

Milwaukee County Outreach Collaborative

Homeless Outreach Procedures: COVID - 19

3/16/2020

Due the fluid nature of this challenging issue, this document is subject to change

Overview

In conjunction with Outreach Community Health Centers, Homeless Outreach Nursing Center (HONC), Impact 211, CoC Member outreach agencies, and community-based volunteer outreach teams, the local homeless outreach procedure for COVID - 19 will give general guidance for: outreach coordination and scheduling ; specific mapping of outdoor locations; supply needs for consumers and outreach teams; prevention protocol; safety protocol for both consumers and outreach teams; education materials and distribution to consumers; and general resources. All questions or concerns can be relayed to:

outreach@milwaukeecountywi.gov

Outreach Coordination and Scheduling

- **Milwaukee County:** Will shift to daily wellness checks to known locations starting Monday, March 16th. Focus will be on supplies, wellness checks, and triage into shelter/other indoor placements.
- **Outreach Community Health Centers:** Outreach schedule is staying the same. No in-reach, but will meet outside facilities
- **Homeless Outreach Nursing Center:** Early morning outreach 2x/week.
- **Impact 211:** Increasing capacity for mobile screeners to do triage assessment for service connections

*****If teams receive requests from new individuals reporting they are in need of assistance and sleeping outdoors, please send the information (Name, contact information, and outdoor location) to outreach@milwaukeecountywi.gov *****

Tracking and GIS Mapping (Access to dashboard will be sent out to outreach leads on Tuesday, March 17th)

The Milwaukee County GIS and Land Information department has put together a mapping system that will allow outreach workers to track, in real time, where individuals are currently staying outdoors, and pertinent information related to COVID-19. Outreach workers will be able to enter answers the following questions:

- Where are you currently staying?
- Are you currently displaying any symptoms of COVID-19?
- Do you have any potential risk factors?

- Are you in need of any supplies?
- Are you in need of food?
- Are you interested in indoor placement?

*****Once the location is entered, it will be pinned on the map, and outreach workers can click on the pin, with answers to these questions popping up. *****

Supplies

Each team will take an inventory of current supplies and relay any additional needs for COVID 19 related supplies to Milwaukee County Outreach Services, Attention: Eric Collins-Dyke, eric.collins-dyke@milwaukeecountywi.gov or (414) 208-5328 (text preferred)

Inventory will include supplies for both outreach teams and potential consumers. Items needed most include:

- Gloves
- Hand soap or sanitizer
- Clorox wipes
- Face Masks
- Disposable Thermometers

As of right now, the ideal outreach kit should consist of the following:

- Disposable gloves
- Face masks
- Disposable or scanning thermometer
- Alcohol wipes
- Alcohol-based sanitizer
- Re-sealable, watertight plastic bags for contaminated garbage
- Hygiene kits to share tissues, personal-sized hand sanitizer, soap, water, snacks, etc.
- Educational flyers

Prevention Strategies

Outreach teams should begin messaging preventions strategies as they encounter individuals outdoors:

- Encourage regular hand hygiene and acknowledge inherent limitations
- Distribute personal-sized hand sanitizer or hand soap
- Counsel clients to cover their cough or sneeze using their elbow or into a tissue and dispose of tissues.
- Remind clients to avoid rubbing eyes, nose, or mouth
- Consider distributing cleaning supplies (like sanitizing wipes), tissues, and plastic bags for waste disposal
- Counsel clients to avoid sharing food, drinks, utensils, cookware, cigarettes, blankets, and bedding with others

- Counsel clients to avoid close contact with anyone who has cold or flu symptoms and maintain the “six-foot rule”
- If a client sleeps in a tent with others, consider sleeping head to toe
- Encourage clients to get recommended vaccines, including influenza/pneumonia
- Counsel clients to come into shelters, shower stations, and/or bathroom stations to improve hygiene conditions
- Address clients’ unique mental health needs and reinforce positive coping skills, including reaching out to their mental health providers, looking to social contacts for support, etc.

Safety

Encountering someone with flu like symptoms during outreach:

- Give a mask to the individual
 - **Make sure you clean your hands well before putting on your personal protective equipment**
- Put on a face mask and disposable gloves for yourself
 - **All personal protective equipment must be taken off (without touching them with your bare hands or other skin) and thrown away (in a sealed garbage bag) after single use**
- Maintain a distance of at least six feet between you and the individual

Ask your client:

- Have you been in contact with someone who is sick?
- Do you have a Fever or symptoms of fever?
- Do you have a new cough and shortness of breath?
- NOTE: Symptoms of fever may include asking about shaking chills, night sweats, muscle aches, or feeling feverish
- Consider carrying a disposable or scanning thermometer to check if fever present (temperature greater than 100.4 F)

*****If there is any indication, even subtle, of symptoms that are deemed to potentially correlate with COVID-19 symptoms, please immediately call 211, and the call will be routed to the local COVID 19 hotline*****

*****Tips for using phones: Use gloves and conduct telephonic triage over speaker phone. Sanitize phone after use with alcohol wipe and dispose of gloves/wipes in sealed plastic bag*****

Street Triage

- If client has severe symptoms
 - High fevers with shaking (look sick)
 - Difficulty breathing
 - Worsening shortness of breath
 - Difficulty walking or standing upright
 - Inability to stay hydrated or eat
 - Unable to care for self in tent or shelter

CALL 911 – Notify dispatcher about clients' symptoms

Distribute Education Materials

- All outreach teams should plan on distributing materials (flyers, etc.) in multiple languages
- The CDC and USICH have great information, which teams can pull from:
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
 - <https://www.usich.gov/tools-for-action/coronavirus-covid-19-resources/>

Stay safe, stay healthy, support each other, and let's collaborate to maintain our services during this challenging time