

Spotlight Statement

While the world has turned its attention to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have remained diligent in addressing the opioid crisis which continues to claim lives daily. The opioid crisis now sits in the shadows of the Coronavirus but has not gone away. In fact, during times of crisis people are more likely to turn to substances to help them cope.

Many have been impacted in recent months: physically, financially, emotionally, socially, and mentally. On April 14, 2020, The Philadelphia Inquirer featured a story titled “The impact of the loss of human touch’: Philly-area suicide hotlines see an increase in calls related to coronavirus.” While not directly addressing addiction, it highlights the devastation isolation can cause. For those addicted to drugs and alcohol, isolation is a known trigger. Lockdowns put those in recovery in a precarious situation. We teach our clients to H.A.L.T. Never let yourself get to: Hungry, Angry, Lonely, or Tired. Any one of those things has the potential to derail the recovery process, and for some may be deadly. Healthy social interactions are critical to the recovery process. One of the greatest challenges faced by most treatment centers is finding the balance between social distancing and social interactions.

Through it all, Avenues has remained committed to the welfare of our clients, staff, and the community at large. We have always provided, and will continue to provide, a safe place for those struggling with addiction. Avenues follows all CDC, WHO and state licensing recommendations and requirements. Below are protocols and procedures that we have put into place over the recent months. We have made appropriate adjustments based on available information, mandates, restrictions and loosening of restrictions.

- Mandated PPE which has been made available to everyone (The governors mask mandate has made an exception for those with a medical condition, mental health condition or disability)
- Mandated sick staff members to stay home.
- Trained staff and clients on respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene.
- Emphasized and encouraged respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene.
- Prioritized use of telemedicine, as appropriate.
- Routinely sanitized all frequently touched surfaces.
- Scheduled regular professionally disinfected the entire facility, as appropriate.
- Practiced social distancing, markers on floor where needed or appropriate.
- Limited group sizes.
- Implemented staff temperature checks.
- Mandated pre-screening/screening of all new clients.
- Mandated isolation of clients with a fever.
- Mandated quarantine of clients who test positive.
- Immediately notification of staff and clients potentially exposed.

- Required staff that tested positive to quarantine. (Return to work was permitted when cleared by the health department).
- Discontinued visitation.
- Discontinued attendance at 12 step meetings.

Avenues has gone above and beyond to try to provide high quality substance abuse treatment in the safest environment possible. Our highly dedicated staff have followed protocols and acted immediately. Our staff take the responsibility of client care seriously, understanding that what we do matters. Our daily reality is that lives are on the line. This reality will not change when the rest of the world gets back to “normal.”

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