

COVID19 Updates & Report-outs w/ Homeless Service Providers

Monday, March 30, 2020 9:00 AM

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Meeting Recording:

Topic: COVID19 Updates & Report-outs with Homeless Service Providers

Date: Mar 30, 2020 08:53 AM Central Time (US and Canada)

<https://zoom.us/rec/share/5OBTHZKt00pIQ5GVy2XAV54eQ57-aaa8h3VK8gZbmE4-7cVywmmmcPTsNw6g1yYe>

Meeting Agenda

Austin/Travis County

COVID19 Updates & Report-outs w/ Homeless Service Providers
March 30th Agenda

-  Agency Updates
-  ECHO – Local Operations
-  Pre-Screening Tool
-  Medical System Updates – Dr. Audrey Kuang & Dr. Tim Mercer
-  City of Austin / Austin Public Health
-  Wrap Up – Next Call: Tuesday, 31th @ 9:00am

Symptoms

1. Do you feel like you've been having fevers or chills? yes no
2. Do you have a cough that is more than your normal cough? yes no
3. Do you have any shortness of breath or breathing difficulties beyond you normal state? yes no

Risk/Exposure

1. Age (in years) _____ (program on back-end as binary variable of 55yrs or older vs < 55yrs)
2. Do you have lung disease (COPD/asthma), heart disease, diabetes, cirrhosis, HIV, or cancer?
 yes no
3. In the last 2 weeks, have you been in close contact with someone confirmed to have COVID-19?
 yes no

Current Living Situation (to be assessed by interviewer):

- Living outside but in a solitary tent/camp (e.g., single tent deep in the woods; able to self-quarantine)
- Living outside in a congregate encampment
- Living outside on the streets (e.g., mobile, no fixed location)
- Shelter or other Congregate Living Facility (e.g., ARCH, Salvation Army, indoor communal sleeping)

*Note: final version of screening tool has added pregnancy as an at risk factor.

Meeting Notes:

ECHO –Kate Moore

- ECHO has been working closely with COA and APH on the process of how a person can access a unit when needing isolation or quarantine
- We are working on how we are going to track this for our clients through the city's system
- We have decided on a prescreen tool that will go into HMIS and captures risk factors and exposures to determine next step
- The screening tool will be used by shelters, outreach workers, and day resource staff
- The next step will lead to calling a new hotline staffed by Austin Public Health nurses
 - The hotline determines and makes decisions for all community members who are eligible for hotel unit regardless of housing status
- Once a person has been identified as needing a unit ECHO will be notified
 - We are still working on what this process will look like
- Once ECHO is notified ECHO will connect person(s) who are experiencing homelessness to the homeless response system
- The city is working on transportation for these clients to the hotel units for isolation and/or quarantine.
- The city has asked ECHO to assist with building out a proposal to fund and provide support services onsite at the isolation/quarantine hotel units coming on board.
 - ECHO will be sending out an electronic survey for stakeholders to give their feedback and suggestions - need leadership staff to complete survey monkey and send back with suggested services and capacity to provide services from each agency that can take on additional work.
 - City of Austin does not anticipate providing COA staffing to support persons who are staying in isolation/quarantine hotel units.
- The hope is to connect more people to permanent housing resources with stimulation funds
- Screening tool overview – graphic attached to email.

CUC Health Care for the Homeless Team – Tim Mercer

- Available for consult if needed
- Finalized screening tool for community to use
- Length of stay in unit depends on case and determined by exposure, symptomatic, non-symptomatic and testing results
- For example, if positive and symptomatic recommended length of stay is 7 days from beginning of symptoms and 72 hours from resolution of fever and improvement of respiratory symptoms

City of Austin / Austin Public Health – Vella Karmen

- City memo sent out – <http://www.austintexas.gov/edims/pio/document.cfm?id=338058>



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council Members
FROM: Christopher Shorter, Assistant City Manager
Rodney Gonzales, Assistant City Manager
DATE: March 27, 2020
SUBJECT: Update on Homelessness Services During Response to COVID-19

This memorandum serves to provide updates on the impacts of COVID-19 to services related to homelessness within the community. The issues addressed in this memorandum include: (1) Access to Services: Basic Hygiene, Social Services, and Food, and Health Services and Community Coordination (2) Hotel and Motel Leasing and Acquisition, (3) The Homeless Outreach Street Team & Emergency Medical Services Community Health Paramedics, (4) Underpass and Encampment Cleaning Process and Coordination Efforts, and (5) Communications

- Use of Hotels for isolation and quarantine:
 - Isolation/Quarantine Hotel Units are available for anyone without a place to go – including first responders, travelers, and others who may not feel safe returning home.
 - Outreach teams are not expected to provide transit for clients
- COVID-19 TESTING
 - Will be inconsistencies with testing based on supply and test result turnaround time
 - APH has a two-day turn around for tests but is only testing symptomatic people due to lack of testing kits available
- APH working to get hotline up and running
- Info hosted on www.austintexas.gov/covid19

[Austin Community Steps Up to Help Feed Struggling Families during COVID-19 Crisis](#)

Q&A

- What to make sure everyone understands the difference between “isolation” and Quarantine: at least as I understand the CDC’s definitions. Isolation refers to separating a sick individual who is contagious while quarantine restricts the movement and separates people that have been exposed. APH - agree?
 - No. Vella Karman to send out confirmed definitions.
 - Response: From the current Isolation Facility plan which is in line with the algorithm below (per APH): Quarantine (asymptomatic clients who have been exposed to positive COVID-19) & Isolation (symptomatic Person Under Investigation with or without positive test)
- Will youth (minors) be eligible and able to access hotel units?
 - Vella to get this info
- What are range of services envisioned at hotel?
 - Survey will be sent out by ECHO to collect feedback.
- Will food need to be provided to hotel in addition to support services?
- In the case of a person in a shelter who has symptoms can they go directly to unit instead of back to shelter? Concern expressed surrounding shelters being able to isolate and quarantine people effectively and not being prioritized for testing.

Comments and Suggestions for Follow Up

- Suggestion to have all shelter stayers prioritized for testing resources before entering into shelters.
- Outreach staff would need immediate access to hotline and hotel transportation once someone identified as symptomatic.

Resources

- COA Homeless Strategy page: <http://www.austintexas.gov/department/austins-homeless-strategy-covid-19-support>
- Google Drive Folder (drop docs/flyers to share)
<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/13MPhvSwdYqfNHASyfnOZgb0x9ScsHGmE>
- Q&A Form
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScLTzZ6S91QYm3REfD7Lo6AVJ55dRLaTgsM7mZxx_Dc1pBSRg/viewform
- Community Google Doc (Homeless Services Continuities)
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1SSLjrNBi7TWvpisfZ5PNIXUjQU_5A9ecoxvmH9DHycM/edit