

March 23, 2020

MSDC-PHP Participants:

The Medical Society of the District of Columbia (MSDC) is taking steps to mitigate risk of COVID-19 for our participants and staff. Out of an abundance of caution, given the current status of COVID-19 in the United States and public health recommendations, the Medical Society of the District of Columbia and the MSDC Physicians Health Program (MSDC-PHP) is implementing temporary measures relating to operations. **Effective, March 16, 2020, the MSDC and the MSDC-PHP offices are now closed to all staff, board members, and participants.**

These measures are reflective of our mission, the health, safety and well-being of our participants, the public they serve, MSDC-PHP staff and other stakeholders. We are all faced with an unprecedented situation and rest assured we are working collaboratively to the benefit of all. Our goal is to strike a balance mitigating disease transmission with support of your recovery.

These decisions were not made lightly as we are learning more about the ongoing COVID-19 outbreak and the importance of preventative measures in mitigating the extent of illness. The MSDC-PHP is here to provide assistance, guidance and support as we navigate through the current public health situation we face today. As we move forward, we have full confidence in our participant's ability to work collaboratively with the MSDC-PHP in maintaining their own wellbeing. This would include increasing utilization of your own support system which may be relatively unaffected by the conditions we are all facing today (sponsor contact, etc.).

Mutual Support Meetings

An individual's health, safety and recovery are a priority to us and the MSDC-PHP understands groups and meetings may be cancelled. We encourage and support you in making informed decisions about recovery meeting attendance and to follow local and state recommendations regarding gatherings and social distancing. We also encourage you to do what is best for you and your recovery.

Therefore, through May 18, 2020, you may utilize online support meeting resources (listed at the end of this notification) in place of in-person meetings for those of you who cannot or should not attend.

Toxicology Screens

The MSDC-PHP are suspending all UDS testing effective April 1, 2020 until May 18, 2020. The MSDC-PHP are implementing the use of in-home testing with Recovery Trek's PROOF, a mobile app that utilizes saliva. While there will be a slight increase in testing fees (~\$65.00 per test), the MSDC-PHP believe given this unprecedented time with COVID-19, minimizing participants exposure is paramount.

The MSDC-PHP will be coordinating with each of you personally through e-mails and telephone calls during the next 72 hours. Recovery Trek has been alerted to our change in testing and will be available (beginning on March 24, 2020) to answer any questions regarding setting up the PROOF system. Your POC will remain the same: Ms. Rochelle Lyons.

The PROOF test kits will be sent to a mailing address that you designate and will be mailed in sets of three (3). You will be billed for 50% of the three test kits (\$97.50) and then as each test packet is received by a lab, you will be billed the remaining amount for each one test kit received. For example, when you mail one test kit you will be billed for approximately \$32.50, etc.

Alternative testing (PEth & hair/nail) will continue as scheduled, for the time being. For participants undergoing toxicology testing in labs, **we are allowing 48 hours** for specimen (PEth & hair/nail) provision for testing through May 18, 2020. This will allow you to best coordinate the collection with your schedule and arranging efficient and effective collection process. **We recommend you contact the site you are planning to use prior to going to make sure they are open and to schedule an appointment.** If we hear of any site closures or system-wide changes, we will notify you as soon as possible. If you believe you are at a higher risk of serious illness or have concerns about potential exposure, please contact your case manager to discuss alternative testing options. There will be testing guidance on matrix testing alternatives to document abstinence during any uncovered period of time.

All participants that are testing will continue to be required to check-in daily for your random selection, unless notified by either me or Steve Carreras, Ph.D., MSW.

Monthly / Quarterly Reports / Meeting Lists & Other compliance reports

Please consider maximizing your utilization of electronic reporting through email and/or fax (202-452-1542). If you are concerned about any deadlines, please email us any questions, concerns, status reports or other updates.

Treatment Provider Appointments

The MSDC-PHP is cognizant of some scheduling difficulties for your routine healthcare needs inclusive of counseling/therapy, psychiatry, primary care and /or specialty care. Please do the best you can continuing to maintain your therapeutic relationship and associated compliance with your appointments by working directly with your treatment provider and following their direction. Telemedicine visits will now be approved as needed through May 18, 2020.

Office Meetings with your Case Manager

In an effort to curb the spread of COVID-19, MSDC-PHP participants will not be scheduled for appointments at the MSDC-PHP office for the next 45-days (March 16 – May 1, 2020). Rather, case management needs will be conducted by phone or email. Feel free to utilize phone and email support as needed. For more immediate needs of in office visits, advance approval will be required. As always, the office voicemail is actively monitored after hours.

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RE: COVID-19 Response

The MSDC-PHP will be reassessing these temporary measures on a periodic basis. If you have any questions, please contact your case manager. Most importantly, stay in touch with us and keep us abreast of your current situation so we may be able to best provide assistance. Protecting you and the health care workforce is our top priority during this challenging time. Thank you for your ongoing dedication and service to the health and well-being of our patients and communities. Stay safe, and please remember to take care of yourself and maintain your recovery during this pandemic.

Sincerely,

Steve Carreras, for

Charles Samenow, M.D.
MSDC-PHC, Chairman

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Online Mutual Support Meetings

AA Online Meeting Directory: <http://aa-intergroup.org/directory.php>

AA – Online - http://12stepforums.net/alcoholics_anonymous_online_meeting.html

AA COVID-19 Information Page: AA link- https://www.aa.org/pages/en_US/update-on-covid-19-coronavirus

AI-Anon – Online - http://12stepforums.net/alanon_family_group_online_meeting.html

IDAA - <https://www.idaa.org/>

SLAA - <https://slaafws.org/onlinemeetings>

[In The Rooms: An Online Addiction Recovery Community](#)

AA, NA, Dual Diagnosis, SAA (sex addiction), CPA(chronic pain): www.intherooms.com

NA Online Meetings “Addicts helping Addicts Recover:” <http://na-recovery.org/>

NA – Online - http://12stepforums.net/narcotics_anonymous_online_meeting.html

NA COVID-19 Informational Page: NA link:

https://www.na.org/admin/include/spaw2/uploads/pdf/Coronavirus_web_message_12Mar.pdf

Recovery Dharma: “Healing from Addiction with Buddhist Practice,” daily meetings via computer, smartphone or dial-in: <http://recoverydharma.online/>

Smart Recovery: <https://www.smartrecovery.org/community/>

WEconnect and Unity Recovery are partnering together to offer four daily all recovery meetings to anyone in the world. Meetings will follow an open format and are available to anyone in or seeking recovery. 7 days a week: 9am ; 12pm; 3pm; 9pm ; All times are EDT.

Join by navigating to: <https://unityrecovery.zoom.us/j/2656499375>

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Recovery Apps for Phone

Sober Grid - <https://www.sobergrid.com/> - allows you to create online profiles and interact, support, and engage with other people in recovery using a platform similar to Facebook. You can also use the app to create anonymous check-ins about whether you're sober or not, your mood, and what's going on.

SoberTool - <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/sobertool-addiction-recovery/id863872931> - is an easy way to track your clean and sober days. The app includes daily motivational messages and reminders to keep you on target.

The WEconnect app - <https://www.weconnectrecovery.com/patients> - provides you with daily reminders to stay on track with your recovery plan. You can create reminders to call your sponsor, go to a group meeting, or meditate—anything you need to provide that extra push.

AA Big Book- <https://mybigbookapp.com/> -This app gives you access to the full text of the Big Book, along with a meeting finder, podcasts, prayers, and personal stories. You can use the app to bookmark meaningful passages, make notes on individual chapters in the comment section, and search for specific keywords.

12 Step Meditation Daily Reflections for AA, NA, Al-Anon- <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/12-step-meditation-daily-reflections-aa-na-al-anon/id1027253662> - This app features hundreds of easy-to-follow guided meditations, as well as soothing music, prayers, and 12-step recovery audio.

I Am Sober- <https://iamsobers.com/> - to track your sober days and milestones, build new habits, and enjoy ongoing motivation from a community of people who get it.

Pink Cloud- <https://gopinkcloud.com/> - locate meetings near you based on your location
Meditation Apps

Headspace - <https://www.headspace.com/> - Mindfulness for your everyday life. Stress less. Move more. Sleep soundly. Try for free.

Simple Habit - Daily Meditation - <https://www.simplehabit.com/> - Download free.

Calm - <https://www.calm.com/> - Find your Calm. Sleep more. Stress Less. Live Better. Try for free.

Stop, Breathe, and Think - <https://www.stopbreathethink.com/> - Check in with how you're feeling, and try short activities tuned to your emotions. Try for free.

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Podcasts

The Bubble Hour (<https://www.blogtalkradio.com/bubblehour>)-invites listeners to share their stories of recovery from [alcohol addiction](#). Each week, host Jean McCarthy holds space for a guest to tell their truth, and together they explore topics relative to recovery.

Busy Living Sober- a podcast with the mission of “giving people an opportunity to listen, learn and live a sober lifestyle without shame while having fun.” <http://busylivingsober.com/podcasts/>

The Addicted Mind is about understanding addiction, its impact and the latest treatment options available. This podcast aims to create an environment of compassion for individuals caught in the destructive grip of the addictive process. <https://theaddictedmind.com/>

The Sober Guy- Host Shane Ramer is in recovery from alcohol. He interviews a mix of [celebrity guests](#) and everyday people who have experienced addiction or felt the impact of drug or alcohol use. He focuses on [living a positive, healthy](#) and sober lifestyle, and uses his podcast as a platform for sharing inspiration with others who want to live the same way. <http://www.thatsoberguy.com/>

Let’s Talk: Addiction and Recovery- Hear what leading addiction and recovery experts are talking about—addiction trends, topics and challenges as well as research, practices and advances that point the most promising way forward. Provoking interview series, brought to you by Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation. <https://podcast.app/lets-talk-addiction-recovery-p498650/>

The Boiled Owl Coffee Club- www.boiledowlaa.org Casual conversations about recovery in Alcoholics Anonymous. Listen online or with any podcast management app.

Annie Grace’s – This Naked Mind podcast- <https://thisnakedmind.com/>

The Unruffled Podcast - <https://www.theunruffled.com/the-unruffled-podcast> - a weekly show hosted by Sondra Primeaux and Tammi Salas that explores all topics related to creativity in recovery. When an addiction is removed there is a void that is left and this show digs into all the ways to fill that void. The Unruffled is passionate about creating and making and how those pursuits fuel recovery, specifically from alcohol. Come with them as they unruffle the old stories and write new ones, to not just exist but thrive. \$1 pledge per episode download.

She Recovers - <https://sherecovers.co/podcast/> – a collection of audio posts, interviews and recorded talks. She Recovers believes we are all recovering from something and our podcast examines the healing power of connection and intentional living as well as what happens in our lives when we put down our past stories and pick up our soul’s true purpose.

To 50 and Beyond - <https://www.stitcher.com/podcast/lori-massicot/to-50-beyond> - celebrates women over 40. Host Lori Massicot, is a former over-drinker, over-eater, and over-thinker turned truth-teller, wannabe comedian, and sober (aging) life coach. Twice a week, Lori shares honest stories, wellness + alcohol-free solutions, and empowerment through solo shows + interviews with women who are going after their dreams + challenging you to do the same. Midlife is the best life to age with grace + self-kindness while unapologetically living life on your terms.