



Majority View COVID-19 as a Crisis

Written By Mike Phillips, CEO, Wyoming Behavioral Institute

The results of the UHS survey are interesting. They show:

- 68% of American adults surveyed view COVID-19 as a severe or extreme crisis in the U.S.
- 62% of survey participants report increased stress, anxiety or depression. Of those feeling COVID-related stress, anxiety or depression, 55% report these stressors are interfering moderately, severely or overwhelmingly in their lives.
- Nearly 25% feel COVID-related stress, anxiety and/or depression most or all of the time.
- Concerns about the economy, unknown duration of COVID-19 effects, no 'normalcy' in near future, isolation from friends/family and risk of virus exposure are the leading sources of stress, anxiety and depression.
- 1 in 4 surveyed are unclear what action to take if they had a mental health crisis.
- Of those with COVID-related anxiety, stress or depression, most are self-managing these negative feelings; only 15% used online tools and/or sought help from a licensed counselor/therapist.
- Fear of virus exposure was the key barrier to mental health treatment during this time, followed by cost of co-pay and negative perception of telehealth.
- Telehealth: About half of Adults surveyed used Telehealth to treat a mental or physical condition, most of whom had a positive experience.
- Nearly half of Americans expect to regain 'normalcy' within a few months; more than 90% are at least somewhat hopeful of their home life in the future

View the survey at <https://www.multivu.com/players/English/8744351-universal-health-services-survey-on-mental-health-amidst-covid-19/>

Wyoming Behavioral Institute is working to expand tele-access and tele-assessment options around the State. In fact, telehealth services are available from many mental health providers if people are uncomfortable about visiting in person. Wyoming has historically been reported as having among the highest suicide rates in the nation. We encourage everyone to ask for help, because even though times are tough, there is hope.

Mike Phillips is CEO of the Wyoming Behavioral Institute, an 85-bed acute care psychiatric hospital for children, adolescents and adults in Casper.

The results of a recent survey reveal numerous valuable insights into the impact COVID-19 is having on the mental health of Americans, as well as the tools being used to manage the effects. According to Matt Peterson, President of the Behavioral Health Division, Universal Health Services, Inc., the parent company of Wyoming Behavioral Institute, the data specifically indicate that few Americans are utilizing the online tools that offer coping strategies or are seeking help from professionals to manage COVID-related stressors.

However, it is promising that the majority of Americans surveyed who have used telehealth had a positive experience. Barriers to care – particularly for mental health – still exist and must be addressed. Research studies in this area will give us a better understanding of how to better support the citizens of our country to be resilient during this current pandemic as well as future challenges.

In addition to our challenges in Wyoming with provider access, we seem to be following a similar trend as highlighted nationally that few people may be accessing the online tools available.

2020 PAC Contributions

Eric Boley
Barry Burkart
Carol Solie
Doug Faus
Heidi Baskfield
Doug McMillan
Tim Thornell
Maureen Cadwell
Margie Molitor
Bren Lowe



Member Spotlight

PVHC Paramedicine Program

Powell Valley Healthcare (PVH) has launched a community paramedic program, one of three currently operational in the state of Wyoming.

Jess Mathews, community paramedic coordinator at Powell Valley Healthcare, says a community paramedicine program, utilizes emergency medical system personnel to deliver healthcare services in situations other than emergencies.

A community paramedicine program utilizes emergency medical system personnel to delivery healthcare service situations other than emergencies. The programs are designed according to the needs of the community where the programs are

run, so they look different in every community.

Community paramedics approach healthcare differently from traditional paramedics. A paramedic deals with patients' immediate, often emergency needs; they may look at the help they need in terms of minutes or hours. The community paramedic looks at needs over months or a year.

"It's a different angle of looking at the patient," Mathews said. "So we're not looking at the patient as an emergency. We're trying to look at them in a more holistic manner, and we're looking at them with their entire medical team."

That includes the person's primary care physi-

cian, any physical or occupational therapy they receive, and coordination with any home healthcare workers. Community paramedics provide medical services, such as the management of post-surgical patients, monitoring chronic diseases and prescription drug education.

As telehealth services increase, the community paramedics can facilitate these sessions by taking the patient's vitals, relaying them to the provider and helping the provider with the diagnosis.



Powell Valley Healthcare

MHCC Program

MHCC Launches PreventT2 Diabetes Program

Community members are preventing type 2 diabetes, together with the PreventT2 lifestyle change program offered by Memorial Hospital of Converse County (MHCC).

Guided by trained diabetes care and education specialists, groups of participants learn the skills they need to make lasting changes such as losing a modest amount of weight, being more physically active, and managing stress. People with prediabetes — higher-than-normal blood glucose (sugar) levels — are 5 to 15 times more likely to develop type 2 diabetes than those with normal

blood glucose levels. Many people with prediabetes can be diagnosed with type 2 diabetes within five years.

"One in three American adults has prediabetes, so the need for prevention has never been greater," said Memorial Hospital of Converse County Diabetes Care & Education Specialist Ashley Littleton. "The PreventT2 program offers a proven approach to preventing or delaying the onset

of type 2 diabetes through modest lifestyle changes made with the support of a coach and one's peers." PreventT2 groups meet for a year — weekly for the first 6 months, then once or twice a month for the second 6 months to maintain healthy lifestyle changes. The program's group setting provides a supportive environment with people facing similar challenges and trying to make the same changes.



WWAMI

New Wyoming WWAMI Assistant Dean for Clinical Medical Education



Robert Monger, M.D., F.A.C.P., has been named the new clinical dean for Wyoming WWAMI.

He is succeeding Dr. Larry Kirven and will begin on August 1, 2020. Dr. Kirven will continue working with the WRITE program (WWAMI Rural Integrated Training Experience) across the WWAMI region.

"We are excited to have Dr. Monger join us as the new Wyoming WWAMI Assistant Clinical Dean," said Dr. Suzanne Allen, Vice Dean for Academic, Rural and Regional Affairs for the UW School of Medicine. "Dr. Monger has been an integral part of Wyoming WWAMI for a number of years and we anticipate a seamless transition from Dr. Kirven to Dr. Monger."