

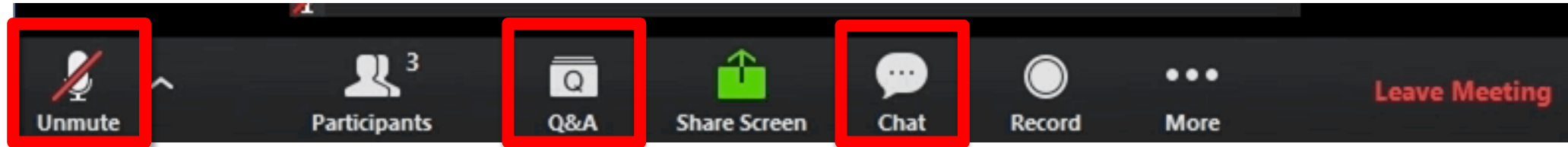
# Regulatory, Financial and Workforce Impact of COVID-19 for Behavioral Health

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NATIONAL COUNCIL  
FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

# How to Ask a Question



All functions are located at the bottom of your screen

- Type in the Q&A function
  - send your questions

# Today's Presenters



**Frankie Berger**

Director, State Policy and  
Advocacy

National Council for  
Behavioral Health



**Stephanie Katz**

Director, Federal Policy and  
Advocacy

National Council for  
Behavioral Health



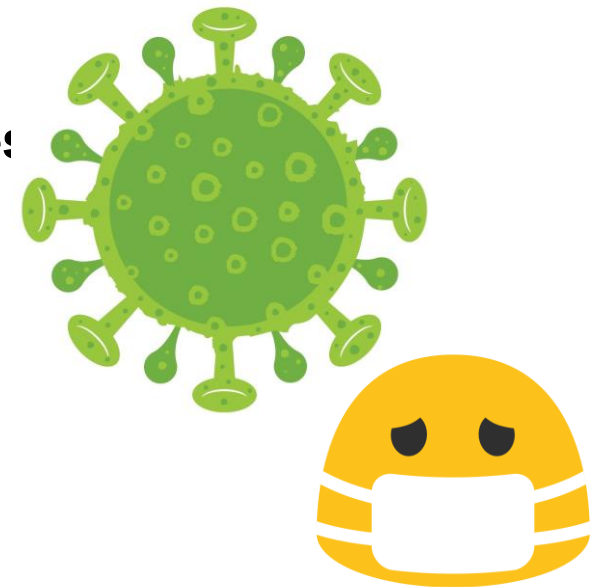
**John Jay**

Strategic Product Marketing  
Manager, HHS

Relias

## Setting the Stage

- Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic many behavioral health provider organizations were **underfunded, under-resourced, understaffed, and in high demand**
- The **opioid epidemic** was (and remains) a pressing issue
- There was a reignited focus on **improving access to care, new funding streams and innovative programs**
- **Physician Fee Schedule** changes, CMS allows for **telehealth flexibilities**
- Recent **ACA** oral arguments (ruling expected by June 2021)
- **2020 election** and incoming Biden Administration

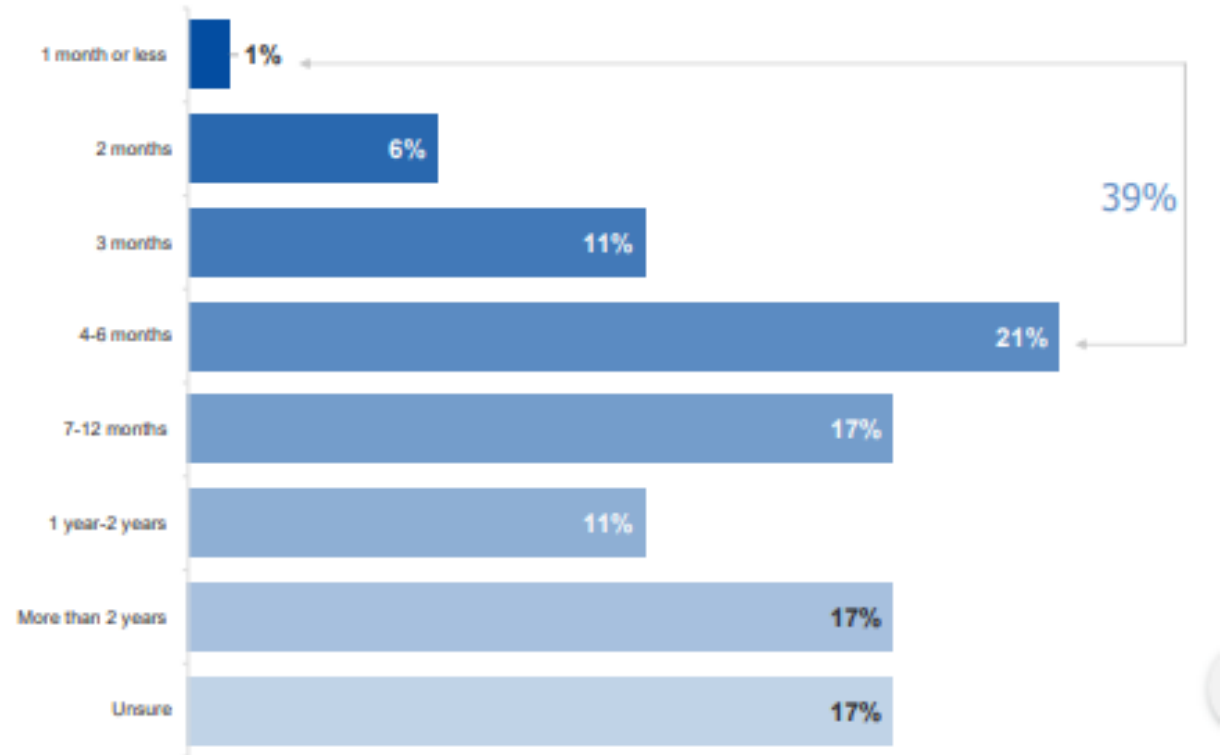


# Some Complications – Funding Streams

- Community Behavioral Health Organizations (CBHOs) provide behavioral health services to communities across the country
- CBHOs operate from a **mix of funding streams**
  - Medicaid, Medicare, Medicaid Managed Care, CHIP, state and local funding streams, and grants
- Many organizations only have a **few months of reserves**

**Thirty-nine percent of organizations think they can survive financially up to 6 months under the current situation.**

*About how many more months can your organization survive financially under the current situation?*

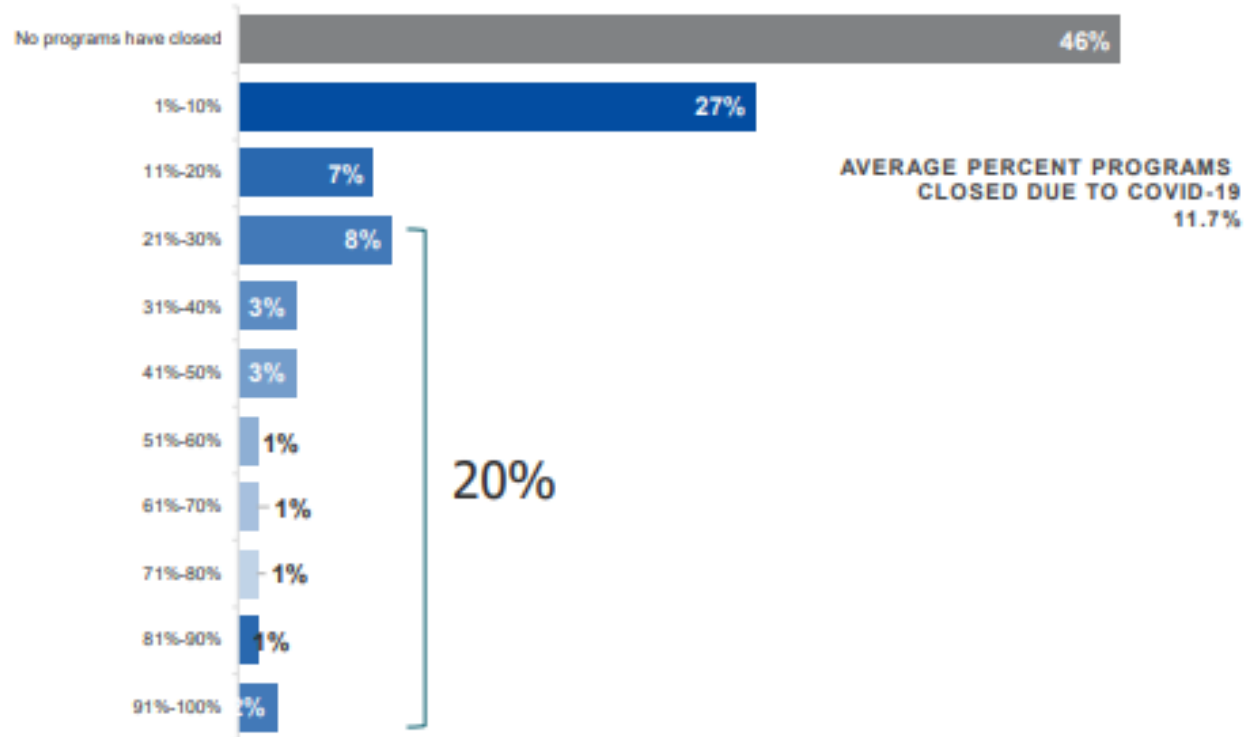


## Some Complications – Provision of Services

- Most behavioral health services were previously provided in-person
- The need for services has always been high, with COVID-19 exacerbating the demand
- 26% of organizations do not have enough PPE to last the next 2 months
  - BH providers as essential workers for Phase vaccine distribution
- Telehealth adoption and existing regulations (PHE deadline)

Half of organizations (54%) have closed some programs due to COVID-19, and a fifth have closed more than 20% of their programs.

*Percent of programs within your organization currently closed due to COVID-19:*



# Increased Need for Behavioral Health Services

## Depression/Anxiety

- The prevalence of anxiety symptoms was 3x higher, prevalence of depression symptoms was 4x higher than in 2019

## Suicide

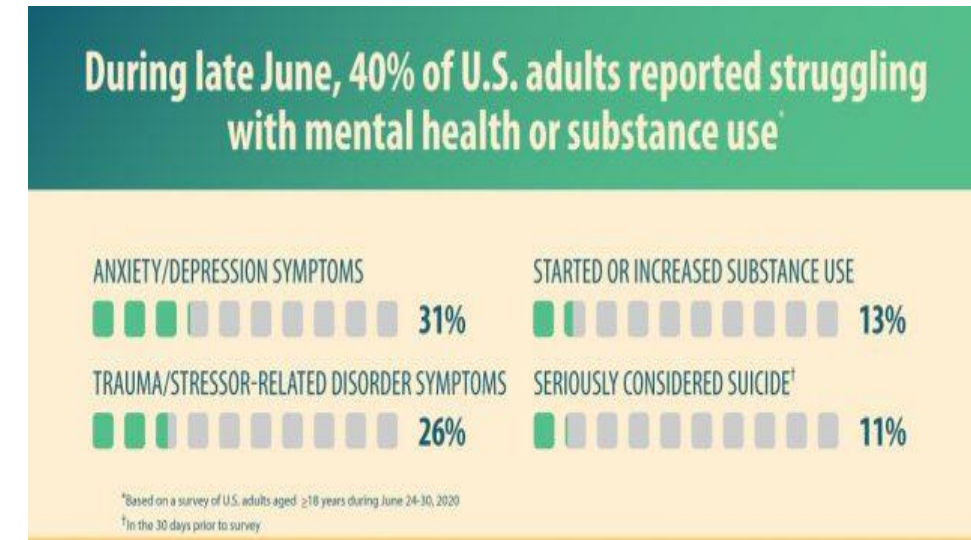
- Adults reporting seriously considering suicide in the past 30-days increased significantly between June 2020 and June 2018 (11% versus 4%)
- Percentages were significantly higher for youth, Hispanic and Black respondents, unpaid caregivers for adults, and essential workers

## Substance Use

- 25% of those age 18-24 reported increased substance use to cope with COVID
- Black respondents reported increased substance use and seriously considering suicide in the past 30 days more than white and Asian respondents
- US sale of alcoholic beverages rose 55% at the beginning of the pandemic (the week ending March 21), and online alcohol sales went up 243%

## Overdose

- More than 40 states have reported increases in opioid-related mortality
- Suspected overdoses rose nearly 17% this year, as compared to Jan-April 2019
- 11% increase in fatal overdoses, and 19% increase in nonfatal overdoses



Sources: <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6932a1.htm>  
<https://apnews.com/c407ecb931c6c528b4cceb0ecc216f0c>  
<https://www.ama-assn.org/system/files/2020-08/issue-brief-increases-in-opioid-related-overdose.pdf>  
<http://www.odmap.org/Content/docs/news/2020/ODMAP-Report-June-2020.pdf>  
<https://files.constantcontact.com/a923b952701/dbf0b5a5-f730-4a6f-a786-47097f1eea78.pdf>



# Response

- In response to the COVID-19 pandemic the federal government allows sweeping **telehealth flexibilities** to states
  - Medicaid
  - Medicare
  - Audio Only
  - 42 CFR part 2
  - Drug Enforcement Agency
- Many state revenues are down, leading to potential **budget cuts**
  - Revenue shortfalls projected at 10% in FY20, 20% in FY21
  - Some cuts have already begun – Georgia, Maryland, Florida



# Congressional Response Since Shutdown

- **CARES Act (COVID 3.0)**

- Became law on March 27, 2020
- \$2.2 trillion in spending
- Paycheck Protection Program (PPP)
- Public Health and Social Services Emergency Relief Fund (PHSSEF)
- Aligned 42 CFR Part 2 closer to HIPAA
- \$425 million to SAMHSA
- Extended and expanded CCBHCs

- **Paycheck Protection Program and Health Care Enhancement Act (COVID 3.5)**

- Became law on April 24, 2020
- \$484 billion in spending
- Replenished the PPP and PHSSEF
- No relief for PPP loans to nonprofits 500+

- **HEROES Act 2.0 (House-passed COVID 4.0)**

- Passed the House on October 2, 2020
- \$3 trillion in spending
- Further funds PHSSEF, PPP loans (extends PPP and allows recipients more time, flexibility in using loan)
- \$8.5 billion to SAMHSA funding: block grant increases and other programs
- FMAP increase, Medicaid Reentry Act

- **Delivering Immediate Relief to America's Families, Schools and Small Businesses Act (Skinny COVID 4.0)**

- Senate introduced updated package on October 1, 2020
- \$500 billion in spending
- Further funds PHSSEF, PPP loans
- Renews pandemic unemployment insurance
- Liability protections for employers

## Next Steps

- **Provider Funding**

- \$38.5 billion infusion of emergency funds for behavioral health providers to avert a large-scale public health calamity
- Over four in five voters (84%) think increasing funding for mental health and addiction recovery treatment should be a top or important priority to Congress, including a majority of Republican (80%) and Democrat (91%) voters.

- **Mental Health First Aid**

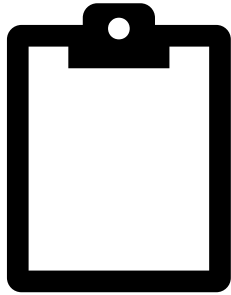
- Mental Health First Aid is a course that teaches you how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental illnesses and substance use disorders. The training gives you the skills you need to reach out and provide initial help and support to someone who may be developing a mental health or substance use problem or experiencing a crisis
  - More than **2.5 million people** across the United States have been trained in Mental Health First Aid by a dedicated base of more than **15,000 Instructors**.
  - MentalHealthFirstAid.org



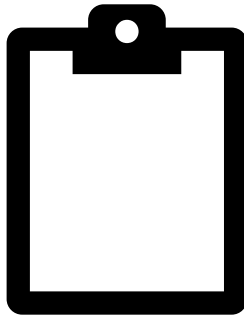
Source: [www.cbpp.org/research/state-budget-and-tax/states-grappling-with-hit-to-tax-collections](http://www.cbpp.org/research/state-budget-and-tax/states-grappling-with-hit-to-tax-collections)

# Relias – State of Training and Staff Development 2020

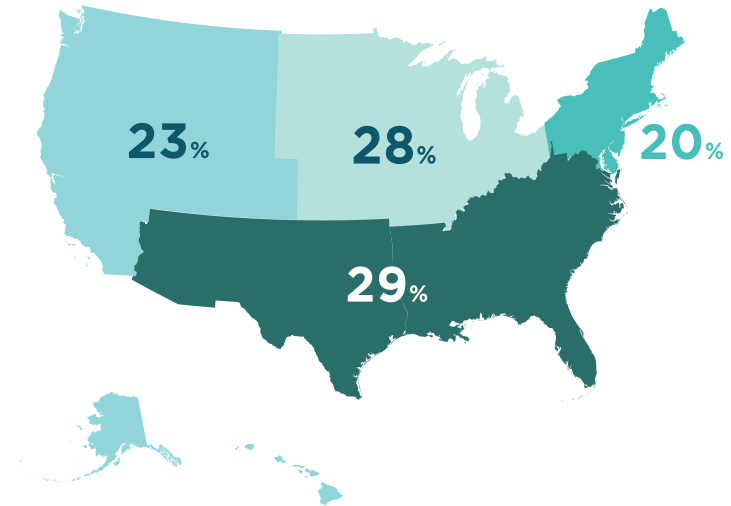
- Two Surveys, One Report



Original study closed in February 2020



Follow-up survey in June 2020



*Survey Response Distribution*

# Use of Learning Management Software

## Setting the Stage

Prior to the pandemic, **71%** of Healthcare organizations believed their investment in staff development and training was **adequate or more than adequate**

**34%**  
adequate

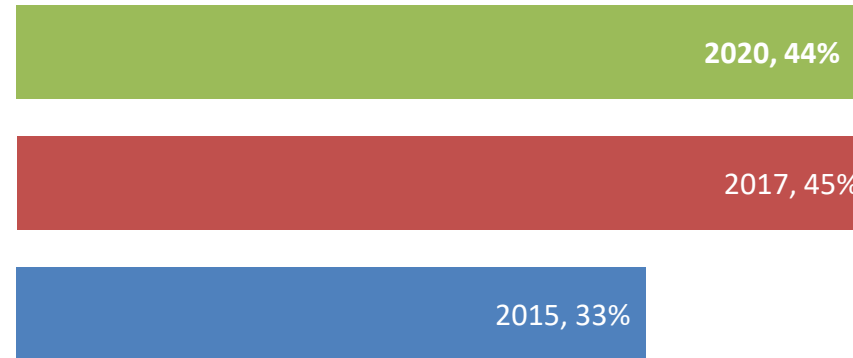
**37%**  
more than adequate

*Please rate your organization's financial investment in staff development and training.  
(% adequate and more than adequate)*

# Use of Learning Management Software

## Setting the Stage

Learning Management Software usage has **decreased** in behavioral healthcare organizations since **2017**



*How do you track the training completed by staff? (% of learning management software responses)*

# Use of Learning Management Software

## Study Findings – COVID Insight

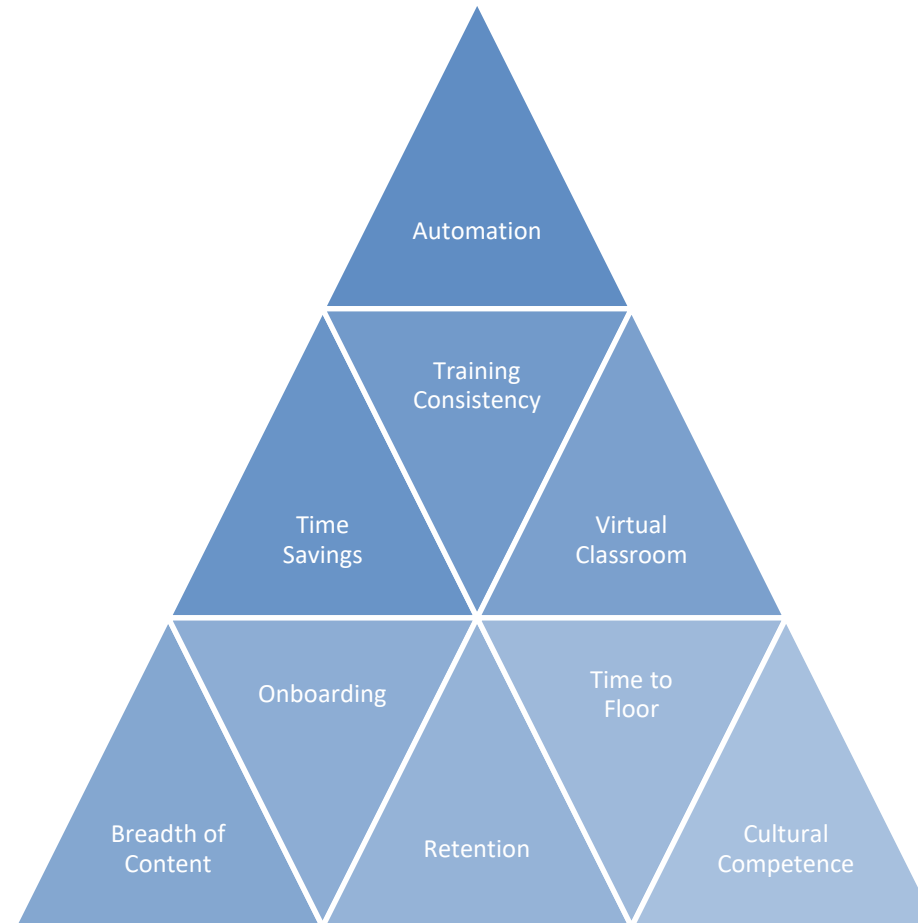
23% of Healthcare respondents say they have **adopted** learning management software during the pandemic



*Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, which of the following methods has your organization adopted to track staff training? (% who chose Learning Management System)*

# Technology Adoption

## COVID Benefits – Customer Feedback



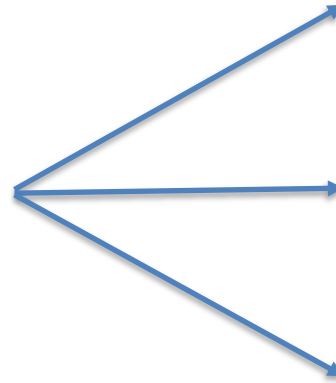


# Relias Case Study

Large Behavioral Health  
provider - > 6,000 employees

17 Million individuals served

Servicing 23 States and District  
of Columbia



Unnecessary Travel  
Eliminated

Reduced Orientation Time

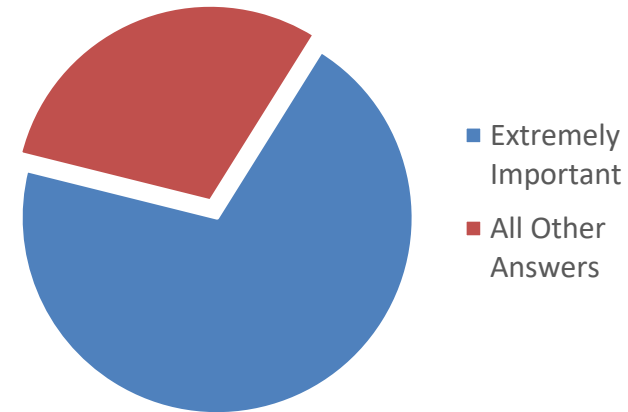
Reduction of  
Administrative Burden

***Estimated \$1.2MM in annual savings***

# Importance of Training and Staff Development

## Study Findings

**70%** of healthcare organizations believe **training and development** is extremely important.



## COVID Insights

- **53%** of organizations say online training has **increased** in importance since the pandemic began
- **80%** of organizations say there has been a moderate to major increase in online training since the pandemic began

# Training Topics Prioritized During the Pandemic



## Why this Matters – Qualitative Feedback



*“Staff working and/or providing services outside of their core competencies.”*



*“Outside stressors are making work stressors more difficult to manage.”*



*“Helping our employees feel comfortable with what they are doing helps reduce the pressure they feel.”*

*“Expanding services as other services slow or stop is dependent on our staff being competent to pivot.”*

# Increased Need for Behavioral Health Services

## What Relias is Seeing

Trauma-Informed  
Care eBook #1  
downloaded asset  
from Relias.com

5 Key Elements of  
Trauma-Informed  
Care #2 asset  
downloaded from  
Relias.com

**Need for New  
Content:**  
*Understanding and  
Addressing Racial  
Trauma in  
Behavioral Health*

Racial Trauma  
Webinar #1 most  
viewed webinar  
on Relias.com

**Need for New  
Simulations:**  
*Practicing Clinical  
Skills to Prevent  
Suicide*

# Increased Need for Behavioral Health Services

## What Relias is Seeing - Telehealth Course Series

### 5-part Series

- Best Practices for Delivering Telehealth
- Implementation Guidelines for Telehealth Practitioners
- Clinical Assessment via Telehealth Options
- Using Telehealth in Clinical Practice
- Ethical and Legal Guidelines for Telehealth

***3000% increase  
in Telehealth  
course usage  
during pandemic***



# Increased Need for Behavioral Health Services

## What Relias is Seeing – Other Top Areas of Increase





## Questions?

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Download the [National Council's survey results](#)