

HealthProCHOICES

A newsletter for participants in the Health Professionals' Services Program (HPSP)

January 2020



"Let your smile change the world, but don't let the world change your smile." - Connor Franta

Staffing Updates

After six years with HPSP, Monitoring Programs Director, Christopher Hamilton, PhD is returning to state service as a Behavioral Health Business Analyst in the State Court Administrator's Office of General Counsel. In this role, Christopher will provide leadership and direct policy in how Oregon's state courts interact with individuals with behavioral health conditions. HPSP will be in the VERY capable hands of the monitoring leadership team of Drs. McBeth and Gustafson, Jenn Leddin, LMSW, CADC II, and monitoring's Operations Manager Tina Mewhinney.

- Monitoring Policy Manager - Scott McBeth, PhD. Scott has been with HPSP for over five years as an Agreement Monitor and most recently working in enrollment.
- Monitoring Clinical Manager - Jenn Leddin, LMSW, CADC II. Jenn has been with HPSP for over a year with a wealth of clinical knowledge.
- Monitoring Operations Manager - Tina Mewhinney. Tina has been with HPSP for nine years. Tina is point for all monitoring operational aspects including toxicology.
- Senior Vice President Clinical Operations - Eric Gustafson, Psy.D. Eric has been with the company for 24 years and will support HPSP.
- Drs. Bahl and Autry remain in their Medical Director and Consulting Psychiatrist roles.



Scott McBeth, PhD



Jenn Leddin, LMSW, CADC II



Tina Mewhinney

Saturday Phone Coverage

With Christopher's departure, Saturday phone coverage will be provided by Tina Mewhinney with back-up by Jenn Leddin and Scott McBeth. Tina can be reached at (503) 802-9866.

HPSPMONITORING.com is Now Ready

In follow-up to our spring announcement and reminder last month, HPSPMONITORING.com is up and running. The website can be reached at: <https://www.hpspmonitoring.com> and the new generic email is: hpsp@ibhsolutions.com. Stop by and visit the new site!



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Upcoming Testing Holidays

The following Oregon observed holidays are test exemptions days on which you do not need to check to see if you need to test:

- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – Monday, January 20, 2020
- President's Day – Monday, February 17, 2020

Upcoming Events

IDAIA 2020

The next **International Doctors in Alcoholics Anonymous** will be August 5-9, 2020 in Spokane, Washington. For more information please visit www.idaa.org.

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)

Seasonal affective disorder (SAD) is a depression that occurs during a particular season of the year. Most people with SAD are depressed during the fall and winter, when the days are shortest. Their depression disappears in the spring and summer. A less common type begins in late spring or early summer. Changes in the amount of daylight may be the cause of SAD.

Although many people say they get the "blues" in the winter, a person with SAD has much more difficulty coping during this season. Like other forms of depression, SAD interferes with daily life. Overcast days can make a person with SAD feel worse. People with SAD have mild to moderate depression.



SAD can affect anyone, although women are approximately 1.5 times more likely to develop SAD than are men. Those most affected are people in their late teens, 20s, and 30s, with the majority women in their 30s. Older adults are less likely to develop it. It is more common in northern latitudes and extreme southern latitudes. The depression is frequently moderate to major. SAD sufferers frequently have other family members with mental illness, such as depression.

Varying levels of the neurotransmitter serotonin are believed to play a role in SAD. The sleep hormone melatonin, which has been linked to depression, also may play a role. The body makes more melatonin in the dark, so the shorter, grayer days of winter boost levels of melatonin.

The symptoms of SAD can be confused with symptoms of other illnesses, including hypothyroidism and viral infections such as mononucleosis.

People with a mild case of SAD can ease symptoms by increasing the time they are exposed to daylight during the day. Spending time outdoors each day and getting regular outdoor exercise are two effective methods to combat SAD. For more severe cases, doctors may prescribe light therapy and possibly antidepressants. Light therapy involves exposure to very bright, full-spectrum fluorescent light for a certain amount of time each morning.

What to Do

During the fall and winter, try to get regular exercise and spend time outside each day. Rearrange the furniture in your home and workspace and open the blinds or curtains to take advantage of as much sunlight in the fall and winter as possible. Talk to your doctor if you have signs or symptoms of SAD significant enough to interfere with daily life. Your doctor can refer you to a mental health professional trained to treat patients with SAD.

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"An empty lantern provides no light. Self-care is the fuel that allows your light to shine brightly." – Unknown

Testing Holidays

You may find the listing of all 2020 testing holidays on the hpspmonitoring.com site on the Resources tab.

Inclement Weather

As we continue through the colder months of the season, please remember that if a collection site is closed due to inclement weather, you must inform HPSP of the closure as soon as possible. The closure will be verified by your agreement monitor. If the site is confirmed to be closed and the licensee has been in compliance with all requirements for nine consecutive months (or has been compliant thus far, if enrolled less than nine months), then the licensee may use one of the 21 toxicology exemptions allotted to each licensee per year.

Satisfaction Survey

Thank you for participating in the January 2020 HPSP Satisfaction Survey. Your feedback is very important to us. All input is reviewed by the HPSP Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) and, where possible, the program is adjusted. Changes made from Satisfaction Survey input in the past include in-person meetings with agreement monitors, Saturday phone support, and lower-cost toxicology panels for unemployed HPSP participants. Results and answers to your questions will be shared in an upcoming newsletter. Input will also be reviewed by the HPSP Advisory Committee. Your next opportunity to participate is July 2020.

HPSP Outreach

The HPSP Team is scheduling informational sessions on HPSP. If the administrators of your health care workplace are interested in learning more about HPSP, please ask them to contact Scott McBeth, Ph.D. (503-802-9865; scott.mcbeth@ibhsolutions.com) for more information, or to schedule a meeting.

Guideline Reminders

HPSP is governed by thirty two guidelines and we believe that we all need reminders from time to time. We will begin including a guideline in each newsletter as a refresher. This month we will look at the Toxicology Testing Exemption guideline. This guideline can be found online at hpspmonitoring.com on the Guidelines tab.



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Toxicology Testing Exemptions - Guideline

1. A Licensee may request a travel exemption from toxicology testing if all of the following conditions have been met:
 - a. The request must be made at least two weeks prior to time requested. Testing requests not made within the two week timeframe may not be considered.
 - b. The licensee must give HPSP the dates requested, and the city, state, and zip code of where the licensee will be staying. HPSP may request a copy of the licensee's itinerary or proof of travel.
 - c. The request must be for travel in an area where calling the interactive voice response system is not possible and/or a collection site is not available within a 20 mile radius.
 - d. The licensee must have a minimum of 9 months in a monitoring program. If the licensee was in a residential treatment program 2 weeks prior to licensee's entrance to the monitoring program, the time spent in the treatment program will be included in the 9 month calculation. Other treatment modalities may be considered as part of the 9 month calculation if the treatment included random, observed toxicology testing.
 - e. The licensee must have a record of compliance with his/her monitoring agreement and addendums. A licensee must have a minimum of nine months in the HPSP program from the time of the closure of a non-excused report of substantial non-compliance to be eligible to request a testing exemption.
 - f. All treatment providers must approve the licensee's request, in addition to the licensee's agreement monitor. If the agreement monitor has questions if the request meets the requirements of the Guidelines, the agreement monitor may review the case at the Agreement Monitors meeting or consult with a manager.
 - g. The licensee will be required to have a toxicology test upon return from testing exemption.
2. A licensee is able to use up to 21 testing exemption days per year, except in the first year of the program. For the first year, the licensee may not request exemption days until the licensee has been in the program and compliant for nine months. For the remaining 3 months of the licensee's first year in the program, the licensee will be entitled to 10 exemption days. At the licensee's annual review date, which is the anniversary of the date of full enrollment, the licensee will be entitled to 21 exemption days. For licensees who have previously planned longer vacations during the last three months of their first year, the requests may be reviewed and approved at the agreement monitor meeting or staffed with a supervisor on a case by case basis.
3. If a testing exemption is not approved, then the standard vacation policy applies as follows:
 - a. The licensee may travel to a location where the licensee is able to call the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) or log on to the website on a daily basis.
 - b. The licensee must make a request for collection sites at least two weeks in advance of the proposed travel.
 - c. The licensee needs to give the monitoring program the dates of travel, and the city, state and zip code of where the licensee will be staying.
 - d. Licensee will need to take a paper Chain of Custody form to the collection site. No travel kit 45 is needed.
4. The IVR and website are accessible from 3:00am Pacific Time - 5:00pm Pacific Time. If the IVR system is contacted prior to 3:00am or after 5:00pm, the licensee will NOT hear their individualized testing message; rather a message will inform each licensee that they've contacted the IVR outside the hours of operation. The website provides the same messaging outside hours of operation.

Upcoming Events

2020 Caring for Trans and Non Binary Patients

You are invited to participate in the first of 2020's Continuing Professional Education courses offered by Cedar Hills Hospital and Outpatient Services - Culturally Competent Care for Trans and Non Binary Patients. Dale Johannes of Merck will present, followed by a consumer panel discussion. Snacks will be provided. We applied to NASW for CEUs.

When: Thursday, February 27, 2020 from 2:45 PM to 5:30 PM

Contact: Michael Sorensen, MPA, Cedar Hills Hospital, 971.228.8000x250, michael.sorensen@uhsinc.com

Register: [Click here to register.](#)

The ASAM 51st Annual Conference - Innovations in Addiction Medicine and Science

The ASAM Annual Conference is the nation's premier event providing the latest innovations and scientific developments in addiction medicine. The conference is 4/2/2020 - 4/5/2020 Gaylord Rockies Resort and Convention Center Denver, CO.

New Save the Date 2020 Oregon Professional Recovery Network Conference

The 2020 Oregon Professionals Recovery Network (PRN) Conference will be Saturday, May 16th, 2020 in Salem. Details and additional information will be shared as soon as they are available.

Visit <http://www.pnforegon.org/> for more information.



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Upcoming Events (continued)

IDA A 2020

The next **International Doctors in Alcoholics Anonymous** will be August 5-9, 2020 in Spokane, Washington. For more information please visit www.idaa.org.

Relax: How to Let Go of Stress

You're familiar with the symptoms of stress -- a pounding heart, increased perspiration, tight neck and shoulder muscles, anxiety and fear. But you may not know how to prevent or relieve these symptoms. Taking the following actions can help you manage the negative effects of stress.

Exercise. A regular workout can release pent-up frustrations. The American Heart Association (AHA) recommends getting 30 minutes or more of moderate exercise at least three or four times a week. Choose any aerobic activity you like, such as walking, jogging, bicycling, swimming, stair climbing or step aerobics.

If life is too hectic for such a commitment, you also can find relief through brief periods of exercise: If you work at a desk, get up and take a walk around the building for 15 minutes, or go up and down a few flights of stairs.

Don't Isolate Yourself. One of the best ways to fight stress is to discuss your problems with a close friend or relative. Talking to other people helps you realize you're not alone and can help you put a difficult situation in perspective.

Besides relieving the pressure of dealing with a problem by yourself, talking things out may lead you to a solution. If you can't find someone to talk to, or you have difficulty talking about what's bothering you, writing about the situation in a journal can be effective as well.

Live In The Present. Take a moment to think about the causes of your stress. Many of them may come from thinking about the past or worrying about the future. If you can plant yourself firmly in the present, you can leave many worries behind and focus more clearly on solutions to current problems.

Quiet Your Mind And Imagination. In times of stress, the mind makes things appear worse than they are by creating endless versions of impending disaster. Because the body can't tell the difference between fact and fantasy, it responds with heightened physical response and mental anxiety.

Pay Attention To Your Diet And Health Habits. A sensible diet of wholesome, healthful foods can help stabilize your moods. Consuming too much caffeine, sugar and alcohol or any nicotine or illegal drugs can increase your stress, making coping more difficult.

Make Time For Laughter And Fun. Surround yourself with positive people who like to laugh. Watch funny movies instead of the news in the evening. Engage in fun or silly activities. You'll find laughter really is one of the best remedies.

Immerse Yourself In A Favorite Activity Or Hobby. Participating in a pleasurable activity will give you a block of time when you're focusing on an interesting task instead of on your problems. Gardening, carpentry, fishing, sewing, working with clay, painting or playing cards may appeal to you.

Use A Variety Of Relaxation Techniques. Deep-breathing exercises, progressive relaxation, visualization, creative imagery, yoga, meditation or listening to relaxation tapes can help relieve stress. Relaxation techniques are skills that can be learned and practiced. If you don't know how to do any relaxation exercises, take a class, read a book or listen to a tape on the subject.

Balance Your Life. If work is causing you stress, immerse yourself in a favorite activity when you get home. But focus more on work if a family problem or relationship is the cause of your stress. Above all, take time for yourself, whether it's for a daily walk, a hot bath or a quiet night at home. Taking good care of yourself helps you let go of stress.

If these techniques don't work, and your stress impairs your capacity to function at work or at home, speak with your primary care doctor or a mental health professional

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March 2020



Testing Holidays

There are not any testing holidays this month. The next testing holiday is Memorial Day (May 25, 2020.)

COVID-19 and HPSP

During this time of uncertainty, we will follow the CDC guidelines for Healthcare Providers:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/handhygiene/science/index.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/show-me-the-science-hand-sanitizer.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/rr/rr5116.pdf>

HPSP has been in communication with all participating licensing boards. At the time of this publication (March 18, 2020), all guidelines continue to be followed with very limited exceptions. See below for details:

Testing

- Testing is as usual. Exemption will be allowed on a very limited basis with medical verification; in those cases, alternative testing will be employed.
- If you are unable to test due to emergency issues at work, you will need to submit documentation from your employer explaining the emergency.
- If you have been quarantined by a medical provider, HPSP will need medical updates every four weeks. If you have been advised to self-quarantine but do not have medical documentation, please consult with your agreement monitor.
- If you are NOT working, you likely qualify for the unemployed toxicology schedule; this will alleviate some of the financial burden of toxicology. (*Ask your agreement monitor for more information).
- If your toxicology site is closed, please proceed to your secondary site. If you do not know where that is, log in to the portal at hpspmonitoring.com or ask your agreement monitor
- If you do not have a secondary site, please document the closure by taking a picture of the closed sign when you arrive. Submit the time-stamped photo to your agreement monitor. We will verify that you were unable to test by calling the site when they next open.
- Please make it a habit to call your testing site before you leave to test so that you can confirm their hours or make arrangements to go to your alternate testing site. You may also want to ask if there are protocols in place to allow for social distancing and/or if you can make an appointment to alleviate wait times.

Workplace

- If you are working and your Workplace Monitor is out sick, you need to call your agreement monitor immediately for further direction.

Please be safe and when in doubt about your monitoring, please call your Agreement Monitor.



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PRN Annual Conference

The 2020 Oregon Professionals Recovery Network (PRN) Conference has been cancelled due to COVID-19. They may reschedule for later in the year.

HPSP Outreach

The HPSP Team is scheduling informational sessions on HPSP. If the administrators of your health care workplace are interested in learning more about HPSP, please ask them to contact Scott McBeth, Ph.D. (503-802-9865; scott.mcbeth@ibhsolutions.com) for more information, or to schedule a meeting.

Over-the-Counter Allergy Relief

Seasonal allergies will soon be in full force. As a reminder, several over-the-counter medications may have sedating or stimulating effects, include centrally acting antihistamines, such as diphenhydramine (Benadryl), and hydroxyzine (Vistaril or Atarax). A complete list can be found at: <https://hpspmonitoring.com/HpspOregon/OrForms?fileType=Forms>.

Be sure to have your primary care physician submit a Medication Management Form if you are using any of these over-the-counter medications BEFORE you have a non-negative test. This is the same form that is filled out if you have any prescriptions with addictive potential and/or psychotropic medication. The Medication Management Form (MMF) and other useful forms are available at www.hpspmonitoring.com under the Resources tab.

Future Travel Plans?

Eventually, we will recover from this pandemic and travel will resume. Please remember that travel requests need to be made two weeks in advance in order to guarantee appropriate collection site allocation and chain of custody form distribution. The Guideline for Toxicology Testing Exemptions and all other HPSP Guidelines are available at www.hpspmonitoring.com.



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April 2020



Testing Holidays

There are not any testing holidays in the month of April. The next testing holiday is Memorial Day (May 25, 2020.)

COVID-19 and HPSP

During this time of uncertainty, we will follow the CDC guidelines for Healthcare Providers:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/handhygiene/science/index.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/show-me-the-science-hand-sanitizer.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/rr/rr5116.pdf>

Updates on COVID-19

Recently we sent an email notification which is best to be reiterated here in this month's newsletter.

Attention all Licensees:

We are aware of continuous changes in collection site hours and protocols as well as some temporary closures. Given the volume of changes and the speed with which things are changing, the only way for you to be fully informed is to personally call your assigned sites when you are required to test.

We strongly recommend that you:

1. Check to see if a test is required EARLY in the morning.
2. If a test is required, call your collection site(s) as early as they may be open to:
3. Verify that they are OPEN that day.
4. Confirm their hours
5. Ask about any special protocols (Do you need to make an appointment? Do they need to screen you before you come in?)
6. If NONE of your sites are open, it is your responsibility to call your agreement monitor to make alternate arrangements.

***Remember, it is your responsibility to test if you are scheduled. We know that this is a difficult time and we are here to support you.**

Social Distancing Accommodation

In light of the current circumstances in regard to COVID-19 and the need for social distancing, on a temporary basis HPSP will allow participants to sign into the collection site to be tested and then return to their car (and remain parked there) until they are called in to be tested.

After signing in at the collection site, please show this to the front desk so that they are aware of our request. By allowing this change, we are asking collection sites to assist us in our efforts to keep our participants, as well as the collection site team members and other patrons, SAFE.



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The HPSP Team is scheduling informational sessions on HPSP. If the administrators of your health care workplace are interested in learning more about HPSP, please ask them to contact Scott McBeth, Ph.D. (503-802-9865; scott.mcbeth@ibhsolutions.com) for more information, or to schedule a meeting.

If you or the collection site have any questions, we can be reached at 888.802.2843.

HPSP has been in communication with all participating licensing boards. At the time of this publication (April 17th, 2020), all guidelines continue to be followed with very limited exceptions. See below for details:

Testing

- Testing is as usual. Exemption will be allowed on a very limited basis with medical verification; in those cases, alternative testing will be employed.
- If you are unable to test due to emergency issues at work, you will need to submit documentation from your employer explaining the emergency.
- **If you have been quarantined by a medical provider, HPSP will need medical updates every four weeks. If you have been advised to self-quarantine but do not have medical documentation, please consult with your agreement monitor.**
- If you are NOT working, you likely qualify for the unemployed toxicology schedule; this will alleviate some of the financial burden of toxicology. (*Ask your agreement monitor for more information).
- **If your toxicology site is closed, please proceed to your secondary sites.** If you do not know where that is, log in to the portal at www.hpspmonitoring.com or ask your agreement monitor.
- If you do not have a secondary site, please document the closure by taking a picture of the closed sign when you arrive. Submit the time-stamped photo to your agreement monitor. We will verify that you were unable to test by calling the site when they next open.

****If the site was open that day and you showed up after they closed that will be considered as a missed test.**

- **Please make it a habit to call your testing site before you leave to test so that you can confirm their hours or decide to go to your alternate testing site.** You may also want to ask if there are protocols in place to allow for social distancing and/or if you can make an appointment to alleviate wait times.

****You are responsible for testing even if your site is closed which means that you need to understand where your secondary sites are.**

****You need to contact HPSP as soon as possible if your site(s) is closed in order to get a link to your secondary site(s).**

Workplace

- If you are working and your Workplace Monitor is out sick, you need to call your agreement monitor immediately for further direction.

Workouts for One: Staying Fit in Extraordinary Times

The Coronavirus pandemic has closed gyms and shut down pools, community centers and other places where we're used to getting our exercise in. But staying fit and healthy is still important. What's the best way to get a workout when your gym and Zumba® class are off-limits? There are lots of healthy ways to exert yourself under "stay at home" or "shelter in place" orders, even if you don't have a dusty exercise bike in the basement.

For many of us, replacing the motivation of working out in groups is the most challenging aspect of the closures. There are several ways to keep yourself accountable when your goal is to stay fit. You can pair up with a friend virtually or join one of the many "30 Day Challenges" you can find online. There are challenges for everything from yoga to push-ups, designed to increase your fitness and instill a habit over the course of a month.

1. **Take a Class (At Home).** Any exercise class that you take is probably available in some form on the Internet. Zumba founder "Beto" Perez has a 54-minute high energy workout on Vimeo, for example. There are plenty of yoga and tai chi videos as well, which may be particularly calming in stressful times.

2. **Update the Jumping Jack.** If you're just starting out, try the chair sit: Sit on a chair with your arms across your chest, push from your feet to a standing position without using your arms. Repeat for 30 seconds. Rest 2 minutes and repeat. If you are fitter, jumping jacks and push-ups may seem a bit old-fashioned, but they work! Bored with those? The exercise website ExRx.net has a number of variations.



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3. **Head Outside.** Remember that the stay at home regulations in most places allow solitary hiking, jogging and walking your dog (make sure to stay up on the local guidance for your city). This is the simplest way to get a solid cardio workout, and the sunlight and fresh air will help your mood, too.

4. **Stairways to Heaven.** Stair climbing is a time-tested way to get your heart rate up. Inhabitants of high-rises have plenty of stairs to climb. House-dwellers may feel silly going up and down the same flight of stairs, but a pair of headphones and a good playlist can transport you. If you are a newbie, take it very slow. Start with 2 minutes of stair climbing and increase from there.

5. **Get Into Your Chores.** Now's a great time to do those energy-intensive chores around the house that you've been putting off. Scraping down flaking paint, or scrubbing or sanding anything, are tremendous upper body workouts. Scrub the tub. Get the grease off the walls and ceiling around your stove. It's unlikely that you'll run out of useful things to do.

6. **Dance Party.** Put on your favorite music and have a dance party with your family. Young kids are remarkably ready to jump around with their parents. Some will be comfortable Facetiming a friend and dancing their faces off. Even if you're by yourself, go ahead and cut a rug.

Whatever you do, remember to do something. One of the most important things you can do for your health is to stand up, and move for 5 minutes of every hour you spend sitting in front of your computer.

Finally, be sure to hydrate and wash your hands before and after your workout. Although it's always good to check with your doctor before beginning any new exercise program, that might not be possible at this time, so be mindful of your own fitness abilities and take it slowly.



Source: Miriam Wolf

PRN Annual Conference

The 2020 Oregon Professionals Recovery Network (PRN) Conference has been cancelled due to COVID-19. They may reschedule for later in the year.

Reminders

Guideline for Over-the-Counter Allergy Relief: <https://hpspmonitoring.com/HpspOregon/OrForms?fileType=Forms>.
Medication Management Forms: www.hpspmonitoring.com



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May 2020



Upcoming Testing Holidays

The following Oregon observed holidays are test exemptions days on which you do not need to check to see if you need to test: May 25th Memorial Day.

Welcome New Monitor

Welcome Aboard to our newest member of the Agreement Monitor position Shawla Scott-Barker, LPC, CGAC-II.

I am a Licensed Professional Counselor in the state of Oregon. I am also certified as a gambling addiction counselor (CGAC) and have several years' experience working with those who have a gambling disorder, as well as their partners and families. My work background has been in a community behavioral health setting, working with both mental health and addiction issues. I have always been interested in working in the addictions/recovery support field in some capacity. During my time off from work, I enjoy traveling around and hiking in the beautiful Pacific Northwest. I especially love the desert, with all of the unique plants and wildlife.

Over-the-Counter Prescriptions

With allergy season fast approaching, please review and familiarize yourself with the Over-the-County Medication List at www.hpspmonitoring.com. Over-the-counter medications containing alcohol cannot be approved and must not be taken. Additionally, avoid medications that contain diphenhydramine or pseudoephedrine. If your provider suggests a centrally acting antihistamine or decongestant such as diphenhydramine (Benadryl) or hydroxyzine (Vistaril or Atarax), a Medication Management Form will be required. All mind-altering, intoxicating substances, or potentially addictive drugs prescribed by a provider need to be documented using the Medication Management Form. Please have these forms in place and approved in advance of any non-negative toxicology.

To find the Medication Management Form and other related material you can go to:
<https://hpspmonitoring.com/HpspOregon/OrForms?fileType=Forms>

A Few Good Reminders:

- Check in with the IVR, APP, or log into your account in hpspmonitoring.com daily.
- If you are randomly selected to test- go test.
- Always check with your testing site by calling and checking to see what hours they currently have since the sites are changing hours due to COVID-19 and social distancing.
- Call, email, or leave a voicemail with your Agreement Monitor weekly for a check in.
- Be in touch with your treatment providers and your Agreement Monitor. If you are in touch with your Agreement Monitor when issues arise, they will be able to be much more helpful in suggestions or solutions to your issue.



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Stress Signals: When Your Body Says Help

In moderate doses, stress challenges you to do your best so you keep learning and growing. But too much stress has a negative effect on your work, mood and physical well-being. "When stress becomes chronic, it turns into distress. It creates a hostile environment in your body," says Susan B. Johnson, Ed.D., with the Cooper Institute for Aerobics Research in Dallas.

"Every time you face a task or problem that requires special effort," Dr. Johnson says, "your body secretes hormones such as adrenaline. These hormones prompt your body to make other chemicals that send extra power to muscles and help you focus your mind and senses. After your response is over, these chemicals are washed away safely in your blood." When stress continues over time, the level of the chemicals goes up and remains elevated with continued stress.



Your body says "help". Stress-related symptoms vary from person to person. If you have a health problem or even a family predisposition to a certain disease, that's where the stress-related symptoms are likely to occur. Here are common ways your body tells you it's under too much stress:

Chronic colds and flu. If you get a cold every Christmas or before a major presentation at work, added stress could be the reason. With a weakened immune system, your body is more susceptible to cold and flu viruses. Build your immune system by getting lots of rest, drinking plenty of fluids and eating vitamin-rich foods.

Insomnia. If you go to bed with a problem on your mind, your body gives you another shot of adrenaline every time you think about it. Before going to bed, settle down by taking a walk, drinking warm milk or taking a hot bath. Then think about something pleasant as you drift off.

Headaches and sore muscles. The stress reaction—also known as "flight or fight"—puts your body in a state of red alert, with your muscles tensed to fight back. Constant tension makes them rigid and sore. Tight neck and shoulder muscles make your head throb. To relieve the symptoms, stretch every couple of hours or do light exercises. Avoid caffeine if it makes you tense.

Stomach problems. Stress prompts secretions of stomach acid that can cause heartburn, stomach cramps or other digestive miseries. Treat the symptoms with an over-the-counter antacid and avoid stomach irritants such as coffee, cigarettes, alcohol, hot peppers and mints. Soothe yourself with deep-breathing exercises and physical activities you enjoy – like bicycling or gardening.

Stress-proof yourself. "Physical symptoms of stress often become worse if the stress continues to build," Dr. Johnson says. "Chronic stress also can lead to more serious conditions such as heart disease, depression, alcoholism and cancer."

You may be keeping your body in a state of chronic stress if you often feel uptight or hostile. Learn how to deal with stress constructively and you can use it to meet life's challenges. Some things that may help with stress are: exercise, entertainment and companionship offer brief respites from stress; efforts should be made to reduce obvious and modifiable sources of stress; recognize that some sources of stress are not modifiable and need to be worked around.

Source: The StayWell Company LLC, ©2020



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HealthProCHOICES

A newsletter for participants in the Health Professionals' Services Program (HPSP)

June/July 2020



"It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences."
-Audre Lorde

Great News: We are Switching to a New MRO Service!

We have heard your concerns and we are making the switch to MRO Express. MRO Express is an experienced, efficient, MRO service with a strong track-record. We are sure you will be pleased with their services!

You will or may have already received an EchoSign document to sign by our newest team member, Kathy Prewitt. Medtox will be sending you new paper chain of custody forms in the coming weeks. You can continue to use your current forms in the meantime. (Note: If you have not already signed and returned a Medtox direct mail consent form you will receive one to complete so that Medtox can send you the chain of custody forms.) Your assistance will allow us to make the change to MRO Express and we are confident that you will be pleased with your experiences with them.

If you have questions, please reach out to your Agreement Monitor.

Travel Plans

Traveling this summer? Please remember that we require two weeks' notice of travel plans so we can identify testing sites. Remember that we need zip codes and dates of travel. Also, please remember to carry your paper chain of custody forms with you on your travels. Get your requests in early if you have already made your summer plans.

After-hours Phone

IBH Monitoring is pleased to once again offer an after-hours line in case of collection site emergencies. Please note this new phone number: 503.802.9818. During business hours, you should continue to use (888.802.2843).

Friendly Reminder

Please remember to check to see if a test is scheduled every day, Monday through Saturday, between the hours of 03:00 and 17:00. We have three easy options that you can utilize:

1. Phone: 1-888-802-2851
2. Website: <https://www.hpspmonitoring.com/>
3. iPhone and Android App: RBH Daily

Our tip sheet provides some helpful hints and tips about the check-in process:

<https://www.rbhmonitoring.com/Content/Oregon/Tips/Daily%20IVR%20Check%20Tip%20Sheet.pdf>



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One More Caveat to Testing

We highly suggest that you call your testing site early in the day to verify the hours of operations every day you are required to test. Especially in today's climate, many testing sites' hours of operation are changing. Verifying the hours will help to ensure that you do not miss a test and consequently be reported to your respective board for Non-Compliance.

Our Lives in the COVID-19 Age

Our lives have changed due to COVID-19. Some of these changes are small and others are significant. You might be unexpectedly working from home, homeschooling your kids, caring for an elder, or experiencing other major life changes. Then there are little changes like how you grocery shop, exercise and spend your free time. This may have left you feeling uneasy, overwhelmed, anxious, stressed or just plain tired.

"Performing a daily de-stress routine can effectively counteract stress and anxiety, so that the results of stress don't build up and cause problems," says Gerald W. Vest, professor emeritus of sociology at New Mexico State University in Las Cruces. Mr. Vest offers the following suggestions for staying calm when your in-box is filling up, your children are screaming or your car's breaking down.

Stress Rx

The following de-stressing exercises can be done at home or the office:

- **Belly Breathing.** For immediate stress relief, Mr. Vest recommends placing your left hand over your heart, your right hand on your belly and breathing deeply. "Just notice your breathing," he advises. "By observing the rise and fall of your breath, you'll naturally begin to relax. At home, or at work if you have privacy, you can also do this technique lying down. Do it for several minutes any time you feel anxious or stressed.
- **Arm Yourself.** Pull up your right shirt sleeve and massage your right shoulder with your left hand. Then feather down your arm with gentle soothing motions. Repeat on the other arm. "The nervous system is connected to all the cells of the body. By soothing the skin of your shoulders and arm, you'll immediately start to relax," says Mr. Vest. And whenever you're using touch, continue to focus on your breathing.
- **Hand Care.** To discharge tension that can accumulate in the hands, knead your left palm with your right hand. Repeat on the other hand. Also, spread your fingers and use the thumb and forefinger of your opposite hand to lightly press each joint and work out the tension between your fingers. Switch hands. Then make circles in your palm with your opposite hand. Switch hands.
- **Saving Face.** Massaging the face also reduces cumulative tension. For quick stress relief before a meeting or important presentation, Mr. Vest recommends lightly massaging your temples, smoothing your eyebrows and massaging your cheekbones and jaw. Also, spend a few seconds pinching and stretching your ear lobes, a typically tense area.
- **Progressive Breath Relaxation.** Use your breath to relax your muscles. "Starting with your feet, visualize each muscle and imagine that your breath is going to the muscle and relaxing it," says Mr. Vest. "Working your way up, spend a few seconds on each part of the body, going through it consciously."



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August 2020



"An obstacle is often a steppingstone." – William Prescott

Great News: New Agreement Monitor



We are pleased and honored to introduce the newest member of the HPSP Agreement Monitor team: Kathy Prewitt. Here's a brief introduction in Kathy's own words: "Nearly all my life I've worked in the behavioral health field. After earning my Master's degree, I worked for 12+ years for a large national Employee Assistance Program addressing broad and complex issues affecting mental and emotional well-being, such as alcohol and other substance use, stress, grief, family problems, and psychological disorders. I've also dedicated my time to volunteering in the community (i.e. Portland Women's Crisis Line, Cascade AIDS Project, Community Advocates Child Abuse Prevention, OHSU's Knight Cancer Institute, etc.). Personally, I'm a stepmother to a daughter whose mom passed away. I find nourishment spending time with friends and family, being outdoors, dabbling in videography, playing musical instruments, and providing trauma-informed bodywork for hospice patients." Please join us in welcoming Kathy to the team.

After-hours Phone

In case you missed it last month, IBH Monitoring is pleased to once again offer an after-hours line in case of collection site emergencies. Please note this new phone number: 503.802.9818. During business hours, you should continue to use 888.802.2843.

HPSP Informational Sessions

HPSP is once again scheduling informational sessions. The COVID-19 Pandemic has severely reduced our in-person outreach over the last few months, but we are once again offering these sessions. We have developed a new online webinar that will educate your facility, administrators, healthcare workers, and other professional employees about HPSP. If the administrators of your health care workplace are interested in learning more about HPSP, please ask them to contact Scott McBeth, Ph.D. ((503) 802-9865; scott.mcbeth@ibhsolutions.com).

Travel Plans?

Planning to travel? Please remember that we require two weeks' notice of travel plans so we can identify testing sites. Remember that we need zip codes and dates of travel. Also, please remember to carry your paper chain of custody forms with you on your travels. Get your requests in early if you have already made your plans.



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Oregon Medical Board – “When and What to Report to the Board”

The Oregon Medical Board’s summer newsletter included an article worth noting for our OMB Licensees. The topic of this article is the issues that must be reported to the board. (<https://www.oregon.gov/omb/Newsletter/Summer%202020.pdf>). The chart below exhibits the issues that are reportable. The Board stresses that these issues must reported directly to the Board and not to HPSP to count as an official notification. It is up to individual licensees to report the issue to your HPSP Agreement Monitor as well.

Please contact your Agreement Monitor with any questions.

What Must be Reported to the Board		
Self-Report	<p>Arrests and Convictions: Licensee must self-report if convicted of a misdemeanor or felony or if arrested for a felony crime. * References: ORS 676.150(3), ORS 676.150(5)</p> <p>Adverse Actions: Licensee must self-report any adverse action taken by another licensing jurisdiction or any peer review body, health care institution, professional or medical society or association, governmental agency, law enforcement agency or court for acts or conduct similar to acts or conduct that would constitute grounds for discipline as described in the Medical Practice Act (ORS 677). * References: ORS 677.190(26), OAR 847-010-0073(1)</p> <p>Official Actions: Licensee must self-report any official action taken against the licensee. Official action means a restriction, limitation, loss or denial of privileges of a licensee to practice medicine, or any formal action taken against a licensee by a government agency or a health care facility based on a finding of medical incompetence, unprofessional conduct, physical incapacity or impairment. This includes reporting official actions from any state or other licensing board. * References: ORS 677.415(4), ORS 677.205(1), OAR 847-010-0073(1)</p> <p>Voluntary Actions Under Investigation: Licensee must promptly self-report voluntary withdrawal, resignation, or limitation of staff privileges at a health care facility, if the licensee’s voluntary action occurs while the licensee is under investigation by the facility for any reason related to possible medical incompetence, unprofessional conduct, or physical incapacity or impairment. * References: ORS 677.415(6), ORS 677.205(1), ORS 677.190(27), OAR 847-010-0073(1)</p> <p>Office-Based Surgery Complications and Incidents: Licensee performing office-based surgery must self-report complications and adverse incidents, if the complication occurred within 30 days of the procedure. * References: OAR 847-017-0037</p> <p>Address Changes: Licensee must notify the Board of changes to residence address, practice location, or mailing address. May be subject to an automatic lapse of license to practice for failure to notify the Board. * References: ORS 677.228(1), ORS 677.190(18), ORS 677.172, OAR 847-008-0060</p> <p>Retirement from Practice: Licensee must notify the Board of the intention to retire. * References: ORS 677.175</p>	
	Other Licensee/Association Report	<p>Prohibited or Unprofessional Conduct: Licensee who has reasonable cause to believe another health care professional has engaged in prohibited or unprofessional conduct must report the conduct to the board responsible for that person, unless prohibited by law. * References: ORS 677.092, ORS 676.150(2), ORS 676.150(3), OAR 847-010-0073(1)</p> <p>Medically Incompetent, Unprofessional or Dishonorable Conduct, Physical Incapacity: Licensee or medical association must report any information that appears to show that a licensee is or may be medically incompetent, guilty of unprofessional or dishonorable conduct, or has a physical incapacity. This report may not include privileged peer review data, see ORS 41.675. * References: ORS 677.415(3), OAR 847-010-0073(1)</p>
	Facility Report	<p>Official Actions: A health care facility must report any official action taken against a licensee. The facility is subject to a penalty of not more than \$10,000 for each failure to report. * References: ORS 677.415(5), ORS 677.415(10), OAR 847-010-0073(1)</p> <p>Voluntary Actions Under Investigation: A health care facility must promptly report a licensee’s voluntary withdrawal, resignation, or limitation of staff privileges at a health care facility if the licensee’s voluntary action occurs while the licensee is under investigation by the facility for any reason related to possible medical incompetence, unprofessional conduct, or physical incapacity or impairment. * References: ORS 677.415(6), OAR 847-010-0073(1)</p>
Insurance Report	<p>Alleged Professional Negligence: Insurer or self-insurer must report claims of alleged professional negligence. Incidents and inquiries not leading to claims need not be filed. * References: ORS 742.400(2), OAR 847-010-0075(1)</p> <p>Settlements, Awards, or Judgments: All settlements, awards, or judgments against a physician paid as a result of alleged professional negligence must be reported. * References: ORS 742.400(4), OAR 847-010-0075(2)</p> <p><i>Most reports are required to be made within 10 days of the occurrence. Please review the associated references for specific requirements.</i></p> <p><i>For reporting definitions, including official action, medical incompetence, unprofessional conduct, and licensee impairment, see OAR 847-010-0073(3) and ORS 677.415(1).</i></p>	

Self Care: Handle Stress Before It Handles You

No one is immune to stress. It’s a part of life, whether the physical stress of a harried schedule, or the mental stress of money problems. People respond to and rate stress differently, but stress is usually defined as a negative feeling, according to the National Mental Health Association (NMHA). Much of the stress we complain of or react to is tied to everyday responsibilities, the NMHA says. And not all stress is easily recognizable by us. But our bodies respond automatically: increasing blood pressure, heart rate, breathing, metabolism and blood flow to your muscles, the NMHA says. This response is valuable when fleeing a dangerous situation, but when you face stress daily, the result can affect your health, weakening your immune system and leaving you more susceptible to illness.

By understanding what is causing you stress, you may be able to make changes to help you feel more in control.

Impact of Stress

People are affected differently by stress. Some feel overwhelmed about lack of time, others are more irritable and less patient, and some are unable to focus well.



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How to Cope

Dealing effectively with stress takes determination, persistence and time, the NMHA says. Here are suggestions for coping with stress; some may help immediately, but others may help in the long term. Learn to accept or change stressful situations when you can.

Learn to Say No

If you feel overwhelmed by your (or your family's) hectic schedule, figure out what you can eliminate -- and learn to say no to new responsibilities, the NMHA says. Tell family and friends why you are making changes, and be willing to listen to other people's suggestions.



Pass Up Perfection

You're not superman or superwoman, so don't expect perfection from yourself -- or others, the NMHA says. Be realistic about what you can accomplish, and don't hesitate to ask for help if you need it.

One at a Time

Focus on one task you need to do at a time. Decide which is the most urgent and tackle that one first. From there, go down your list one at a time. This will help keep you from feeling overwhelmed.

Have a Support System

It's OK to lean on others. Taking time to talk with friends and family about what's bothering you can make a real difference, the NMHA says. Instead of simply complaining about issues, talk about ways to solve the problems causing your stress. And, if your stressors become overwhelming, your next step should be turning to a mental health professional.

Exercise and Enjoy Your Leisure Time

Step away from your stress by setting aside time for exercise, leisure and relaxation. Don't use leisure time as a reward for completing work or chores. Build it into your schedule all through the year.

Some people like quietness and can use relaxation exercises such as meditation to ease their stress because they find it refreshing and restorative. Other people like to be active and are more apt to find physical activities, such as walking, running or other exercise, to be beneficial.

Whichever style is appropriate for you, it's important to make time to de-stress regularly. In the long run, using small moments to escape your stressors can protect you from many of the damaging effects of stress.

Here are other ways to increase your coping ability:

- Concentrate on the present. Don't dwell on problems in your past or worries about your future.
- Maintain a daily routine. A familiar pattern can increase security when stress seems to be taking over.
- Take deep-breath breaks several times a day. Even brief stress breaks of 10 to 15 minutes can be helpful.
- Get regular, adequate amounts of sleep. Most people need from six to 10 hours per night.

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HealthProCHOICES

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September 2020



NOTE: There are no Holiday exemption days in the month of October.

Where has the time gone? Summer is over, candy displays for Halloween are out and I saw my first Christmas display of the year last weekend. Every year I ask myself, "What happened to the summer and how could it be fall?!" Every year like clockwork.

This year, 2020, is especially strange due to the COVID-19 pandemic, closing of businesses, quarantining at home, mask wearing, riots, and protests. This is a strain on anyone and everyone. In hopes of providing some support, we continue to disseminate information regarding those topics, particularly through our newsletters. In this issue, we have included more information on self-care in our new world.

We hope in these difficult times that you stay in contact with your Agreement Monitor, especially if you need help or just need to talk. We are here to help and support you!

Scott McBeth, Ph.D.

Director of Monitoring Programs

Professional Resources During the Pandemic

At Health Professionals' Services Program we are here to help and support the front-line healthcare professionals. One of the ways we strive to do this is with notifications of education and support groups. The Federation of State Physician Health Programs offer a series of educational sessions.

Preparing PHPs to Support Physicians Facing Moral Injury and Trauma of COVID-19 Education Session

June 26, 2020: Hosted by the FSPHP Task Force to Support PHPs During COVID-19

Website: <https://fsphp.memberclicks.net/preparing-phps-to-support-physicians-facing-moral-injury-and-trauma-of-covid-19>

Session Outline and Presenters:

- **Staying Well Amidst the Crisis** - Doris C. Gundersen, MD, Medical Director, Colorado Physician Health Program
- **Pacing Yourself in a Pandemic: Knowing When to Slow Down** - Joy Albuquerque, MA, MD, FRCPC, Medical Director, Ontario Medical Association
- **The COVID-19 Pandemic and the Impact on Health Systems and Clinicians** - Arthur S. Hengerer, MD, FACS, Past Chair of FSMB Board, Board of Professional Medical Conduct, and the Dept of Otolaryngology at University of Rochester



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Testing Tip

Previously this year we requested that you call your testing site early in the day to verify the hours of operations each time you are required to test. Especially in today's climate, many testing sites' hours of operation are changing. Verifying the hours will help to ensure that you do not miss a test and consequently end up reported to your respective board for non-compliance.

Unfortunately, this situation persists. We continue to encourage you to call the testing site well in advance to alleviate any issues that could come up.

Guideline Refresher: Testing Frequencies

We have had questions regarding our guidelines on testing and frequencies. In an attempt to address those questions, please review the below information and the guidelines. The most important piece to understand is that the **listed frequencies are an absolute minimum**. These frequencies do increase in many situations. Examples of particular issues that require additional testing include dilute tests, missed tests, positive tests, concerns regarding recovery, and requests from the Board. If you have more specific questions regarding your toxicology testing, please reach out to your Agreement Monitor.

The testing standard for the HPSP program for licensees with substance use disorder only or substance use disorder and mental health diagnoses are as follows:

- Year one: a minimum of 36 tests per year
- Year two: a minimum of 24 tests per year
- Year three: a minimum of 18 tests per year
- Year four: a minimum of 18 tests per year
- Year five: a minimum of 12 or 18 tests per year (depending on program entry date)

Please review the entire guideline at: <https://hpspmonitoring.com/Content/Oregon/Guidelines/Guideline%20for%20Toxicology%20Testing%20Frequency.pdf>

Reach Us

We assume by now you know how to reach us, but just in case:

- Phone number: (888)802-2843
- Fax Number: 503-961-7142
- Email: hpsp@ibhmonitoring.com
- IVR #: 888-802-2851
- App for check-ins: RBHDaily
- Portal (for check-ins and more): hpspmonitoring.com
- IVR/App/Portal daily check-in hours: 3:00am PT – 5:00pm PT

Don't Let Anxiety Control Your Life

Anxiety is even more of an issue and is an issue for more people during these challenging times. Here is some information and some tips to help.

Anxiety is familiar to everyone due to the many stresses and complexities of modern life, but about 25 percent of U.S. adults have a serious problem with anxiety that must be addressed at some time in their lives. "Unlike fear, which is usually directed toward a concrete thing or event, such as a snarling dog or not meeting a deadline, anxiety is often nonspecific and can be brought on by worrying about the future, your finances or your health, in general," says Edmund Bourne, Ph.D., author of *Coping With Anxiety*."

The causes of anxiety are varied and can include upsets in brain chemistry, heredity, childhood trauma, abuse, chronic stress, loss of a loved one, and drug and alcohol abuse. "While it can be helpful to identify possible causes of anxiety and address them, you don't need to know why you feel anxious to be helped by practicing coping strategies," says Dr. Bourne.



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Coping Strategies. The following practices are helpful for anyone with anxiety and may be all that's needed if your level is mild and not disrupting your life. People with more severe anxiety, including anyone dealing with panic or post-traumatic stress symptoms, will still find the exercises helpful but also may need therapy and medication.

Take Calming Breaths This exercise quickly interrupts the momentum of anxiety symptoms. Breathing from your abdomen, inhale through your nose slowly to a count of five. Pause and hold your breath to a count of five. Exhale slowly to a count of five. Take two normal breaths, then repeat the cycle for three to five minutes.

Stop Magnifying Problems. Exaggerating problems by making them seem bigger and more serious than they are can lead to anxiety. To combat this way of thinking, stop using words such as terrible, awful, or horrendous in relation to events or situations in your life. Instead of saying to yourself, "It's unbearable," or "I can't stand it," try saying, "I can cope" and "I can deal with this."

Stop Worrisome Thoughts. Use this strategy if you feel stuck in a spiral of worrisome thoughts. "If you're alone and want to halt a chain of anxious thoughts, shout in a loud and forceful manner, 'Stop!' or 'Stop it!'" says Dr. Bourne. "If you're with other people, shout internally as you visualize a large stop sign." Repeat this every time the worrisome thought returns.

Shift your Point of View. When anxiety or worry about an actual or possible problem is getting the best of you, try thinking about the situation in the following ways:

- Tell yourself you can lighten up about it.
- Say the affirmation, "This, too, shall pass."

Combat Negative Self-talk. Positive affirmation can help you cope in the moment and over the long-term by helping you change long-standing beliefs, which tend to enable anxiety. To make your thoughts more constructive and supportive, replace or refute each negative statement. For example, replace "This is unbearable" with "I can learn to cope with this."

"Resisting or fighting anxiety is likely to make it worse," says Dr. Bourne. "A more constructive approach is to cultivate an attitude that says, 'OK, here it is again. I can handle this. I've done it before.' Anxiety often peaks and subsides in a few minutes and will pass more quickly if you practice coping strategies regularly."

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HealthProCHOICES

A newsletter for participants in the Health Professionals' Services Program (HPSP)

October 2020



New Member of the IBH Team

We are excited to introduce the newest member of the IBH Monitoring team – Jameson Mewhinney. Jameson was born October 19 to his proud Mom, Tina Mewhinney, our Operations Manager. Congratulations to Tina and her family from everyone here at Integrated Behavioral Health and especially from the HPSP crew!



Holiday Exemption Days

As a reminder you do NOT need to check in to see if a test is required on these dates:

- Veterans Day - Wednesday, November 11th, 2020
- Thanksgiving Day - Thursday, November 26th, 2020
- Day After Thanksgiving - Friday, November 27th, 2020

HPSP: How Can It Benefit You?

We know that it can be a challenge for some participants to see the positive aspects of program participation. Even for those who can see the positives, it may be hard to appreciate them while you are in the midst of doing the hard work of recovery and monitoring. In that light, we offer a few comments from past participants that illustrate how HPSP helped in his/her personal life. We hope you can take a step back from your own experience and appreciate how these individuals benefited from their participation in HPSP. Their hard work, positive outlook and determination led to their ultimate success.

The road is not easy, but we know that YOU too can succeed and we are eager to support you in that success.

"I want to thank IBH and its program for the stability they have provided me over the past 4 years. I often share this when I chair AA meetings; I was so broken and afraid when I started this monitoring program. Although monitoring is not enough to keep me sober, it is what I credit with keeping me in AA long enough to integrate it into my life, and that IS what keeps me sober. I am grateful for where I am today, and where life will take me next. I truly consider myself one of the lucky ones."

"When I first entered the program, I was full of resentment and anger. I really was just not ready to admit I had a problem... today as I graduate from the program, I look back at these five years and realize I am blessed. I am grateful for this program that has made it possible for me to continue in my nursing career."



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Celebrating Halloween in 2020

As Halloween quickly approaches, I am reminded of my own childhood and the palpable excitement and anticipation of the upcoming holiday: the pumpkins, the decorations, the smell of crisp Fall air, and the churning of costume ideas. Over the years, our lives typically become more complicated. The state of the world can weigh heavy on us, making our heart contract. When this happens, we can use our heart's contraction as a reminder tool or warning signal. We are being called to pause, pay attention and turn inward, like the reflective season of Fall, and give ourselves gentle waves of kindness and empathy. When we take time to do this regularly, we often end up touching on the fact we are not alone in our struggles and that there are other people facing similar challenges. This feeling of connection can open our hearts to increased compassion and empathy.

So how can we keep our hearts open and nurture this sense of connection with others? One way is through celebration. Celebration helps us rise above the mundane and ordinary, to laugh and connect with others from the heart. Speaker Mike Robbins recalls talking with a cab driver in Houston who told him, "I'm from Ethiopia...every day here is a good day. I don't understand why people just don't walk around here with their hands in the air saying, 'THANK YOU.'" We can foster gratitude and rejoice over everyday occurrences like sunsets, as well as seasonal events like harvest time and Halloween.

This Halloween offers us a great opportunity to celebrate with some new Halloween traditions (due to Covid-19). While traditional activities such as trick-or-treating, indoor haunted houses, and indoor costume parties are not recommended by the CDC this year, with a little creativity you can have fun with your loved ones without putting each other at risk. The following are some ideas to bring our families, friends and neighbors together for connection and celebration!

For Families and Young Kids

Pumpkins: Carve pumpkins with others virtually or outside on a warm evening while sharing spooky stories or jokes. Award prizes for categories (funny, spooky, creative). Be sure to roast the seeds. <https://funkidsjokes.com/ghost-jokes>

Crafts: Make crafts together, like a DIY treat advent-style calendar. <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/244390717253804523>

Movie Night: Host an open-air outdoor movie night (or family movie marathon) with special treats. <https://www.amny.com/news/halloween-movies-families-2020>

Virtual Costume Contest: <https://www.punchbowl.com/p/celebrate-halloween-with-a-virtual-costume-contest>

Treats: Make fun and tasty treats. <https://www.care.com/c/stories/3708/halloween-party-food-ideas-for-kids/>

Face Painting: www.goodhousekeeping.com/holidays/halloween-ideas/g28126244/easy-halloween-face-paint-idea

Play Halloween Bingo: <https://www.aliceandlois.com/printable-halloween-bingo>

Anonymous Kindness: "Boo" or "Ghost" someone! Leave a goodie bag of treats on a close friend or family's doorstep, ring the bell and run.

Masks: Decorate your face masks to match your costume. www.fun365.orientaltrading.com/article/11-ways-diy-face-masks

For Older Kids And Adults

Virtual Escape Room: <https://www.marthastewart.com/7983390/virtual-escape-rooms-halloween>

Drive-In Movie: <https://everout.com/portland-mercury/events/the-cinema-of-horrors-drive-in/e36842/>

Drive-Through Events

- <https://scaregroundspdx.com>
- <https://www.etix.com/ticket/e/1014860/clackamas-county-scary-fair-canby-clackamas-county-event-center>

Music: Craft a Halloween music playlist.

Halloween Zoom Backgrounds: <https://www.thebash.com/articles/halloween-zoom-backgrounds>

"Travel": Have fun learning about Halloween around the world and consider cooking traditional foods. https://www.history.com/topics/halloween/halloween-around-the-world?li_source=LI&li_medium=m2m-rcw-history

Outschool offers Halloween-themed virtual classes: FX makeup class, escape room from The Pumpkin King, Pokémon Halloween mythology and Hocus Pocus Chemistry. Ages 3-year-olds to teens. <https://outschool.com/online-classes?startAfter=ThisWeek&q=halloween#abkfr50unf>

Enjoy celebrating!

Kathy Prewitt, M.Ed., LMT



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FEDERATION OF STATE PHYSICIAN HEALTH PROGRAMS

2021 VIRTUAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE & ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

*World Disrupted: Caring for Caregivers
in Uncertain Times*

PRE-CONFERENCE DAY: MARCH 30

CONFERENCE DATES: APRIL 1, 8 & 15

FSPHP MEMBER ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING: APRIL 29

SAVE THE DATE

JOIN US AS WE EXCEED YOUR EXPECTATIONS AND RISE ABOVE OUR CHALLENGES!



CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

- Connect with leaders in the field of professional health and well-being
- Interact with exhibitors before, during and after the event via virtual exhibitor booths
- Ability to connect live with MORE attendees than ever before
- Engaging general and breakout sessions with experts including Q&A, Chat, Gaming & Polls
- Poster Symposia Showcase with recorded informative sessions
- Ability to schedule and attend live networking breakouts
- Peer Support Meetings & Silent Auction

EDUCATION SESSIONS WILL ADDRESS:

- Prevention of healthcare professional burnout and the risk of physician suicide
- Reducing barriers for healthcare professionals seeking support for health and well-being
- Best practices of mental, behavioral and addiction health services provided by Physician Health Programs, Healthcare Professional Evaluation and Treatment Programs

All speakers are asked to explore the impact of COVID-19 and topics on diversity, equality, and inclusion in relation to the health and well-being of health care professionals



This activity has been approved for AMA PRA Category 1 Credit.

Visit WWW.FSPHP.ORG

Contact us at ssavage@fsphp.org/978-347-0600x102



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888.802.2843

HealthProCHOICES

A newsletter for participants in the Health Professionals' Services Program (HPSP)

November 2020



The Holidays are Coming!

There are several toxicology testing exemption days approaching:

- Thanksgiving Day - Thursday, November 26th, 2020
- Day After Thanksgiving - Friday, November 27th, 2020
- Christmas Day - Friday, December 25th, 2020
- New Year's Day - Friday, January 1st, 2021

As a reminder you do NOT need to check in to see if a test is required on these dates. Please make sure to notify your agreement monitor of any travel plans for the holidays so that alternate collection sites can be located in time.

Android App: RBH Daily

If you use an Android phone or other device, make sure to download the newest update to our app "RBH Daily." An update was just released and you will want to make sure you have the newest version. If you don't have the app yet, follow the directions below. The app will let you check in to see if a toxicology test is required for that date, just like you do on the IVR or the website/portal.

Get the Android app: Simply go to the Google Play store from your device and search for RBH Daily to download the free app.

Use the app: Open the app, log in with your ID and password, and the app will tell you if you need to test that day. The app provides a confirmation number just as if you called the IVR or checked in by logging into the portal. The app will also give you the panel to check off if you have a paper CCF. Using the app WILL count as your daily check-in. Make sure to close out the app after using it each time.

HPSP Outreach

The HPSP Team is scheduling information sessions. We would love to have an opportunity to talk to your organization! Session topics can vary but could include successful recovery of the impaired health professional, the role of the agreement monitor and of course HPSP services. We can deliver these sessions in-person or virtually and can customize the content to meet your audience's needs.

If the administrators of your health care workplace are interested in learning about or scheduling a session, please ask them to contact Scott McBeth, Ph.D. 503-802-9865.



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Surveys, Surveys and More Surveys

Thank you to everyone who has taken their time this year to complete one (or more!) of our surveys. We value your feedback greatly! We recently interviewed our Report and Data Manager about the surveys:

Q: What surveys does HPSP send?

A: HPSP sends out the following surveys throughout the year:

- Enrollment Survey: This survey is sent out a few months after a licensee enrolls in the program to gather insight into the enrollment process.
- Exit Interview: This survey is sent out immediately upon successful completion of the program. Questions are asked about the impact of the program on the licensee's life and about the program elements that were most impactful.
- Satisfaction Survey: In July and January, HPSP surveys licensees (who have been enrolled for more than 4 months), workplace monitors, the Oregon health associations and providers (GMC/PMCs and evaluators.)

Q: What happens to the survey data?

A: Each January, the January satisfaction survey data is analyzed and reported. Each July, all other survey data is analyzed and reported. Reports are reviewed closely by IBH Monitoring and the PAC (Policy Advisory Committee), but also by the HPSP Advisory Committee which consists of Oregon State Board Members.

Q: What did recent survey data show?

A: Here are some highlights from the satisfaction survey data for the year:

- 98% of workplace monitor respondents are either "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with IBH's support of their supervision of their licensee.
 - 90% of workplace monitor respondents rated their overall experience working with IBH as "excellent" (60%) or "above average" (30%).
 - Just over 95% of licensee respondents "agree" or "strongly agree" that they understand the program's statutory monitoring requirements.
 - The mode response from licensee respondents was that the program provides a "significant" amount of structure and accountability. In fact, 81.6% feel it provides more than "some" accountability.
 - 83% of licensee respondents indicated that their questions and/or concerns are responded to within one business day.
 - 80% of licensee respondents believe that information is communicated clearly and professionally, and in fact the largest group of respondents "strongly agree" with this statement.
 - 84.6% of licensee respondents indicated that their agreement monitor is knowledgeable about their case, and again the largest group of respondents "strongly agree" with this statement.
 - 27.7% of licensee respondents rated the program "excellent" and an additional 29.2% rated it "above average."
 - Overall, provider respondents rated the program positively with a mode response of "above average."
- In addition, this year's exit interview showed that respondents overall felt that the program had a positive impact on their professional, personal and interpersonal lives. Notably, 73% felt "better able to cope with life changes," 65% indicated "[their] mood improved;" and 64% felt "better equipped to manage [their] own health." In total, 75% of licensees thought they were better off after participating in HPSP. None of the participants felt they were worse off. In fact, the largest group of respondents endorsed the statement "I feel I am much better off than prior to my participation in HPSP."

Q: Does my feedback actually make a difference?

A: Yes! IBH Monitoring is always looking for ways to improve our services. When the PAC reviews the survey data each year, they read each and every comment in addition to looking at the summary data. During the reviews, notes are made regarding changes that may be able to be made and things that should definitely be continued.

Q: What kind of changes have been made as a result of the survey data?

A: Many changes have been made over the years of the program as a result of survey responses: from adding collection sites to our network to creating the portal and apps. More recently, we have rewritten and repackaged our enrollment materials in response to comments on the enrollment survey. The option of the in-person intake was first offered based on a desire expressed in a survey response. Continued feedback has shown that in-person intakes are greatly valued by those who take advantage of them. Given the state of our nation, IBH Monitoring was prompted by this data to offer intakes via video conferencing and is piloting an option to offer annual reviews via video conferencing as well! Keep the feedback coming and we will continue to strive to better serve you as well as future participants.

Q: Anything else you'd like to add?

A: Our staff members greatly appreciate the positive feedback they receive too. There's nothing better than reading about how you specifically have made a difference. Thank you!



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Creative Ways to Connect with Family During the Holidays

You may not be physically together with your family and loved ones this holiday season, but you can still honor holiday traditions and stay connected during these challenging times. There are so many ways to do this. When you're thinking about holiday rituals and adapting to current circumstances, think about how you can recreate a quarantine-friendly version of meaningful moments you have shared in the past.

- Acknowledge that things are different this year. Plan ahead so you can stay connected in a safe way.
- Be mindful of expectations and remember that circumstances change and things are a little different every year.
- Look at this year's challenges as an opportunity to start new traditions and rituals. You may find new ways to add meaning to your holiday.
- Try and be flexible in your thinking. Adjust to find what works best for you and your family.



Stay Connected During the Holidays

While sharing time with each other virtually may not be ideal, it is a nice way to still feel close while being physically apart during the pandemic. Seeing familiar faces during this time can be comforting.

- Mail out handwritten holiday cards instead of sending an email. The heartfelt sentiments in hand will be worth it.
- Make the favorite foods of your distant family members.
- Use decorations that remind you of your loved ones.
- Call or Skype your family or friends and share your favorite holiday memories, photos, etc.

Helpful Links

- [COVID-19: Stay Connected with Loved Ones This Thanksgiving](#)
- [Should You Sit Out the Holidays This Year?](#)
- [CDC Guidelines for Holiday Celebrations](#)

HealthProCHOICES

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December 2020



Holiday wishes! We hope you have a wonderful, healthy, and safe holiday season!!

The Holidays are Here!

There are two toxicology testing holidays approaching:

- Christmas Day – Friday, December 25th, 2020
- New Year's Day – Friday, January 1st, 2021

These are testing exemption days. As a reminder you do NOT need to check in to see if a test is required on these dates. Please be aware that HPSP's main office will also be closed on December 24th. Our answering service will be available and/or you can reach us through our after-hours emergency number at (503) 802-9818. Leave a message if there is no answer and your call will be returned quickly.

Please make sure to notify your agreement monitor of any travel plans for the holidays so that alternate collection sites can be located in time.

Toxicology Testing Exemptions

You are NOT required to test on testing holidays (Oregon State Holidays). Further on these dates you do NOT need to check in to the testing notification system. Testing holidays can be found on hpspmonitoring.com under the Other Resources tab.

Please give two weeks' notice prior to travel. This gives us plenty of time to ensure that we can connect you to testing sites at your travel destination. Whenever you know of an upcoming trip, send dates of travel and zip codes to your agreement monitor.

If you have been in the program longer than 9 months and are eligible for exemption days, you can request a testing exemption if there is not a site within 20 miles of your travel destination. If your travel includes plans to be in a remote area where you will not have access to the testing notification system (i.e. no cell phone reception), you may also use a testing exemption if eligible. If you will be testing while traveling, it is very important that you remember to take some Chain of Custody forms ("testing forms") with you, as you will not be able to test at most sites without one. If you are low on forms, please let your agreement monitor know, and we will have some mailed out to you.

Inclement Weather Policy

The weather is often unpredictable this time of year. Below is some information that could be helpful when the inevitable winter storm brings snow or ice:

- There is a possibility that a collection site could close due to inclement weather. It's always a good idea to call your testing site ahead of time if you are experiencing inclement weather in your area. If you determine that your primary site is closed, please access the portal (hpspmonitoring.com) to check your list of alternative sites. Check to see if any of these testing sites are open. If all of your assigned sites are closed, please call your agreement monitor. Once your agreement monitor has confirmed the site closure(s), you will be excused from testing that day, and your test will be rescheduled.



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- If your sites are open but you are unable to travel due to inclement weather, you can use one of your exemption days. Remember, you are eligible for exemption days once you have been in compliance with all requirements for a period of nine consecutive months. If you are unable to travel due to inclement weather but you have been in the program for less than 9 months, you will be given a one-time use of an exemption day as long as you have not had any non-compliance events.
- Regardless of your situation, **make sure to contact your agreement monitor** if you are not able to test due to inclement weather because any missed test is treated as a non-compliance if not approved.

If you have any testing issues or concerns and are unable to reach your agreement monitor, you can always call the main line and be connected to another HPSP team member. Our main line is: 1-888-802-2843. Our after-hours testing emergency phone is: 503-802-9818. All of the HPSP guidelines can be found on our website under the Resources tab at <https://www.hpspmonitoring.com/>.

Resource Corner

Saying that this pandemic is stressful is an understatement. Symptoms may manifest as feelings of irritation, anger, denial, helplessness and powerlessness among others. As a healthcare worker, your stress is likely more than that of the general population. Recent headlines highlight this with titles like "COVID-19's crushing mental health toll on health care workers." Please remember that HPSP is here to support you and help you protect your overall wellbeing. Self-care is more important than ever even though it may feel like there just isn't time. Here are a few resources that may be helpful.

- [Healthcare Personnel and First Responders: How to Cope with Stress and Build Resilience During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
- [Emergency Responders: Tips for Taking Care of Yourself](#)
- [Disaster Technical Assistance Center \(SAMHSA\)](#)
- [CDC Website, 2020; Mental Health and Coping During COVID-19](#)

We encourage you to speak to your Agreement Monitor about any concerns. We can support you and offer additional resources as appropriate. Please take care of you!

Continuing Education Unit's

Center for Professionals Recovery at Seasons in Malibu. Join Dr. Greg Skipper for a live webinar on Thursday, December 17, 2020 at 11:30am PT to learn about Mitigating Risk of Fraudulent Applications. This webinar is for licensed PHP's who are interested in comprehending the concept of "Mitigating Risk of Fraudulent Applications" and the issues surrounding it. This is to help physicians who worry about answering license, renewal or privilege application questions regarding substance and impairment. To reserve your spot visit the [Center for Professional Recovery Site registration page](#).

Managing Holiday Stress

The kids are home, money's tight and you're trying to juggle the demands of work and family without letting anything slip through the cracks. Is it finally the holidays or quarantine? Holidays are supposed to be a special time when family and friends come together to celebrate, but due to COVID-19, many of us may celebrate alone, socially distanced or virtually this year. Things are different for all of us this holiday season and these changes can trigger feelings of loneliness, anxiety and stress. Here are a few ideas to help you feel emotionally and physically balanced during this challenging time.

1. **Maintain a Routine.** Even though your regular routine has been disrupted, you can still have some structure to your day. Create a realistic schedule with times set aside for important activities like work time, school time, screen time, exercise and free time. Try to maintain your normal sleep schedule. It can help you function better during the day, stabilize your mood and give a boost to your immune system.
2. **Keep Moving.** Although it might be tempting to binge-watch all of your favorite holiday movies, too much screen time and sitting can make you cranky, bored and irritable. Make time to be physically active every day, even if it's just a short socially distanced walk. It'll help reduce your stress and give you a healthy burst of endorphins to improve your mood.
3. **Schedule Downtime.** No matter what time of year it is, taking the time to rest and rejuvenate is always a good idea. Have an in-home movie night with your family. Take a nap. Make sure each family member has scheduled "me" time for some peace and quiet.
4. **Stay Positive.** Even if this moment seems stressful, can you find a way to make it pleasant? Connect with someone else in a positive way with a kind gesture, or try to notice what's around you with fresh eyes and an open mind. Even though the holidays are stressful, try and remember to laugh. Laughter is the best medicine and it's free.



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