

From: Tom McAlvanah

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Here are today's top headlines from our call.

**Revised Staffing Guidance for the Management of COVID-19:** Jill Pettinger reviewed some of the components of the document and attempted to bring clarity to the people on the call. It was a tough assignment as the procedures listed under numerous categories such as Environmental Hygiene, cleaning bathroom surfaces each time it is used, or N-95 Respirators (masks) are not realistic for the residences that are homes, not health care facilities. For the N-95 masks, the guidance read: "All staff wearing N95 respirators should undergo medical clearance and fit testing." While it was pointed out that this mandate challenges the reality of an extreme lack of supply and the staffing capacity to accomplish the mandate, the response was to try to adhere to the guidance.

Of course need we forget, these are health care guidelines developed in conjunction with practices developed by DOH. This is an area where we will pursue further.

**Access to Testing:** a round of points and opinions were brought forth. In some areas of the State, people with I/DD have had some access to testing, from the Capital to the Western regions. It not so in the downstate area. We have all been witness to news reports about the shortage of testing supplies. OPW will be exploring the capacity to conduct testing in our certified facilities at some point as the supplies and roll out can be developed.

**PPEs:** the subject continues as one parent pointed out the rather deliberate process to obtain the supplies with the urgency of our needs. So while the answer didn't lead to a new way of managing the supply, we are seeing some loosening here and there, such as in NYC. More to come on that one.

**Some other items to watch:** Abiba spoke to documents that are to be released shortly including: more clarification on Day Hab Retainer payments and billing; more detailed information and direction on communication with families especially with the presence of COVID-19 in facilities; Fiscal Intermediary billing components to be issued as well.

Our next meeting is Wednesday.

Other items on my list:

Families and Communication — it has become clear in these meetings and conversations with family members, that not every service provider is making or able to make the consistent effort to keep the lines of communication open to the individual and/or the family. While most providers and CCOs are doing incredible work under the circumstances, some families are suggesting that they have not been contacted by this provider or site or staff in quite some time. I am certainly not pointing any fingers here as the strain on us all is incalculable. But please remember to reach out when you can, even if it is an ability to just touch base and let everyone know the folks in program are ok or ask, are you ok at home.

Please keep up the great work you do as the families know that you are and supporting you all the way.

Day Hab billing: there a million questions unanswered, and there's a good half of those for me to understand, but in the meantime, please continue to provide the services as best you can now as the new billing reality has already started, and even if the full guidance we need has not been completed. What we do these days even if it's not clear, will impact the billing come 5/1. It's always about the numbers. Make sure you are doing what you can to document contact and services.