

To: All Trillium Members and Stakeholders

From: Cindy Ehlers, Executive Vice President

Date: September 28, 2020

Subject: Flu Vaccines, Virtual MHFA Training, Text Messaging Survey, My Learning Campus Training Videos, Small Business Startup Funds, CFAC Involvement, Joint DMH and DHB (NC Medicaid) COVID-19 Update Calls




As the State of North Carolina begins the reopening of businesses and activities, Trillium will continue sharing information with our members, their families or guardians, and our community stakeholders. While some temporary COVID-19 changes will end, such as working from home and not visiting loved ones, we realize some changes may be here to stay. Throughout this process, Trillium will send email and other communications to share news about opportunities, updates from the State, and how we are serving you during this unusual time.

FLU VACCINES




Influenza (flu) is a contagious respiratory illness that infects the nose, throat and lungs caused by influenza viruses. It can cause mild to severe illness, and at times complications from flu can lead to hospital stays and death. The best way to reduce the risk of flu and its potentially serious complications is to get a flu vaccine each year.

The U.S. healthcare system is already expected to be strained in the fall by a resurgence in COVID-19.

You are at high risk for flu complications because you are:

-  An Adult 65 years or older,
-  A Child younger than 5, but especially children younger than 2 years old,
-  Or Have a chronic medical condition(s)

Medical Conditions that puts us at high risk of developing serious flu complications:


-  Asthma
-  Neurologic and neurodevelopment conditions [including disorders of the brain, spinal cord, peripheral nerve and muscle, such as cerebral palsy, epilepsy (seizure disorders), stroke, intellectual disability, moderate to severe developmental delay, muscular dystrophy, or spinal cord injury]
-  Chronic lung disease (such as cystic fibrosis)

- 🌿 Heart disease (such as congenital heart disease, congestive heart failure and coronary artery disease)
- 🌿 Blood disorders (such as sickle cell disease)
- 🌿 Endocrine disorders (such as diabetes mellitus)
- 🌿 Kidney disorders
- 🌿 Liver disorders
- 🌿 Metabolic disorders (such as inherited metabolic disorders and mitochondrial disorders)
- 🌿 Weakened immune system due to disease or medication (such as children or adolescents with HIV or AIDS, cancer, or those on chronic steroids)
- 🌿 Children who are taking aspirin or salicylate containing medicines
- 🌿 Extreme obesity, which has been associated with severe influenza illness in some studies of adults, may also be a risk factor for children.

Treating Influenza (Flu)

FIGHT FLU

Information for People at High Risk for Serious Flu Complications



Do you have Asthma, Chronic Obstructive Disease, Diabetes, or Heart Disease?
If so, you are at high risk of serious illness if an influenza antiviral drug can mean the difference between a mild illness and a very serious illness that could be life-threatening. This fact sheet provides information about the drugs to treat influenza in people at high risk.

Why am I at greater risk of serious illness?
Your medical condition makes it more likely you will get a more serious illness from flu, like pneumonia. Flu also can make your condition worse, even if they are well-managed. People with obstructive pulmonary disease, or heart failure, or other conditions and have difficulty breathing can make the immune system less able to fight off the virus and raise blood sugar levels.

Can flu be treated?
Yes. There are prescription medications called "antiviral drugs" that can be used to treat and fight influenza viruses in your respiratory tract. They are different from antibiotics, which fight bacteria.

What should I do if I think I have flu?
Check with your doctor promptly if you are in a group at high risk for serious complications. Symptoms of flu can include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, and fatigue. If you get flu, antiviral drugs are a treatment option. Your doctor may prescribe antiviral drugs.

Should I still get a flu vaccine?
Yes. Antiviral drugs are not a substitute for getting a flu vaccine. While flu vaccines can help prevent influenza, vaccination is the first and best way to prevent influenza. You should receive flu vaccine every year as a second line of defense to treat flu if you get sick.

What are the benefits of antiviral drugs?
Antiviral treatment works best when started within two days of getting symptoms. Antiviral drugs can shorten the time you are sick by about one day. They also can prevent complications like pneumonia when treatment is started early.


For people at high risk of serious flu complications, early treatment with an antiviral drug between having a milder illness instead of a more serious illness that could result in a hospital stay with flu illness, some studies have reported that early antiviral treatment can help.

What antiviral drugs are recommended?
There are four FDA-approved influenza antiviral drugs recommended by CDC: oseltamivir (trade name Tamiflu®), zanamivir (trade name Relenza®), peramivir (trade name Peramivir®), and baloxavir (trade name Xofluza®). Oseltamivir is available as a pill or liquid, and zanamivir is administered intravenously by a health care provider. Baloxavir is a pill given orally.

Flu Information

What if my child seems very sick?
If your child is experiencing any of the following emergency warning signs, you should take him or her to the emergency room:

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish lips or face
- Ribs pulling in with each breath
- Chest pain
- Severe muscle pain (child refuses to walk)
- Dehydration (no urine for 8 hours, dry mouth, no tears when crying)
- Not alert or interacting when awake
- Seizures
- Fever above 104° F
- In children younger than 12 weeks, any fever
- Fever or cough that improve but then return or worsen
- Worsening of chronic medical conditions



When can my child go back to school after being sick?

- Your child should stay home for at least 24 hours after their fever is gone.
- The fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen.
- A fever is defined as 100° F/37.8° C or greater*

*Many authorities use either 100 (37.8 degrees Celsius) or 100.4 F (38.0 degrees Celsius) as a cut-off for fever; but this number can vary depending on factors such as the method of measurement and the age of the person.


Is a flu vaccine safe for my child with chronic health problems?
Yes. Flu vaccines have a good safety record and a number of them are approved for use in children older than 6 months, including healthy children and children with certain chronic health conditions. Because children with chronic health conditions are at a high risk of getting flu related complications, it is especially important that they get vaccinated.

What flu vaccine should my child get and how many doses?
In general, children with chronic medical conditions should get a flu shot rather than a nasal spray flu vaccine. Your health care provider can help choose the best vaccine option. Additionally, children younger than 9 years old may need 2 doses of the vaccine the first time they receive flu vaccine. Talk with your health care provider to discuss how many doses are recommended for your child.


How can I plan ahead with my child's school or child care?
Find out your child's school or childcare providers plan for flu season. Let them know your child is at high-risk for flu-related problems.

CDC recommends that all children 6 months and older, especially those with chronic health conditions, get a seasonal flu vaccine every year.

For more information, visit
www.cdc.gov/flu
or call 800-CDC-INFO






U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



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PROTECT YOURSELF BY:

-  Getting a flu vaccine every year, as soon as vaccine is available. While everyone six months of age and older should get an annual flu vaccine, it's especially important for people at high risk of serious flu complications. High risk patients are recommended to receive the flu shot, not the nasal spray flu vaccine.
-  Asking family and caregivers to get a flu vaccine to protect you.
-  If you're 65 years or older, you should get either a regular flu shot, a high-dose flu shot, or an adjuvanted flu shot (made with smaller amounts of the virus and promotes a better response from the immune system). The latter two are designed especially for people in your age group. You should not get the nasal spray flu vaccine.

Flu vaccines are generally **free** for anyone with Medicaid, Medicare Part B, employer health insurance or other insurance that conforms to the Affordable Care Act. You can get your flu shot at doctor's office, Health Department, or Local Pharmacy.

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The CDC's website has a [flu shot locator](#) that will be operational by Sept. 1, but you may have to contact each location directly for social distancing details, such as which entrance to use.

More information about flu is available online through the [Division of Public Health](#) and from the CDC at www.cdc.gov/flu. For information about COVID-19 in North Carolina, visit covid19.ncdhhs.gov.

VIRTUAL MHFA TRAINING

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) teaches you how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental illnesses and substance use disorders. These trainings will give you the skills you need to reach out and provide initial support to someone who may be developing a mental health or substance use problem and help connect them to appropriate care.

Trillium is now offering FREE, online, virtual opportunities to complete this valuable training. Please [view the flier here](#) for upcoming dates and registration.

TEXT MESSAGING SURVEY

In August, we started sending text messages to adult members who have shared their mobile phone numbers. Text messages from Trillium will include interesting information, links to training videos, ways you can strengthen your mental and physical health, and more.

If you received a text message, we want to know what you think! Please complete a short (only four questions) survey by clicking on [this link](#).

We will not send more than one text a month, and you can choose to stop receiving them at any time. Trillium's name will be displayed in each text but you will not be able to respond or communicate with a Trillium staff person through these texts. If you have not provided your cell number and want to be sure you are included, [please complete the form from our website](#).

If you receive the texts and do not want to get them anymore, you can reply to the text with "STOPALL" to opt out.

MY LEARNING CAMPUS TRAINING VIDEOS

Trillium's Training Unit has recently added new courses to our [My Learning Campus](#) website. This free, online platform offers a variety of content related to physical, mental, and overall well-being. Each course is short and provides wonderful tools you can use in your day-to-day life.



- 🌱 **How to Order Groceries Online** – Follow the steps on how to use Instacart to place grocery deliveries while staying at home.
- 🌱 **Social Distancing in a Large Family or Crowd** - This course gives tips for how you can manage the recommended social distancing guidelines if you live with many other family members or find yourself in a larger crowd.

Other recently posted courses include:

- 🌱 **Spa Day Course** – Learn easy, inexpensive ways to treat yourself at home to reduce stress and provide self-care.

SMALL BUSINESS STARTUP FUNDS

Trillium will soon start offering up to \$5,000 for business startup funds to adults receiving services for mental health or I/DD!

We will announce the application process and who is eligible on **October 1, 2020**. Please check with your care manager if you are interested.

CFAC INVOLVEMENT

Do you know about the Consumer and Family Advisory Committee (CFAC)? Trillium offers three regional CFAC boards that members and family members can participate in to ensure their voice is heard. Anyone considering membership must attend at least one meeting then submit an application form which will be reviewed by the appropriate Membership Committee. Please [visit our website](#) for more information.

JOINT DMH AND DHB (NC MEDICAID) COVID-19 UPDATE CALLS

Joint DMHDDSAS and DHB (NC Medicaid) COVID-19 Update Call

For BH/IDD Consumers, Family Members and Community Stakeholders

Monday—September 28, 2020 - 2:00 pm

(Monthly on the Fourth Monday at 2:00pm. Please note the new process for future calls)

This call is for consumers, family members, and community stakeholders ONLY. If you are provider who joins the call, please allow consumers, family members, and community stakeholders to ask their questions. **(Provider questions will be answered during the regularly scheduled NC Providers call.)**

Dear NC Behavioral Health and IDD Consumers, Family Members and Community Stakeholders,

The Division of MH/DD/SAS and Division of Health Benefits (NC Medicaid) remain committed to working hard to assess service gaps, create and amend policies, and direct funding into service areas that will be impactful in preventing the interruption and delay of BH/IDD services during this challenging time. The COVID-19 situation is ever-changing and evolving rapidly; we all must continue to work together to meet the needs of individuals, families and communities. This recurring call will be the fourth Monday of each month is an attempt to help keep consumers, family members and community stakeholders informed and updated on policies and actions impacting service access and health outcomes for BH and IDD consumers, and perhaps more importantly – to hear directly from you about any questions or issues that have emerged since we last communicated. We hope that you can join us. To participate please click on the link below to register:

PLEASE NOTE NEW PROCESS

Participant Log-In Information

Please register for COVID-19 Consumer and Community Stakeholders Call - Sep 28, 2020 2:00 PM EDT at:

[REGISTRATION](#)

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

FOR CLOSED CAPTIONING SEE LINK BELOW:

At the start time of the event, please login to your event by clicking on the link below:

Closed Captioning [HERE](#)

As always, members may contact our Call Center 24 hours a day through our **Access to Care Line at 1-877-685-2415**. The health, safety, and overall well-being of our community is first and foremost in everything we do. We are actively working with our local hospitals and provider agencies to coordinate care for our members and strengthen support for our direct support professionals and first responders. We are in this together.

If you were forwarded this email and have not signed up to receive these notifications, [you can do so here.](#)

Any questions about this Communication Bulletin may be sent to the following email: MemberEngagement@TrilliumNC.org.

These questions will be answered in a Q&A format and published on Trillium's website.