

# MENTAL/BEHAVIORAL HEALTH Playbook Summary

## Concerns/Issues | Connecting to Solutions

**Playbooks:** Adams Clay Nuckolls Webster County Area, Blue Valley Area and Public Health Solutions, Buffalo County Area, Cherry Brown County Area, Dawson County Area, Douglas County Community Collaborative, Families First - The Connection (North Platte), Fremont Family Coalition, Growing Community Connections (Dakota), Hall County Community Collaborative, Keith Perkins County, Lancaster County, Lift Up Sarpy, McCook Area, Norfolk Family Coalition, Otoe County Area, Panhandle Partnership, Platte Colfax, Sandhills Community Collaborative, Tribal Communities (Native American Metro Omaha, Western Nebraska, Winnebago, Omaha Tribe, Santee Sioux Nation)

### Themes and priorities common across communities:

#### Telehealth

- Patients do not have access to devices or internet access which limits telehealth capabilities (Adams Clay Nuckolls Webster County Area, Buffalo County, Sandhills)
- Cost, accessibility, knowledge of how to use - Seniors don't know how to use the technology for the connectivity (Norfolk Family Coalition)
- Providers need additional items to deliver services remotely/virtually - computers, webcams, etc. (Otoe County Area)
- Switch to telehealth is taking some time and causing client loss because where clients have lost their phones in the meantime. (Keith Perkins County)
- Communities with asterisks reported issues with access such as lack of devices, internet access, or the technical knowledge to move online included:
  - Adams Clay Nuckolls Webster County Area\*
  - Buffalo County Area\*
  - Cherry Brown County Area\*
  - Dawson County Area
  - Douglas County Community Collaborative\*
  - Fremont Family Coalition\*
  - Growing Community Connections (Dakota County)
  - Hall County Community Collaborative\*
  - Keith Perkins County\*
  - Lancaster\*
  - McCook Area\*
  - Norfolk Family Coalition
  - Otoe County Area\*

- Platte Colfax
- Sandhills Community Collaborative\*
- All Tribal Communities

## Seniors- mental health/isolation

- Need to socialize
  - Seniors are starting feel lonely with no visitors allowed, which will lead to depression; need social opportunities available to them (Norfolk Family Coalition)
  - Unable to get around, unable to communicate via social media (Tribal Community- Omaha Tribe)
  - Some are predicting an increase in seniors going to facilities as a result of health decline due to isolation (Hall County Community Collaborative)
- Concern for seniors with mental health conditions adapting to lack of consistency and structure (Lancaster County)
- All communities expressed high concerns about seniors and isolation

## Anxiety

- Anxiety in general has skyrocketed. Healthcare worker, elderly people, first responders, people who have lost their jobs, and kids that don't have support at home are all a high risk (Growing Community Connections (Dakota))
- Both Health concerns and financial security concerns are leading to anxiety and fear
- Senior center – very difficult time, fear and anxiety.
  - Worried about those who live alone and don't have a lot of support systems in the. Isolation is increasing anxiety and fear
  - Neighborhood associations, churches, or other resources might be used to reach out to seniors (Platte Colfax)
- Concern about parent's mental health as they try to work, home school and deal with the financial stressors upon them
  - Concern of parents being overwhelmed by online schooling (Keith Perkins County) (Hall County Community Collaborative)
- 1/2 new intakes for Heartland Counseling has been for 18 & under (Cherry Brown County Area)
- The following communities reported increased issues with anxiety within their communities:
  - Cherry Brown County Area
  - Dawson County Area
  - Fremont Family Coalition
  - Growing Community Connections (Dakota)
  - Hall County Community Collaborative
  - Keith Perkins County
  - Norfolk Family Coalition
  - Panhandle Partnership
  - Platte Colfax
  - Sandhills Community Collaborative
  - Tribal Communities- Winnebago

## Capacity

- Mental health workforce is overburdened – need more people – licensure is the barrier
  - hired new staff that was fully licensed in Iowa but it takes significant amount of time to get Nebraska license – we need to fast track – they can't see clients (Growing Community Connections (Dakota))
- Need more providers and more training and education to help practitioners develop new skillsets/best practices (Panhandle Partnership)
- Funding for psych centers (Buffalo County Area)
- Capacity concerns for mental health were reported by the following communities:
  - Adams Clay Nuckolls Webster County Area
  - Buffalo County Area
  - Douglas County Community Collaborative
  - Growing Community Connections (Dakota)
  - Lift Up Sarpy
  - Norfolk Family Coalition
  - Panhandle Partnership

## EAP and Support for the frontline workers

- Mental health, depression, fear for staff and clients is a critical issue (Panhandle Partnership)
- EAP and support were reported by the following communities:
  - Buffalo County Area
  - Cherry Brown County Area
  - Growing Community Connections (Dakota)
  - Lancaster County
  - Panhandle Partnership

## Substance Abuse

- Bars/restaurants but social drinkers are not in treatment
  - They may have withdrawal or mental health issues if they do not have access to self-medication strategies (gambling, drinking, etc.) (Panhandle)
- Substance abuse was mentioned by the following communities:
  - Buffalo County Area
  - Cherry Brown County Area
  - Panhandle Partnership
  - Tribal Communities- Native American Metro Omaha

## Grief

- Loss for families that were unable to say goodbye to loved ones who die (Buffalo County Area)
- Need to recognize that the big issues that people may grieve, could be very specific to them, such as missing a prom, or not having graduation a graduation celebration
  - The cancelation of spring sports is huge issue, prompting a Facebook petition from parents (Sandhills Community Collaborative)
- Needs related to grief were mentioned by the following communities:
  - Buffalo County Area
  - Sandhills Community Collaborative

## Unique needs and disparities:

- Lack of technology stops access to mental health for those without reliable internet, devices, or an understanding how to access technology
- Access to telehealth provides limited confidentiality to those without private space in their homes (Fremont and Youth)
- Trauma for flood victims needs to be considered. Farmers will deal with lack of production and a down market. They should be watched for depression and suicide risk (Buffalo County)
- Those with mental health issues are being incarcerated because there is nowhere to put them (Norfolk Family Coalition)
- People with disabilities suffer from isolation. (Tribal Community- Omaha Tribe)
- Seniors may be isolated without tech knowledge (Panhandle Partnership)
- Housing for persons with behavioral health conditions is hard; no shelter services in the area. (Cherry Brown County Area)
- Heartland has delivered behavioral health services to Cherry County jail inmates (Cherry Brown County Area)

## Barriers that exist for people to access necessary services:

- Internet access and device access
- Communication/knowledge of existing services
- Insurance coverage
- Reliable Transportation
- Access to information regarding resources

## Workforce capacity related barriers to serve people impacted by COVID-19

- Mental health workforce licensure is the barrier – hired new staff that was fully licensed in Iowa but it takes significant amount of time to get Nebraska license – we need to fast tract – they can't see clients (Growing Community Connections (Dakota))
- Ongoing financial support for collaborative work (Lancaster County, and McCook Area)
- Gathering consent when not in person. Documented verbal or docu-sign being used

## Barriers around serving specific populations (historically segregated neighborhoods, immigrant populations, LGBT youth)

- Language barriers (Growing Community Connections (Dakota))

## Solutions being implemented or proposed

### Seniors

- There are social groups, bible studies, and church services via computer or phone access. (Norfolk Family Coalition)
- Provide them with devices and provide education to walk them through the process of accessing the virtual social opportunities they could participate in. Nursing homes could support their residents with tech and support. Possibly Area Agency on Aging (Norfolk Family Coalition)
- Take kids around the facility to talk to seniors through windows (Cherry Brown County Area)
- Neighborhood associations, churches, or other resources might be used to reach out to seniors (Platte Colfax)
- Nursing home/assisted living staff are doing facetime to connect residents with family. (Hall County Community Collaborative)

### Anxiety

- Marketing- awareness of existing services to everyone that needs assistance (Growing Community Connections (Dakota))
  - Attached provider business card and/or brochures to the sack lunches that are being delivered and picked up.
- South Sioux Schools does a live YouTube video to connect with schools and children related to mental health and wellbeing. (Growing Community Connections (Dakota))
- Neighborhood associations, churches, or other resources might be used to reach out to seniors (Platte Colfax)
- For those with severe persistent mental illness – those delivering meals and doing daily phone calls (Growing Community Connections (Dakota))
- Connecting parents with teens who are on student council, and others in the community who could do tutoring to give parents respite. (Keith Perkins County)
- Make EAP services readily available to staff of non-profit agencies who are working with homeless and vulnerable clients/Patients during the pandemic. (Lancaster County)
- Center for People in Need and the Digital Inclusion Task Force is in the midst of making plans to assist families. (Lancaster County)

### Connectivity

- Refurbish/reuse technology
  - One therapist gave old cell phone to client, set up hotspot, and drove over and do meeting from outside the house. (Panhandle)
- Phone access for those unable to access the internet
- Engaging youth to volunteer with seniors and tutoring

## Other findings:

### Youth 18-26 Playbook Report:

- Increased mental health needs due to social isolation, anxiety and fear in youth and young adults is a priority. Youth and young adults were previously at elevated risk for loneliness and disconnection within the community so an increase in isolation and lack of social connections due to COVID-19 pandemic may lead to increased mental health needs, unhealthy relationships, and risky behavior. (Project Everlast) (Douglas Co.) (Families 1st) (H3C) (Madison Co.) (Dodge Co.)
  - Anticipated increase in trafficking ‘grooming’ as young people are isolated and experiencing loss of income, which may lead to risky behavior such as survival sex (H3C) (Douglas Co.) (Project Everlast)
  - Access to critical medication is reduced due to telehealth limitations and no access to transportation (H3C) (Douglas Co.) (Project Everlast)
  - For young adult parents: fewer “eyes on” vulnerable children daily and young parents dealing with stressors of parenting 24/7 with little-to-no in-home or kinship support, anticipated increase in abuse/neglect cases following pandemic (Blue Valley) (Panhandle) (Families 1st) (Project Everlast)
  - Youth and young adults report that telehealth options are difficult to access and lack relationship-building that is critical for youth interventions (Project Everlast) (Blue Valley) (Douglas Co.)
    - . Loss of face-to-face social supports (e.g. therapy, AA) may lead to an increase in suicide ideation, suicide attempts, and other mental health concerns