

Beaverbrook STEP, Inc.

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April 7, 2020

Dear Individuals, Staff, Families, Guardians and Members of our Community,

As we continue to navigate our way through this most difficult challenge, we at Beaverbrook STEP would like to take this moment to reiterate our commitment to keeping our residential programs open and our day services operational remotely. We have been implementing alternative programming to our residents in order to provide as much interaction and skill building as possible during this crisis. Families are connecting with their loved ones via technology; virtual activities are being conducted, including Zumba, exercises and music through Zoom and other platforms; staff from our day services have been redeployed to offer direct support; and contact is continuing between management, staff, families and other entities through our weekly email and teleconference updates. We will continue to ensure that all of our participants and staff are provided the highest level of support possible over the undetermined number of weeks ahead and utilize every means possible to keep everyone safe and healthy during that time.

Our leadership team has been in regular contact with the CDC, DDS, DPH and other state and federal entities to stay informed of the myriad recommendations, guidelines and policy changes as they unfold. This guidance is ever changing and requires patience and collaboration on multiple fronts to ensure compliance. We assure you that all levels of management are working hard to understand and implement these policies in a safe and timely manner.

Please read below for the latest information related to our Covid-19 response thus far for each level of programming here at Beaverbrook STEP.

Residential and Day Service Programs:

- Implemented the COVID-19 guidance from DDS and DPH for [Residential and Congregate Care Programs](#).
- Established proper cleaning/disinfecting procedures per the DPH guidance and universal precautions.
- Trained staff in the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and how to monitor persons served.
- Implemented check-in and remote interaction for all participants using multiple technology platforms.
- Initiated daily check-ins with our day service individuals to ensure continuity of skill development and enrichment.
- Conducted ISP's through web cam or conference calls.
- Provided PPE's and cleaning supplies to all homes
- Trained staff on proper cleaning techniques and schedules.
- Distributed weekly emails from our social inclusion specialist and activities coordinator containing recreation and enrichment ideas for in-home and safe outdoor activities.

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Administrative:

- Day programs were closed in mid-March XX due to State “stay at home order”. Day staff were reassigned to residential programs and/or to remote trainings.
- The DDS “No Visitor Policy” was adopted on March XX, which included guidance for families bringing their relatives home during the crisis.
- We have partnered with other Human Service Agencies to purchase bulk orders of PPE’s to ensure an adequate supply for all of our direct care professionals.
- The main office is fully operational and staffed with upper level management to ensure continuity and leadership.
- Human Resources and the Leadership Team will be rolling out a financial incentive program for all staff who continue to work and provide high level care to our individuals.
- We will continue to follow all guidance from DDS, DPH and state and local agencies to adhere to the requirements for reporting potential and actual cases of Covid-19
- Designated quarantine protocols for each scenario have been implemented.
- Beaverbrook STEP’s Covid-10 Response Team will continue to send out correspondence and guidance through email to keep all families, guardians and individuals informed of current updates and policies.

Nursing:

Registered nurses have trained staff on signs and symptoms of illness as well as:

- Provided wellness checks for our most vulnerable individuals
- Maintained constant communication with DDS and State/Local agencies regarding regulatory and specific Covid-19 guidance.
- Collaborated with the Leadership Team on developing and implementing staff wellness checks prior to entering any program. This includes a temperature reading prior to shift.
- Provided individual, case-by case support and guidance to all of our individuals and staff during this crisis.
- Distributed guidance on using PPE’s, quarantine protocols and caring for those with positive cases of Covid-19.

It is with heartfelt gratitude that we salute all of our direct care professionals who are continuing to arrive at work and provide the care and programming to our individuals under extraordinary circumstances. We will continue to maintain regular contact through Constant Contact, our email system and technology platforms to keep everyone apprised of any changes, updates, guidance or new information as quickly as possible. The Leadership Team has been in daily contact with all of our relevant partners and local and state agencies to make sure that we are making informed decisions that directly impact our services.

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We would be remiss if we didn't mention that we are all members of one community and we will endure this challenge as we always have; with resolute determination predicated on informed decisions and an unwavering commitment to continuing our mission. We ask for your support and thoughts during this crisis and we look forward to returning to normalcy in the coming weeks.

Until that time, please know that we are here for you and we will keep you all in our thoughts and prayers.

Sincerely,

Virginia A. Connolly, Executive Director and the Covid-19 Response Team