arrive.

### TREATMENT

There is no specific antiviral treatment recommended for COVID-19. People with most cases of COVID-19 should receive supportive care to help relieve symptoms as they would for other respiratory viral illnesses such as:

1. Drink plenty of liquids. Choose water, juice, and warm soups to prevent dehydration.
2. Rest. Get more sleep to help the immune system fight infection. Individuals may need to change their activity level, depending on the symptoms.
3. Consider Fever & pain relievers. Use an over-the-counter pain reliever, such as acetaminophen (Tylenol, others) or ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin 1B, others), to combat the achiness associated with the virus.
4. For severe cases, treatment will occur in a hospital.

### STAFFING

Staffing is a critical issue for Bridges of Indiana. Bridges of Indiana will attempt to maintain standard staffing until such time the outbreak results in excessive absences. The agency will strive to provide care using existing staffing resources because of the differing nature of each residential setting, as well as the fluidity of the current situation. Staffing responses will be individually tailored to each location and its unique needs. If Bridges of Indiana personnel are experiencing symptoms related to COVID-19 (listed above), the employee MUST contact their direct supervisor immediately before arriving on shift.

When a person served in a 24/7 setting tests positive for COVID-19, the following should take place:

1. Once isolation measures are in place, to further reduce the risk of transmission, it is preferable to allocate specific (non-symptomatic/vaccinated) staff to the care of person supported.
2. Staff members should self-monitor for signs and symptoms of respiratory illness and self-exclude from work if unwell.
3. When influenza-like illness is apparent, COVID-19 can be spread within a location by non-symptomatic staff, who should work only if well. Non-symptomatic staff exposed staff should not work with individuals who have not had a confirmed exposure or illness.
4. Creative staffing may be necessary should the agency be overwhelmed with absences.

### INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL/TRANSMISSION

Vital elements for Infection controlling:

1. Social distancing
2. Develop harm-reduction habits like pushing buttons with a knuckle and not touching the face
3. Flu vaccination

# COVID-19 RESPONSE PLAN



4. Hand hygiene before and after personal care activities
5. Use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE)
6. Regular cleaning
7. Increased cleaning of shared equipment

The approaches for slowing down transmission include quarantine and isolation of known or highly suspected cases, social distancing (canceling gatherings such as meetings, concerts, schools, etc.) and proper hygiene (covering your cough by coughing into your elbow, hand washing, etc.).

## **STANDARD PRECAUTIONS**

Social distancing is a strategy where you try to avoid crowded places, large gatherings of people, or close contact with a group of people. In these situations, viruses can quickly spread from person to person. In general, a distance of 6 feet will slow the spread of a disease, but more distance is more effective.

## **VISTOR RESTRICTIONS**

During an outbreak, Bridges of Indiana, in conjunction with the individual's IDT, may limit or minimize the attendance of visitors into and within the service locations. Virtual Visits can be arranged at most locations.

## **CLEANING & ENVIRONMENTAL DECONTAMINATION**

Clean frequently touched surfaces and objects daily (e.g., tables, countertops, light switches, doorknobs, and cabinet handles) using regular household detergent and water.

1. First, clean dirt off the surface. Then wipe the surface with disinfectant. Leave the surface you are cleaning wet with disinfectant for as many minutes as the product instructions require.
2. Clean high-touch areas such as door handles, phones, remote controls, light switches, and bathroom fixtures.
3. Clean horizontal surfaces such as countertops, kitchen tables, desktops, and other places where cough droplets could land frequently.
4. Follow standard procedures for cleaning and disinfecting with an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) registered disinfectant with a claim for human coronaviruses.

## **CARE OF PERSON SUPPORTED**

The level of care to be provided to people served during a pandemic is dependent upon the staffing levels required and the specific needs of each individual. Bridges of Indiana will continue to ensure all essential requirements of the individual are met. This includes but is not limited to the following:

1. Medication administration
2. Personal hygiene and grooming may be modified depending on staff availability
3. Oral care
4. Ongoing assessment of care needs
5. Clothing and bedding will be changed as needed.

# COVID-19 RESPONSE PLAN



6. Routine toileting and continence care will be based upon the person's individual need to maintain skin integrity.
7. Assistance with eating as needed.
8. Maintain regular communication with the relatives and decision-makers of the person served to keep them updated and reassured about the situation and discourage unwarranted visiting.
9. Non-urgent medical appointments will be canceled and rescheduled.
10. Person Supported with acute respiratory infections will automatically be isolated in a designated area.
11. All persons supported with Acute respiratory infections will be requested to remain to their rooms or the designated area.

## **RIGHTS OF PERSONS SUPPORTED DURING PANDEMIC EVENTS**

As it relates to services provided by Bridges of Indiana, every individual's fundamental rights remain intact during a pandemic event. Quarantine and isolation should be voluntary whenever possible and when that is impossible. They should be enforced by the least intrusive means available. The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) guidelines cite two important principles designed to help ensure that those in quarantine are not placed at increased risk:

1. Quarantined individuals will be closely monitored to detect the earliest onset of symptoms and separation from those who are well.
2. People in isolation will be among the first to receive any disease-prevention interventions. In addition, the HHS plan recommends that they should be provided with all needed support services, including psychological support, food and water, and household and medical supplies. Rights restrictions will only be enforced when directed by public health or other medical professionals and approved by the IDT.

## **SUPPLIES AND STOCKPILES**

Access to essential supplies may be disrupted. Bridges of Indiana will maintain an inventory of PPE, as available from medical supply agencies.

## **FOOD/ PERSONAL ITEMS**

Per current policy, Bridges of Indiana will maintain at a minimum a three-day inventory for current census of food and water and other medical supplies, such as incontinent care products. Ideally a two-week inventory of foods should be maintained, if feasible. Canned foods that have a long storage life and need little or no cooking are recommended. Meat products, fish or beans, soups, broths and stews, fruits and fruit juices, vegetables, canned (or powdered) milk, are among good supply choices. For COVID-19, we do not expect the utilities (electrical grid & water) to be impacted, so frozen foods are an option, too. Other recommended foods are peanut butter, jelly, crackers, nuts, trail mix, dried fruits, granola bars, bouillon cubes, and staples like sugar, salt, pepper. (Keep in mind you may need to include some special foods for individuals on special diets.)

# COVID-19 RESPONSE PLAN



Water and liquids. It is suggested to have plenty of fluids on hand, such as bottled water and supply of fluids with electrolytes, such as Pedialyte or Gatorade. Minimum water is one gallon per person (project staff needs as well). Again, the water utilities probably will not be impacted but you will need drinks with electrolytes for hydration of individuals that may be infected.

## **MEDICATIONS**

Bridges of Indiana staff should order as much medication as allowed, and typically, a 30-day supply is provided. Individuals will want to have a minimum of a 14-day supply of any prescription medications. Preferable up to a 60-day supply for this event, if allowable. You may also want over-the-counter pain relievers, antacids, cough, and cold medicines, and vitamins stocked.

## **PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT**

Bridges of Indiana will do its best to supply each service location with an adequate supply of personal protective equipment (PPE) to staff, and persons supported, as needed and requested. The PPE must always be readily available and accessible to staff during a suspected outbreak, heightened surveillance, and declared outbreaks. Bridges of Indiana personnel are also allowed to bring their own PPE into their shifts.