



Public Notice from Four County Mental Health Center 4/3/2020

During these difficult and stressful times, Four County Mental Health Center remains committed to caring about our communities and is still here for you! We take great pride in being there for people in their times of need. We encourage hope and healing no matter the struggles we may face. In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, we recognize what the CDC has already stated:

- “The outbreak of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) may be stressful for people. Fear and anxiety about a disease can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions in adults and children. Coping with stress will make you, the people you care about, and your community stronger.
- Everyone reacts differently to stressful situations. How you respond to the outbreak can depend on your background, the things that make you different from other people, and the community you live in.
- Taking care of yourself, your friends, and your family can help you cope with stress. Helping others cope with their stress can also make your community stronger.”

With the stay-at-home order currently in effect, residents are adjusting to a new normal consisting of social distancing, quarantining and isolation. The sense of loss, losing their freedom, sometimes people lose their jobs or they have to work from home, there can be boredom which over time could lead to higher rates of acute stress disorder. This is a trauma response because quarantining is not a typical human experience. We are used to the interpersonal contact. This experience can lead to exhaustion, anxiety, irritability, sleeping problems, concentration issues and a lack of motivation and these effects can be more if there is a history of anxiety or depression.

This is a general feeling that many people get when they have to isolate. There are the added stressors with this that come with finances, wondering how you’re going to pay your bills, the fear of infection. Then just feeling that we’re getting an inadequate amount of information or feeling overwhelmed with the flood of updates about the pandemic.

Ways to combat the effects could include:

- Obtain information from credible sources like Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the World Health Organization
- Limit how many times you get updates
- Keeping a regular schedule
- Taking regular breaks if working from home
- Regularly participating in pleasurable activities that don’t have any connection to the pandemic
- Be as active as possible while still obeying the distancing suggestion
- Connect with people - call people, use technology for good like FaceTime and reaching out to family and friends
- Have fun, shut off the news and watch something that doesn’t have any pandemic-related material
- Seek out help from your friends, family, care network, and professionals
- Reach out to help those around you with encouraging calls and check-ins
- Share the helpful tips from the credible sources on coping with the stress - you have the power to be an element of support and stability
- Remember that you are not alone, we’re in this together

In order to provide quality mental health services and still keep you safe with appropriate social distancing, Four County is providing as many services as possible via televideo or telephone during our normal business hours. Our staff has been reaching out to patients with existing appointments to help facilitate that process. Our crisis services continue to operate 24 hours by calling 800-499-1748.

Some services will still require on site visits. Please know that we have social distancing protocols in place to help keep you safe. Staff will provide you with the proper protocol once you are here.

While the COVID-19 pandemic is an obvious physical health threat, we realize that it brings a mental health component as well. Please rest assured that Four County is committed to providing you robust services while still protecting your physical health. We very much value our clients and wish everyone a safe path through this difficult time. We are in this together!

Four County will continue to not only slow the spread of this virus, but also work to slow the speed of the stress and anxiety it also causes. For more information, visit our Facebook page or our website www.fourcounty.com.

Together we will get through this!