



# Tools for Behavioral Health Professionals During a Public Health Crisis

*Engaging in wellness strategies and knowing the signs of burnout are critical.*

A public health crisis can cause distress for all involved, including providers of behavioral health services. Attending to your personal wellbeing during this time is just as important as supporting the individuals you serve. Providers are encouraged to be aware of the toll that working with others in distress can have on their own mental wellbeing.

## THE ABCs OF WELLNESS



### AWARENESS

Being aware of and present with what you're doing while you're doing it.

- Be Mindful
- Journal
- Meditate
- Practice Gratitude

#### USEFUL APPS\*

- Insight Timer
- Smiling Mind
- 365 Gratitude Journal



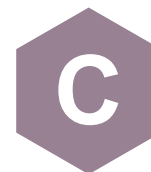
### BALANCE

Balancing your personal needs with the demands of your work.

- Drink Water
- Walk Outside
- Stretch
- Avoid Information Overload

#### USEFUL APPS\*

- Calm
- Daily Water
- Yoga Wake Up



### CONNECTION

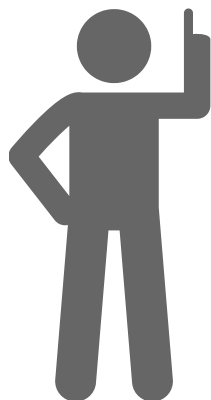
Maintaining a network of social support with people you care about.

- Call, Video Chat or Text
- Friends or Family
- Share Experiences

#### USEFUL APPS\*

- GroupMe
- Houseparty
- Netflix Party

## KNOW THE SIGNS OF BURNOUT



**Be mindful of your own experience and notice if you are feeling overwhelmed.**

- Feeling helpless or hopeless
- Change in sleeping or eating patterns
- Increased emotional isolation
- Feelings of guilt
- Feeling fearful
- Feelings of anger or cynicism
- Extreme exhaustion or fatigue
- Experiencing intense emotions
- Minimizing or dismissing others' concerns
- Difficulty empathizing
- Challenges listening to others
- Increased alcohol, tobacco, or substance use

If you need help due to overwhelming sadness, depression, anxiety, or feelings that you want to harm yourself or others, reach out.

#### SAMHSA's Disaster Distress Helpline

800-985-5990

Text Talk with Us to 66746

TTY 800-846-8517

#### SAMHSA's National Helpline

800-662-HELP

#### National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

800-273-TALK

TTY 800-799-4TTY (4889)

## SUPPORTING YOUR STAFF

1

### STAYING POSITIVE

Encourage staff to schedule time for stress-reducing activities (See ABCs of Wellness)

Take the time to acknowledge good work among your staff - keep this in mind despite competing demands

Help staff capture reminders of their purpose and why they do this critical work

2

### SUPPORTING EACH OTHER

Schedule a daily check-in with staff individually or as a team and assist with prioritizing tasks

Encourage staff working remotely to connect with colleagues regularly via phone, text, or video

Consider developing a peer network or buddy system among staff to minimize isolation

3

### STAFF SCHEDULES

Provide staff flexible schedules to balance work, personal, and family responsibilities

Maintain staff members' boundaries by not expecting them to be available 24/7

Have staff communicate the hours they're available clearly to service participants/clients

4

### BENEFITS AVAILABLE

Offer remote meeting with your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to inform staff of services

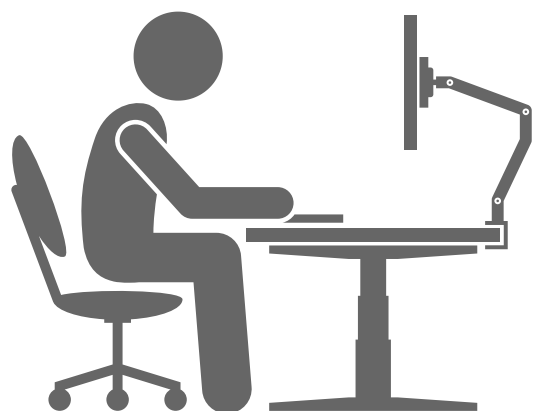
Educate staff on mental health benefits of agency-provided insurance

Share staff wellness resources and create opportunities for mutual support on regular basis

## REMOTE COMMUNICATION & TELEHEALTH

Telehealth is the use of electronic information and telecommunications technologies to support and promote long-distance clinical health care, patient and professional health-related education, and public health and health administration. Telehealth services may be provided, for example, through audio, text messaging, or video communication technology, including videoconferencing software.

*During the COVID-19 nationwide public health emergency, the HHS Office of Civil Rights has suspended enforcement of HIPAA and are waiving penalties with the good faith provision of telehealth.*



#### Technologies for Telehealth\*

- Zoom
- MegaMeeting Telemedicine
- VSee
- doxy.me

#### HIPAA Compliant Texting Tools\*

- GoMo Health
- TigerText
- Qliqsoft

#### Additional Support\*

- National Consortium of Telehealth Resource Centers

\*Note: Inclusion or mention of a resource in this fact sheet is meant to provide an example and does not imply endorsement by the Northeast and Caribbean MHTTC.

Access Reliable Information: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) | [samhsa.gov/coronavirus](http://samhsa.gov/coronavirus)