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Dear Aftercare Program patients and loved ones,

The UCLA Aftercare Research Program is continuing its mission to provide needed treatment and to evaluate improved treatments throughout the coronavirus pandemic. To do that, we have “reinvented” ourselves as a Program that provides most of its treatments through telehealth. Let me share some of the ways we have adapted in order to continue to provide the essential care that we offer to our patients and their families during these difficult times.

During the coronavirus crisis and social distancing procedures, almost all of our services have transitioned to telehealth videoconferencing that adheres with UCLA-approved practices. Individual and group therapy sessions, case manager and psychiatrist meetings, cognitive training, and most assessments will be conducted through a secure internet video connection. We are continuing to accept referrals and perform video-based screenings. Our clinic is still fully functioning with emails being sent out to remind patients of their schedules before each clinic day begins. In addition to this transition, we will check in on our patients’ well-being and discuss any concerns they have regarding the coronavirus.

For the very few services that require coming to UCLA, we are taking extra precautions to safe guard both patients and staff. First, we will provide a wellness check over the phone to confirm that patients and any accompanying family members are not experiencing any symptoms of the coronavirus. There will also be a wellness checkpoint at the building entrance where a trained professional will conduct a forehead temperature scan before allowing individuals to enter. At the Aftercare Research Program we are taking additional precautions to ensure everyone’s safety, including (but not limited to) wearing face masks and asking patients and visitors to wear them as well, cleansing all equipment, door knobs, and furniture with Lysol or Clorox disinfecting wipes before and after each use, washing hands frequently, practicing social distancing by maintaining a 6-foot distance from others, and limiting the number of staff in the office to make it easier to maintain social distancing.

We will continue to keep you informed regarding any clinic changes. Thank you for your patience with us as we are continuing to brainstorm and initiate various ways to maintain all of our services throughout this extraordinary moment. On a statewide level, UCLA is coordinating a multi-stage effort across California to provide critical resources for our communities and has contributed to the development of resources for emotional healthⁱ.

For general inquiries about COVID-19, you can visit this webpage: <https://www.uclahealth.org/coronavirus-news> or you can call our UCLA patient hotline at 310-267-3300.

If you develop flu-like symptoms — fever, cough and difficulty breathing — or are concerned that you may have been exposed to COVID-19, please contact your primary care physician.

As a reminder, self-care is essential. We want to stress the importance of the following preventive measures:

1. Stay at home as much as possible while the Safer at Home orders are in effect. If you must leave your residence stay at least 6 feet away from other people (regardless of whether they appear sick or not).
2. Wash your hands frequently and for at least 20 seconds with soap and warm water.
3. Use alcohol-based hand sanitizers after touching other people or touching items and surfaces used by many people.
4. Cough or sneeze into a tissue or the inside of your elbow.
5. Wear a cloth face covering in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., grocery stores and pharmacies).
6. Limit handshakes.
7. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, mouth, and face.
8. Clean common-use surfaces with disinfectants or diluted bleach solutions on a repeated and regular schedule.

Please know that your health, safety and well-being are our top priorities, and we want to reassure you that we will coordinate with UCLA Health to ensure that our services are provided in the safest way possible during the coronavirus pandemic.

Warm regards from me and the Aftercare Program clinical team,



Keith H. Nuechterlein, Ph.D.
Director, UCLA Aftercare Research Program

ⁱ <https://covid19.ca.gov/resources-for-emotional-support-and-well-being/#top>