

Oahu Homeless Provider COVID-19 Special Meeting
August 12th, 2021

**Note: Today's meeting has been modified to hold a space for all Oahu homeless services providers to receive information from the Hawaii Department of Health, Hawaii CARES, and PIC regarding COVID-19 developments.

DOH Special Guests: Augustina Manuzak, Lauren Usagawa, Jonathan Hilts, Danielle Vassalotti, Belinda Danielson (on behalf of Hawaii CARES)

Changes to Isolation/Quarantine (ISOQ) Eligibility and Coverage

➔ **Hawaii CARES will be prioritizing ISOQ referrals for individuals in congregate shelters or group homes where people are sharing rooms. People who do not live in congregate facilities are not being prioritized for ISOQ referrals.**

- The significant reduction in available ISOQ beds (from 400 to around 60) has resulted in changes to the inclusion criteria to ensure that beds are assigned to individuals with the greatest risk of transmission to others.
- The new ISOQ inclusion and criteria are provided in detail below:

NEW ISOQ ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

INCLUSION CRITERIA

- Individuals who are confirmed COVID + AND reside in congregate* settings.
- Individuals who are in close contact to a confirmed case AND reside in congregate* settings.
- Individuals under investigation for symptoms, awaiting test results, AND reside in congregate* settings.

***Congregate defined as shelter or group home, where there is a large population in facility with shared rooms.**

EXCLUSION CRITERIA

- Limited ambulation (in a wheelchair or need walking assistance)
- Unable to manage their care independently
- Require constant medical care
- Minors (under age 18 years) without parent or legal guardian
- Require supplemental oxygen or CPAP

- Referrals are evaluated on a case-by-case basis, and particularly vulnerable individuals may still be able to receive a referral even if they are not congregate shelter residents.
- Regardless of prioritization, providers should be aware that the surge in COVID-19 cases has resulted in a wait list for ISOQ beds, even for those who are in the priority groups. The current wait list includes around 14-15 individuals.
- ISOQ facilities do not include medical staff on-site to assist people with medical conditions or nursing care. Due to the physical structure of some of the existing facilities, individuals must be able to

ambulate on their own and may need to be able to climb stairs.

➔ **Guidelines for isolation vs. quarantine have been updated based on whether or not someone lives in congregate housing.**

- Providers are encouraged to review the following isolation and quarantine guidelines:

Isolation and Quarantine Guidelines

- **Isolation** = + COVID case
 - #days in isolation (10 days) starts from date of + COVID test or onset of symptoms, which ever is first
 - After 10 days, individual is termed “no longer infectious”, but are advised to be conscientious of those at risk for COVID
 - If exposed to COVID within 90 days since isolation period, individual does not need to quarantine
- **Quarantine** = close contact with a COVID + person, but they are repeatedly COVID negative
 - #days in quarantine depends on whether or not they live in congregate housing.
 - If yes: 14 days from last contact
 - If no: 10 days from last contact
 - Congregate living general rules= > 3 people in house share a bathroom
 - If quarantine person turns COVID + while in quarantine, they move to isolation X 10 days (additional days)

➔ **To accommodate the surge in calls to Hawaii CARES (COVID-related and crisis calls), call routing has changed slightly.**

- Callers to Hawaii CARES (832-3100) will be asked to select from one of the following options:

New CARES Call Routing

#1 – crisis

#2 – mental health (non-crisis) and SUD

#3 – Ku Makani – Mon-Fri. 4pm-9pm, Sat/Sun/holidays 9am-9pm connect

#4 – Pass to voicemail to request ISOQ if from shelter or group facility

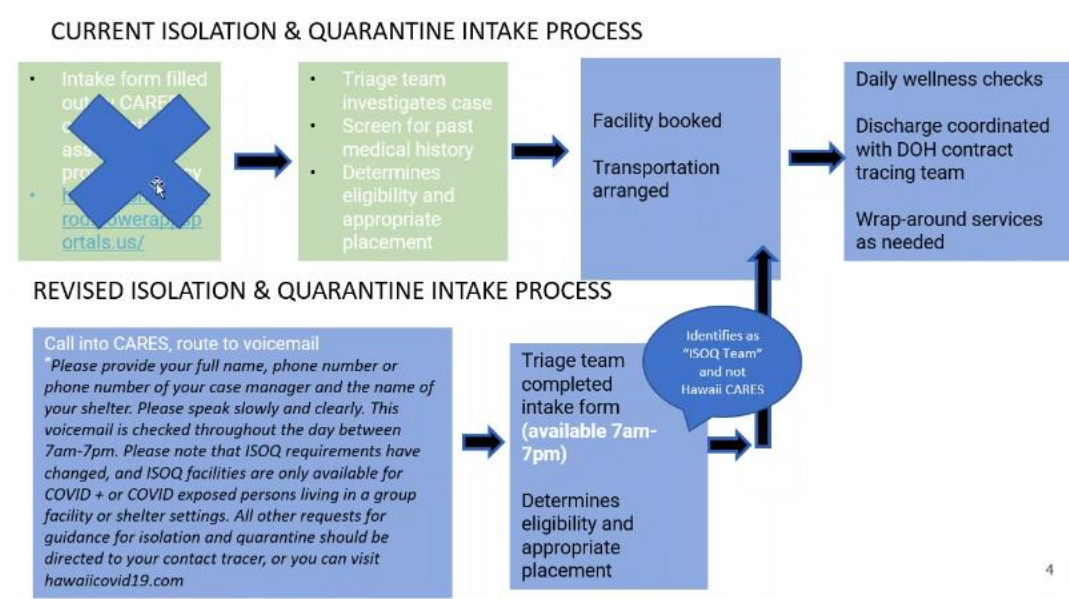
#5 – Pass to 1-800-GO-HAWAII

- Option 4 will direct you to a voicemail with instructions to leave a message for a triage team to follow up.

➔ **The ISOQ referral and intake process has been revised.**

- Providers should contact Hawaii CARES (option 4) to leave a voicemail. Voicemails will be checked between 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. The triage team will determine eligibility and refer to ISOQ team for facility

booking and transportation.



Vaccinations/Testing, PPE, and Other Resources

- Providers are encouraged to continue educating clients and staff about the importance of vaccines in reducing serious illness and hospitalization. Congregate settings are also encouraged to set up ongoing testing opportunities.
- Project Vision Hawaii continues to offer free surveillance testing and vaccinations to homeless service providers. Please reach out to Darrah directly at (808) 306-4406 if your agency needs to set up a schedule, modify an existing schedule, or request emergency testing.
 - All three vaccines are normally available, but the single-dose shot is in shorter supply.
 - For vaccines and testing, please be able to provide the approximate number of tests/shots needed and the last known date of exposure (if applicable).
- Community pop-up testing sites are also available through DOH and its partners. Announcements are posted on DOH social media pages and <http://hawaiiicovid19.com>.
- RYSE has been setting up pop-up events with vaccinations and testing. The next event is at Moiliili Neighborhood Park on August 18th 12 p.m. – 4 p.m.
- We will soon have a provider learning session for Operation: Expanded Testing, which is a federally funded program designed to offer free weekly test kits to schools and underserved populations, including homeless shelters and congregate facilities. Information about this program is available on their website at <http://letsendthistogether.com>.
- Some providers may be eligible to register as a vaccination site if they are qualified to be a part of the Hawaii Immunization Registry. Please be on the lookout for more information about this, or reach out to Heather Lusk with specific questions.
- Some providers are considering or have implemented a vaccine mandate for staff.
- PIC has thousands of cloth masks available to providers.
 - Please complete this request form:
<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=zAUOuT36aUy-kKedl92TWU3TQAQxZ5RNgUp1ZJFP05JURjvJKU1VENEdHSUdUM1JYOTThHRVVSOUFXQy4u>

- HMIS can track client alerts, test results, and vaccination status. This may be helpful for providers to ensure there are accessible records of a client's vaccination status for ease of access to other programs.

Questions & Answers

What are the transportation options for someone who is COVID+ and has no family or personal vehicle to take them home from a hospital or other place?

- For people who are being referred to a DOH ISOQ bed, transportation to the site is available.
- If the person is not going to ISOQ, some taxi services (not including rideshare programs) are available with extra precautions and disclosure to the business. However, some businesses will not offer rides to COVID+ individuals.
 - Transportation companies that have agreed to this include: AMR, Pro-Care, WheelCare Oahu, and VA (if eligible).
 - The cost of using a private taxi service can be much higher than a regular rate. One example is a ride from Waikiki to the Queen's Medical Center that cost \$300.
- Medicaid may have some options to assist with payment for eligible individuals.

Are there any plans to increase the number of ISOQ beds at this time? What happened to all the beds?

- The State, through Hi-EMA, has asked the four major counties about available resources to support this need. Additional discussions are taking place but no firm commitments have been made at this time.
- A majority of ISOQ beds were at hotels that were vacant while the State's tourism industry was on hold. After the reopening of tourism and a resurgence in visitors, hotels chose not to continue their partnership with DOH.

What advice is given to someone if there are no ISOQ beds available? What if there are no beds for an unsheltered person?

- There are some home isolation guides on the Hawaii COVID-19 website at <http://hawaiicovid19.com>.
- These materials may be helpful for anyone who must take steps to quarantine or isolate while minimizing risk to others.
- With the current surge and reopening of tourism, ISOQ bed availability will continue to be an issue across the board. We will continue to work with DOH and other partners to address the gaps in this need.

Is there a point of contact at DOH who can advise congregate shelter providers if an outbreak or cluster occurs?

- DOH will follow up with more information about congregate facility monitoring.

Can a congregate homeless shelter or other facility require guests to be vaccinated in order to enter? Can a shelter deny services to clients who refuse to be tested? We are concerned that the risk to other clients and staff is very high, especially with the low inventory of ISOQ beds.

- DOH is aware that some reentry group homes and transitional programs have required vaccines. We will follow up on steps that similar facilities have taken to encourage vaccinations.
- Homeless providers should check with their funders on this specific question.