

TOWNHALL Q&A

———— with ————
Chuck Ingoglia



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Key Issues

Urge Legislators to Financially Support Behavioral Health Providers

This week, the National Council has made a historic appropriations request for behavioral health organizations in response to COVID-19. The request – an **emergency appropriation of \$38.5 billion** for providers of mental health and addiction treatment services – is one of the largest and most important appropriations requests of our time.

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Key Actions to Date

Congressional Activity

Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act (March 4)

Families First Coronavirus Response Act (March 18)

Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act (March 27)

“3.5” package – supplemental interim support

A fourth COVID-19 relief package is reportedly in the works



Regulatory Activity

CMS actions on telehealth, Medicare and Medicaid policies

FCC telehealth equipment fund

DEA changes to registration and telemedicine requirements

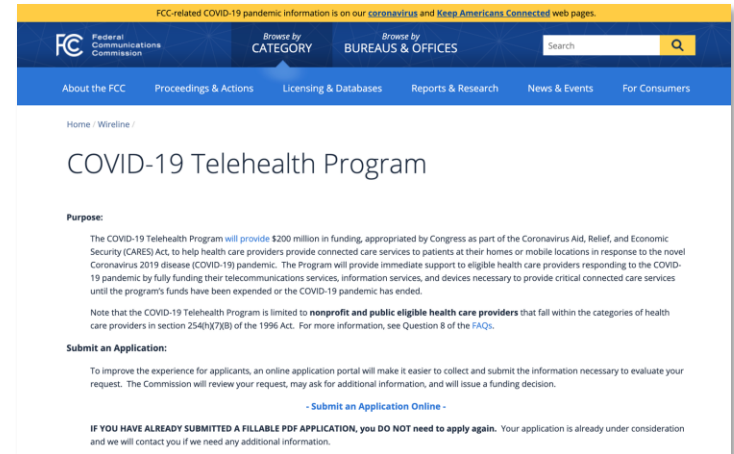
And much more...



FCC COVID-19 Telehealth Program

- \$200 million available
- Applications accepted on a rolling basis
- Eligible providers include community behavioral health organizations
- Funds technology & equipment to bolster telehealth services
 - May include end-user devices such as smartphones or tablets
- Application portal:

<https://www.fcc.gov/covid-19-telehealth-program>



Temporary Federal Policy Changes: Brief Overview

- SAMHSA allows states to request blanket exceptions for all stable patients in OTP to receive 28 days take-home methadone doses (“less stable patients” may receive up to 14 days)
- SAMHSA still requires in-person medical assessment prior to admitting new methadone patients
- DEA relaxed telehealth restrictions:
 - No initial in-person assessment required
 - X-waivered prescribers can prescribe via video or telephone
 - Providers can use less secure tech platforms (but not public-facing ones)
- Restrictions on Medicare reimbursements for telehealth waived
- Restrictions on receiving medications relaxed: Meds can be delivered by parties other than licensed clinicians and through indirect means like doorstep lockboxes
- HIPAA and 42 CFR, part 2 policies relaxed for telehealth

COVID-19 Information & Resources Directory

<https://www.thenationalcouncil.org/covid19/>



- **Goal:** Help members during COVID-19 by creating a regularly updated repository of internal and external resources.
 - Deliver the latest COVID-19 news
 - Connect providers with new tools and resources
 - Share available learning opportunities

Project ECHO: National Council for Behavioral Health COVID-19 Financial Response Strategy ECHO Series

- **Session 1: Extending the Runway – Weekly Cash Flow Projections**
 - Held Tuesday April 21st at 1pm ET: [Access the recording here](#)
- **Session 2: Extending the Runway – Leveraging Stimulus/Relief Efforts**
 - Tuesday April 28th at 1pm ET: [Register here](#)
- **Session 3: Sustaining the New Normal**
 - Tuesday May 5th at 1pm ET: [Register here](#)
- **Who should join?** This series is open to all; however, content in these sessions will be most applicable to leadership and financial management staff of community behavioral health organizations.



COVID-19 Office Hours and Activities

COVID-19 Office Hours	Medical Directors COVID-19 Discussion Series
<p>Join us every Tuesday and Thursday at 3:00-4:00pm ET for a session focused on different COVID-19 topic areas including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Self-Care and Compassion• Telehealth• Rural Health• SUD Services• Children, Youth, and Families• Health Equity• Peer Support <p>Messages will be sent out weekly sharing each week's Office Hour topics.</p>	<p>Upcoming Sessions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• April 30, 11 a.m.-12 p.m.• May 13, 2-4 p.m. <p>Stay tuned for upcoming messages sharing the registration links for these sessions. Questions? Please email LindsayL@thenationalcouncil.org.</p>
<p>Check out recordings here from previous sessions.</p> <p>Send us topics that you want to discuss! Email us at integration@thenationalcouncil.org</p>	

Introducing the New Virtual Delivery Option for MHFA

- First Aiders will complete a 2-hour, self-paced online class, and then participate in a 4-hour, Instructor-led **videoconference**.
- The course will use our new curricula, including expanded content on trauma, addiction and self-care. Youth MHFA will include content applicable for adults working with elementary-age children, including the impact of social media. All content is gender neutral and culturally relevant.
- We are currently piloting this new delivery option in Florida and New York, with the First Aider trainings starting in those locations on May 4.
- The complete rollout of the Virtual delivery option will begin soon.



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