

PrimeCare Medical, Inc.
PrimeCare Medical of WV, Inc.
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For the Frontline Staff

From the Behavioral Health Services Team

While the country is in lockdown, we are thankful for the frontline workers; the security staff, our nursing staff, medical providers, mental health providers, and administrative staff, who continue to work tirelessly to keep our communities and patients safe and look out for each other.

On behalf of all PrimeCare, your commitment is appreciated, **thank you for your kindness, dedication and bravery during this difficult time.**

Working in corrections is challenging at the best of times, with the pandemic, we are forced to juggle a lot of balls. Walking the line between safety and health of the jail/prison population and, also, focusing on the health and safety of our colleagues, ourselves and our loved ones can be challenging.

Right now everyone's physical health is the top concern as we all take precautions to stop the spread of COVID-19. However, it is equally important to protect and nurture your mental and emotional wellbeing, especially when serving others as a frontline worker.

As frontline workers you are likely to experience fear, anxiety and a sense of powerlessness. There could even be aspects such as rage and anger. There can be compassion fatigue. Not to mention the basic concerns related to proper equipment and availability. There is fear about family. Questions about exposure. Concerns for colleagues who have been exposed and are symptomatic.

Remind yourself that everything you are feeling is important and needs to be acknowledged. Also remind yourself that despite the current challenges and frustrations, yours is an important calling.

Together, we are stronger

“The strongest people are those who win battles we know nothing about.”

During this global pandemic, people are talking about the urgent and critical need for personal professional equipment. Administrations and politicians are sharing concerns about quarantining units, taking temperatures and the need for testing. They are talking about flattening the curve and physical distancing. But we want you to know we are also talking about a potential mental health crisis facing security staff and health care workers on the frontlines of this pandemic in the correctional facilities.

To an outside observer, security and health care workers look strong and resilient in the face of the unknown. You inspire us as you go to work every day, at great personal risk, to keep others safe.

But, as the BHS team, we spend much of our time observing and listening — we know that your calm surface appearance may be the only armor you have left. Underneath it, many frontline workers are barely keeping it together. You are probably feeling anxious and afraid. Are you having trouble sleeping and find yourselves feeling sad more than usual? The overall feeling for many is one of an impending doom and an existing gloom that is both physically and psychologically palpable. To lower risk, many frontline workers have decided to socially isolate themselves. Some have chosen to have their at-risk family members spend time with relatives far away from them. Some frontline workers isolate themselves in their own home.

Please take time to recognize that you are human. Please take care of yourselves. We need you!

FACE COVID

F=Focus on what's in your control

A=Acknowledge your thoughts and feelings

C=Come back into your body

E=Engage in what you are doing

C=Committed action

O=opening up

V=Values

I=Identify resources

D=Disinfect and Distance

Finally, when stress, anxiety or burnout become too overwhelming, remember to seek professional support.

Wellbeing Tips

Acknowledge worries

Working on the frontline during a pandemic is stressful. You may have worries about how you and your colleagues will protect yourselves. If you do, talk together about the plans and systems your workplace has to keep you safe. Take time to notice what's worrying you and set time aside to think about what you can and cannot control. Be kind to yourself, it's normal to feel concerned at a time like this.

Take notice of the things that uplift you

Whether it's listening to a podcast on your way to work, having a coffee break, watching your favorite comedian on YouTube, or video-calling your grandchildren after your shift – find the things in your daily routine that bring a smile to your face, and try and do them more often.

Move and nourish your body

To help you through this stressful time it's important to find simple ways to stay active. It could be taking a brisk walk around your neighborhood or doing an online yoga class to unwind after a busy day. Use food to fuel you – eat often and focus on having fresh, nutritious meals. Stay hydrated throughout the day.

Stay connected to your friends

Check in with the people you care about via text, Facebook messenger or calls. Having regular contact with people outside your workplace can help to take your mind off your day-to-day stresses. You might like to try playing an online game or watching Netflix together – think of the things you enjoy doing when you are together and figure out creative ways to keep doing them while you're apart.

Take time to breathe

If things feel overwhelming at work, stop what you are doing and take some mindful breaths. Take deep breaths, in and out, calming your body and mind, then rest where you are noticing everything that is going on around you.

Ask for support

You're giving so much. Remember you can ask for support too. Reach out and ask the loved ones in your bubble to help you in any way they can. Whether it's doing the grocery shopping, making dinner or keeping the house tidy while you're out working – anything that makes life a little easier for you will go a long way toward boosting your wellbeing.

Unplug and unwind

Hearing about COVID-19 continuously can feel overwhelming, especially when you're working through it. Take a break from the news when you need to and create your own wind-down routine. Run a bath, recite a karakia before you leave work, or enter your whare/home to help ground yourself, or try a mindfulness meditation before bed.

Just take a moment...Take a deep breath..Laugh...

The most dangerous game to play:
"Resting your eyes" in the morning
after shutting off your alarm



Actually, I'm fine. I just like to have
a place where I'm allowed on the couch.



Thank you for all you do!!