



State of Louisiana
Louisiana Department of Health
Office of Aging and Adult Services

MEMORANDUM

OAAS-SC-20-001

TO: OAAS Support Coordination Agencies

FROM: Sherlyn Sullivan 
OAAS Interim Assistant Secretary

DATE: March 18, 2020

SUBJECT: **Alternate Contact Guidance Due to Coronavirus Disease 2019 Public Health Emergency**

This memo provides guidance regarding alternate contact requirements for Support Coordination Agencies working with Adult Day Health Care (ADHC) Waiver and Community Choices Waiver (CCW) participants. This guidance is in response to the Public Health Emergency declared due to the spread of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) and is applicable to all OAAS Support Coordination Agencies (SCAs). This guidance will remain in place until stated otherwise via written memorandum issued by Office of Aging and Adult Services (OAAS).

Statewide Alternate SC Contact Requirements for Existing Participants:

- Monthly phone contacts will continue as per policy, including monthly monitoring. The outcome of the monitoring must be documented following current procedures.
- Quarterly face-to-face visits may be conducted over the telephone.
- For participants with a Plan of Care (POC) ending on or after March 27, 2020 and until further notice:
 - The annual Plan of Care (POC) meeting must be conducted over the telephone for **participants whose needs are being met with the current level of services**. The updated annual POC must include the same level of services currently authorized, or less, if requested by the participant. POC narrative sections, emergency plan and back up plans need to be updated and reflective of the participant's current requests/needs/goals/preferences. The MDS-HC will not be completed. Signatures may be obtained verbally.
 - For those **participants whose current level of services are not meeting their needs, (annual or status change) the SC may request an increase of services over the participant's RUG Allocation for a period of 120 calendar days**. Examples of instances where needs are not being met may include, but are not limited to, participants that have experienced serious,

Alternate Contact Guidance Due to Coronavirus Disease 2019 Public Health Emergency

March 18, 2020

Page 2

life-threatening critical incidents, frequent and serious critical incidents in the last 90-120 calendar days, participants that have experienced a substantial change in status, or participants that have expressed and have evidence of marked difficulty in meeting needs due to insufficient support. The MDS-HC assessment will not be completed.

- SC will conduct a meeting over the telephone to gather the specific needs and complete a revised POC, budget and schedule.
 - SC will submit the documents to support the temporary increase to RO.
 - RO will review the request and email the SCA an approval or denial.
 - If approved, the SCA will submit the revision (POC, budget/schedule) to increase the CCW services to the CCW maximum for a period of 120 calendar days to SRI.
 - Signatures may be obtained verbally.
- Revisions for transitions from NF to the community, change of providers, change in schedule, etc. should continue to be completed. Signatures may be obtained verbally.
 - For nursing facility transitions that require face-to-face (moving day for example), collaborate with the Transition Coordinator to ensure the needs of the participant are met.

Alternate SC Contact Requirements for Linked but not Certified Participants:

- All new offers and linkages for CCW or ADHC Waivers, with the exception of Expedited CCW, will be temporarily suspended until further notice.
 - For expedited CCW offers, the last MDS-HC assessment on file can be used for SHARe Allocation determination and care planning, along with information from RO, if RO completed a face-to-face.
- For currently linked **initial ADHC Waiver or CCW offers**, face-to-face assessment and care planning meetings **are suspended in the following regions:**
 - Region 1
 - Region 9
 - OAAS will communicate daily with the Office of Public Health for guidance on suspension of additional regions and/or parishes. OAAS will communicate these to SCAs upon notification of OPH.
 - For participants that the SCA has already completed the MDS-HC assessment, the certification process needs to continue. The care plan meeting must be completed over the phone and the certification/approval process finalized. Signatures must be obtained but can be mailed or emailed to the participant, along with those participating in the telephone care planning meeting.

Alternate Contact Guidance Due to Coronavirus Disease 2019 Public Health Emergency

March 18, 2020

Page 3

- **For all other regions, SCAs shall continue to complete the initial face-to-face MDS-HC assessment.**
 - The SC must contact the participant prior to the face-to-face meeting and screen for any presence of illness or exposure noted above, following the notification to RO procedures outlined in this memo.
 - The care plan meeting must be completed over the phone and the certification/approval process finalized. Signatures must be obtained but can be mailed or emailed to the participant, along with those participating in the telephone care planning meeting.

COVID-19 Screening and Documentation:

Support coordinators should contact participants by phone prior to any face-to-face meeting and screen for conditions described below. Support coordinators should not proceed with face-to-face meeting if the conditions are below are applicable to the participant or a household member. Agencies should also apply these criteria and precautions to their employees.

SCs as a part of all contacts with participants, should follow up on the participant's health, specifically COVID-19 symptoms or exposure. Should a participant or a member of their household **exhibit symptoms of being ill; fever over 100.4 F, cough and/or shortness of breath/difficulty breathing, or, the participant has been in contact with a laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 patient;** the SCA shall provide the following documentation to the OAAS Regional Office (RO) within 24 hours of notification. The participant's record must include the following documentation using the Support Coordination Documentation (SCD) Log:

- The date notification of illness was received;
- The symptoms exhibited, or, indication of COVID-19 exposure;
- Complete critical incident reporting as per procedure;
- A narrative regarding the phone contact as per usual documentation procedures;
- Documentation to identify the date symptoms or illness no longer present, or, when isolation period is over (as applicable).

SCAs need to be prepared to follow and apply the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidance for employers/employees regarding office sick leave procedures. In addition, SCAs need to also apply their own sick leave policies and procedures with staff.

In closing, OAAS recognizes that this is an unprecedented event; therefore, instructions and guidance may change pending federal and state guidance regarding COVID-19. OAAS would like to thank all of staff at the Support Coordination Agencies for your hard work and dedication to supporting the OAAS waiver participants.

If you have further questions, please contact your OAAS Regional Office.

c: Medicaid Program Support and Waivers
OAAS Regional Offices
Statistical Resources Inc. (SRI)