

Summer 2020

HEARTS & MINDS

Latest News,
Announcements
& Updates



**Photos of Clubhouse staff and members during COVID-19 pandemic*



On March 16th, Village Clubhouse (Topsham), Looking Ahead Clubhouse (Lewiston), High Hopes Clubhouse (Waterville) and Capitol Clubhouse (Augusta) had to notify their members that they needed to close their doors to members the next day. Not having members on site every day was so counter intuitive to Clubhouse staff, that it was difficult and often emotional to process what was happening. Almost immediately though, the staff turned to providing phone support, and began utilizing Facebook Live for group meetings before Zoom was "the new normal."

Multiple webcams were installed so regular meetings including the morning meetings, unit meetings

and one on one meetings could happen simultaneously. The Clubhouse staff and Members began to get really creative about connecting with one another. They offered virtual book clubs, meditation, Tai Chi, wellness walks, and cooking and gardening tutorials. All four Clubhouses began doing "swap" meetings with other Clubs across the U.S. and in Europe. Their goal was always about keeping the members engaged. When the Clubhouses began to reopen to members, they were very strict about following the CDC guidelines, including how many people were in the building at one time.

They got creative here too! They offered a split day schedule to accommodate more members

who wanted to participate in the work ordered day. Sometimes they would send staff to work at one of the clinics or at home for the day so that more Members could be in the building. Once they were at capacity, they were strict about not letting anyone else in the building, as our CEO Tom McAdam found out when he went to visit Village Clubhouse and was not allowed inside! Members are becoming more comfortable with the new procedures such as wearing masks on site and even had a masquerade party where they wore decorated masks. Moving forward, the Clubhouses will continue to be overly cautious while giving their members every opportunity to come back when they are ready.

RECOVERY COACHING PROGRAM

Kennebec Behavioral Health continues its commitment to The Recovery Coach program in the Skowhegan office by utilizing telephonic and virtual methods of contact to provide support and resources to our community. The program continues to accept referrals during this time and train coaches through virtual and telephonic means.

Our volunteer Recovery Coaches are trained in how to help others as advocates, peers, and

confidants with many being in long term recovery themselves. We have had two virtual Recovery Coaching Academies (RCAs), one ethics, and two RCA basic trainings all through a virtual training platform that were very successful.

We are committed during COVID-19 to be there for all those in need of coaches and for all those that would like to become coaches. It has not been easy on any of us during this period of

isolation. Yet, our commitment to our community and those we service continues to be our main goal.



THE IDEA OF RESILIENCE

Tom McAdam, CEO, & Carla Stockdale, Clinical Director



A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO & CLINICAL DIRECTOR

We all aspire to be resilient. Being resilient is surrounded with positive connotation. In mental healthcare we spend countless treatment hours with our clients and patients helping to build foundational skills in order to create and strengthen resilience. Yet, resilience is a culmination of a number of other attributes and we can even say it is an end result. Some would say that resilience is something you realize after the fact.

Some of the characteristics of resilience are the ability to improvise, the capacity for optimism, an unfiltered capacity to be realistic and accept current challenges, and lastly the understanding that there is

meaning in what one is pursuing.

These characteristics apply to individuals as well as organizations.

Over the past four months we have all been tested and stretched in our work, our home lives, and in our communities as we adapt to the impact of the pandemic. In this article of



Hearts and Minds, we have many examples of the outstanding resilience that our staff and our clients have displayed as we have had to reinvent our work flows and our support systems. We are fortunate to have so many resilient staff that can improvise and keep their Optimism on the front burner. I hope you enjoy these stories. Stay safe.

Thomas J. McAdam, MBA
Chief Executive Officer

Carla Stockdale, LCSW
Clinical Director

Connect with us...



Facebook:

Like our page at www.facebook.com/KennebecBehavioralHealth



Twitter:

Follow us at <https://twitter.com/KBHMaine>



LinkedIn

Visit and follow our page at www.linkedin.com/company/kennebec-behavioral-health



Mailchimp

Join our e-newsletter by visiting www.kbh-maine.org and clicking the 'Sign Up' button (below the slideshow).

HUMAN RESOURCES

Our team has been very busy through the COVID emergency. We have had to stay on top of the daily updates and recommendations provided through the Maine and Federal Centers for Disease Control. We have also had to work to develop and implement new policies and procedures designed to maintain a safe workplace, including time off and return to work following illness procedures. We moved early on to de-densify the workspace on the third floor by facilitating staff to work from home.

Without the ability to knock on someone's door to check in and discuss an issue in person we have

instituted daily Zoom meetings. These meetings have not only had the purpose of providing consistency in the administration of HR- COVID policies, they have also provided for a more collaborative approach and the ability for remote staff to remain connected to their colleagues. We have intentionally allowed time within the meeting to check in with non-work related discussion and have learned about each other, including our pets, our hobbies and most importantly what programs are recommended for binge watching.

SUPPORTED HOUSING

The Supported Housing Team had to respond quickly to the guidelines set forth by Licensing to ensure optimal safety of residents in KBH's Assisted Living Facilities and program staff. To reduce the number of people the residents would be exposed to each day they quickly, with the support of the amazing staff, adjusted schedules and staffing ratios to two staff per shift for 12-hour shifts. Given that they had to restrict use of all common spaces and gatherings, the staff swiftly adjusted work flow to occur strictly in residents' apartments.

The team experienced a ton of changes, they stopped allowing visitors in the common areas, had vendors make all of their stops at another location which they staffed in order to receive medications and supplies. They have a repository of supplies at 72 Winthrop St. You need a picture of THAT! They have been in "war time" planning mode, constantly planning for an outbreak. They even purchased five additional mattresses in case they needed to quarantine at another building. Resident meals, which typically happens two to three times a week in the common areas got moved to being served in clients' units. Medications were delivered to them.

Rehabilitation services have always prioritized the importance of natural supports and socialization. The supported housing teams worked tirelessly over the years to support residents to reduce isolation and venture into the community. It was a big shift to work solely in resident units and educate the teams

and residents about why avoiding the community and social gatherings was really important. It felt uncomfortable because community and natural supports are a large part of recovery. They had to change out treatment planning paradigm from "community integration" to "community isolation".

Over the course of the Shelter in Place Order, the supported housing teams observed many of their residents' progress quickly toward treatment goals around medication independence. Many residents that were relying on staff for cooking were able to demonstrate increased independence around this which had a positive impact on morale and self-efficacy.



FINANCE

The Finance Department recognized very quickly that the business office needed to run as seamlessly as possible amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Regardless of what was happening around us, KBH staff members still needed to get paid, services needed to be billed so that cashflow would continue, and invoices needed to be paid. The Finance staff adapted pretty easily to on site rotating schedules and cleaning protocols and came up with solutions for their department that they COULD implement together while defaulting to what was the safest for all.

Many of the Finance staff continued to work on location, although some, with the help of some quick technical support from IT, were able to begin working off site very quickly. At the office, one of their strategies was locking the door to the Finance Department due to some staff being at high risk. Locking the door was really hard – it had the most significant impact because the staff really missed face to face contact with other

employees. Other measures they put into place included limiting the number of people in the office (determined by square footage), shifting schedules, and implementing a cleaning process every time the shift changed. The staff also wear masks anytime they are in the same office working on a project together. As restrictions are lifted, they are looking forward to welcoming staff back into their space. They do hope however to continue to use Zoom when appropriate, as it encourages the efficient use of time and resources.

DSTCM

Many of our adjustments were similar to other programs. However, the DSTCM program does most of their paperwork outside of the KBH NEO system. We stayed tuned into news from the Office of Aging and Disability Services and adapted as recommended.

Adapting to ZOOM meetings was the first big challenge; then came trying to manage paper remotely. It is great that the agency works together as a team. The IT team and Med Records departments have been needed to help things continue moving forward! We appreciate their support!

The team adapted to the new situation really quickly. There were different approaches to working remotely and/or working in the office, but the work continued to flow with very little disruption to those we serve. This is not really surprising as the team has always been resilient to changes; it is part of the job!

The “normal” rules of operating have changed and continue to change. While keeping a can-do attitude, the team creatively adjusts. The “who” and the “what” have stayed pretty stable, but the “when”, “where” and “how” have needed a more creative approach. It is great to have a team that keeps a positive attitude through challenging situations.

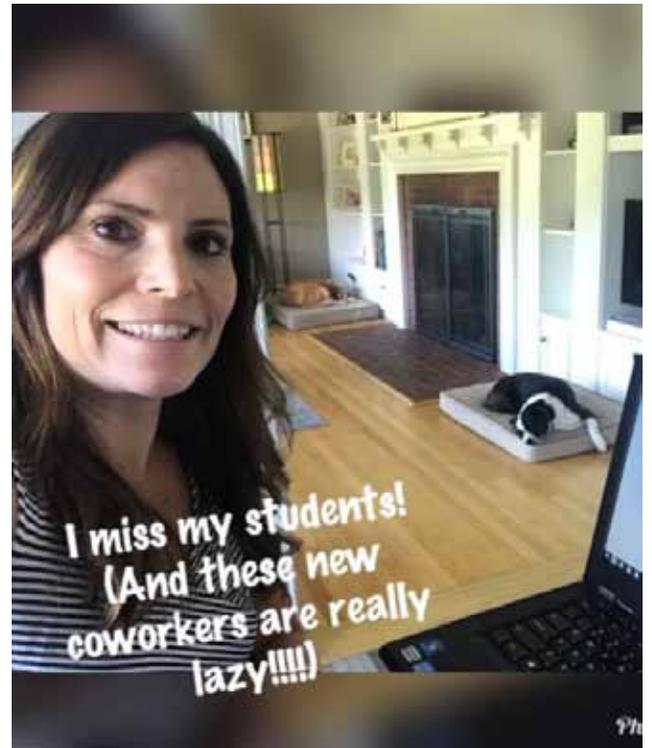
It is nice to have the ability to use telehealth to serve clients. It is great to have real face to face meetings, too, but not having to travel saves time and mileage, and it gives a small team greater flexibility with case coverage options. Working remotely definitely has its benefits!



SCHOOL-BASED SERVICES

On March 15th, the KBH School-Based Counseling Program received word that students would not be returning to their classrooms. From that moment on clinicians quickly shifted gears to ensure that access to this service was not interrupted. Utilizing all of the technology at their disposal, clinicians have creatively adapted to this "new normal" and have been able to provide a consistent support and presence to children whose lives were unexpectedly turned upside down.

Over the last few months, School-Based clinicians have risen to the occasion, utilizing training opportunities to hone their skills over telehealth. In addition to helping clients and their families face these unforeseen challenges, clinicians have also had the opportunity to witness their amazing resiliency through this unprecedented time. As the current school year comes to a close, we have already begun to prepare for and envision the school year ahead. Though there are many unknowns, we look forward to strengthening our partnerships and collaborating with school staff to fully respond to the emerging needs.



ACCESS CENTER

KBH continued to bring new clients into the agency during COVID-19 in part due to the hard work of the Access Center team. Staff showed great flexibility and team work as they continued to be available for other KBH staff as well as new clients. Within a week, Access staff had to adapt their carefully laid out process for new clients and shift to a telehealth platform. Access staff were critical in helping clients understand KBH's new telehealth services, educating about the telehealth platform, walking clients through the installment and running of the telehealth applications and then demonstrating what the initial assessment process would look like by connecting to the client via Zoom.

Access staff also fielded inquiries regarding KBH's services from primary care offices, hospital discharge planners, caseworkers and other concerned stakeholders. Telehealth has a variety of challenges for some clients and Access staff problem solved with them to try to reduce some barriers while supporting and encouraging clients in their wellness efforts. Half of the Access Center staff

worked from home and half remained in the office. While physically divided, the team remained unified in the common goal of being present for clients, stakeholders and KBH staff alike. All Access staff returned to the office and remain committed to KBH's mission, "...promote the well-being of persons who experience mental illness, emotional difficulties or behavioral challenges."



OUTPATIENT/ SUD

Our OP/SUD staff has demonstrated outstanding commitment and flexibility in response to COVID-19. Within the course of less than a week, most staff transitioned to working at home, and all staff embraced new technology as we quickly learned to provide services via Telehealth. We've learned a lot about scheduling and structuring sessions and using Zoom with small children – this has not always been easy!

Clients have been incredibly grateful for their therapy continuing without interruption: we have clients in facilities that remain under strict lock-down, and sometimes a weekly session is their only support. Families with children suddenly home full-time from school and childcare have benefitted from ideas about how to adapt, and resources to support healthy activities and interactions. For clients struggling with addiction, this time has presented additional challenges, as AA meetings and other supports are not available in the usual ways: staff have been creative and persistent in outreach and engagement. We are thankful for the leadership at KBH and for Pat's help navigating

through the changes and constant questions as we move from this being a crisis to what will be normal – at least for now. We are slowly transitioning back to the office and will be working closely with the Front Desk staff re: beginning some “face to face”, which we are looking forward to.



MED CLINICS

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, KBH's Medication Clinic providers and staff have successfully managed their difficult and unique situation - that the Clinics' doors needed to remain open. Although the majority of patients were able to be transitioned to service provision through telehealth, many of KBH's Med Clinic patients needed to be seen on site, face to face. From the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Med Clinic providers have balanced the safety of patients and staff members while adhering to the standards of quality care and good medical practice. This has included reevaluating and changing systems that have been in place for years. The use of Personal Protective Equipment immediately became essential for the safe provision of services on site. Patients were asked to wait in their vehicles until they were set to be seen, and then entered in through a side door in order to limit person to person contact with other patients and staff. Additional supervision was put into place for the front line nursing staff. This allowed for extra support during a time when providing services face to face

was a cause of distress for some. Providers shifted to navigating the world of telehealth, and at times were providing crisis level work for people who were having severe difficulties. Meanwhile, the Med Clinics continued to bring in new patients. Med Clinic providers and staff have successfully added a layer of mindfulness into their repertoire of skills while also providing guidance to other KBH staff on ways to put some of these practices into place.





CLINICS

67 Eustis Parkway
Waterville, ME 04901

11 Caldwell Road
Augusta, ME 04330

66 Stone Street
Augusta, ME 04330

5 Commerce Drive
Skowhegan, ME 04976

736 Old Lewiston Road
Winthrop, ME 04364

115 Mt Blue Circle
Farmington, ME 04938

CLUBHOUSES

High Hopes Clubhouse
26 College Avenue
Waterville, ME 04901

Looking Ahead Clubhouse
646 Main Street
Lewiston, ME 04240

Capitol Clubhouse
37 Stone Street
Augusta, ME 04330

Village Clubhouse
119 Main Street
Topsham, ME 04086

To be added to the list for e-news, contact
ekeane@kbhmaine.org or
sign up on www.kbhmaine.org



67 Eustis Parkway, Waterville, ME 04901
www.kbhmaine.org