



In The News

As people across the U.S. and the rest of the world contend with COVID-19, some populations such as individuals with substance use disorders (SUDs) are being hit particularly hard. Because it attacks the lungs, the coronavirus that causes COVID-19 could be an especially serious threat to those who smoke tobacco or marijuana or who vape. People with opioid use disorder (OUD) and methamphetamine use disorder may also be vulnerable due to those drugs' effects on respiratory and pulmonary health. People who use opioids at high doses medically or who have OUD face separate challenges to their respiratory health. Since opioids act in the brainstem to slow breathing, their use not only puts the user at risk of life-threatening or fatal overdose, it may also cause a harmful decrease in oxygen in the blood.

Additionally, individuals with a substance use disorder are more likely to experience homelessness or incarceration than those in the general population, and these circumstances pose unique challenges regarding transmission of the virus that causes COVID-19.

Source: National Institute on Drug Abuse, COVID-19: Potential Implications for Individuals with Substance Use Disorders

Self-Care Corner

Self-Compassion

Throughout this pandemic, you have been at the forefront of the crisis, providing care and compassion to the people we serve. For many of you, these trying times may have come with a significant amount of stress that could impact your physical and mental health.

Although we need to physically distance ourselves from others because of the coronavirus, we don't need to emotionally distance ourselves. We can stay in **compassionate** connection.

- Being aware of one's own culture, values and biases.
- Being aware of and working at controlling own biases and how these may affect interactions with others.
- Knowledge of institutional barriers that prevent some populations from accessing resources
- Ability and willingness to be an ally to individuals who are different from oneself
- Effective communication skills across differences.

Source: INC., "5 Psychological Benefits of Putting the Needs of Others Before Your Own, by Matthew Jones

Coach-Connect

Today we would like to highlight Jesse Gambrel, a Peer Recovery Coach at Howard University Hospital. Jesse has been working at HUH since September of 2019. Jesse always goes the extra mile in supporting patients. After COVID-19 struck, HUH strove to find innovative ways utilize support from the Peer Recovery Coaches.



The leadership incorporated the team into telehealth of acutely psychiatric patients. Jesse and the team completed assessments of psychiatric to determine appropriateness of telehealth psychiatric evaluations.

Job well done Jesse!



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