



Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, we at Community Mental Health Authority of Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham Counties (CMHA-CEI) have continued to offer behavioral health services, while adapting to new procedures that prioritize the highest possible level of protection for the health and safety of our consumers and staff. Many services have transitioned to telehealth or other alternative means of service provision, and in-person services are complying with protective guidelines set by local and State authorities.

All staff are adjusting to new and creative means to ensure that the community continues to have access to services during this time. One staff member illustrates this tireless innovation by stating, "Access staff, Families Forward Crisis services staff, and support staff are working together to get families access to services through telehealth intakes. It took a lot of conversation, creativity, innovation, collaboration and patience from everyone. Each and every staff member communicated multiple times a day to get a hold of families, walk them through the process for getting Zoom, and also walking through a lot of paperwork via Zoom to help families complete everything. It has been a long process but families now have different options for intake. They can come into the office if clinically appropriate or have access to services that keeps them safe and the community safe!"

In addition to providing existing services with flexibility and excellence, many staff have also displayed dedication in going above and beyond the call of duty in taking on additional or alternative duties and roles to best serve the needs of consumers.

In response to the overwhelming need for mental health support from community members, Adult Mental Health Services opened a COVID-19 Community Support line for tri-county residents to connect with a mental health professional about personal issues related to COVID-19, including employment issues, stress, caring for a family member, becoming ill, and being a frontline worker. The quick identification and response to this need has proven invaluable to the mental health and well-being of the community.

Another staff member notes "I am so very thankful for the leadership and all of those that are a part of Families Forward. From responsive and extremely supportive Support Staff, to those working directly with families (in person and remote), to those supporting this important work with families (both locally and statewide), I've been blown away by the graceful and gracious way everyone has transitioned to this 'new' way of working. While this time presents unique challenges and struggles, I've been inspired by the way folks are talking through things, leaning on one another, and finding their way through it."

CMHA-CEI will continue to remain dedicated to connecting community members to essential behavioral health services throughout this challenging time and beyond, and we continue to operate by the message shared in our tagline, 'Together We Can.'