



## **INFORMED CONSENT FOR IN-PERSON SERVICES DURING COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS**

This document contains important information about the decision to resume in-person services in light of the COVID-19 public health crisis. Please read this carefully. When the document is signed, it will serve as an official agreement between Harrisonburg Rockingham Infant and Toddler Connection/HRCBS and the family whose signatures are included.

### **Decision to Meet Face-to-Face**

HRITC and the family have agreed to meet in person for some or all future sessions. If there is a resurgence of the pandemic or if other health concerns arise, however, the program may require that we meet via telehealth. If the program or family feels that is necessary, we may determine that we return to telehealth.

If, at any point, the family feels that returning to telehealth services is safer, ITCHR will respect that decision as long as it is feasible and clinically appropriate. Reimbursements for telehealth services, however, are also determined by the insurance companies and applicable law. The family will be informed of any issues that may arise with their specific insurance company.

### **Risks of Opting for In-Person Services**

Both the family and HRITC understand that by coming to the office and/or resuming face-to-face visits, there is a risk of exposure to the coronavirus (or other public health risk). Neither party will hold the other party responsible should a provider or family member be diagnosed with coronavirus.

### **Responsibilities to Minimize Your Exposure**

To obtain services in person, agreeing to certain precautions to keep the providers and family safe from exposure, sickness and possible death is necessary. Not adhering to these safeguards, may result in starting/returning to telehealth arrangements.

#### *Family Responsibilities*

- Limit in-person appointments to the child and one parent, if possible.
- Complete a short screening before each appointment to confirm members of the home have not been ill or diagnosed with coronavirus.
- Family members present for the session must wash hands before provider arrives as well as any other family members or children who may be in the home.
- Respond to providers in confirming the appointment before arrival. Sessions will be cancelled if anyone in the home is ill (including fevers)
- Maintain safe distance during the appointment (CDC recommendation of 6 feet)
- Wearing masks for adults (not children under the age of 2 or with respiratory complications) is recommended for family members, however, it is the family's home and right to wear or not wear a mask.
- Notify ITCHR immediately should any family member be exposed to coronavirus.
- If the appointment is scheduled at the center, the family must wear a mask to enter the building as well as the duration of the appointment.

*Program Responsibilities*

- Providers will wash hands before entering and exiting the in-person appointment.
- Providers must wear masks in the home. The mask may be removed briefly if both the provider and family agree, for example, to model a strategy. Should the mask be removed, the provider will maintain social distancing of 6 feet.
- Providers will primarily schedule appointments at an outside location such as: parks, playgrounds, family backyard, etc. to ensure both the family and provider are limiting exposure. Scheduling at the office is acceptable as well.
- Providers will not schedule multiple in-person appointments consecutively as to reduce exposure and potentially spreading the virus.
- Providers will immediately notify HRCSB and family should they be exposed to coronavirus.

The above responsibilities may change if additional local, state, and federal orders or guidelines are published.

**HRITC Commitment to Minimize Exposure**

The Infant and Toddler Connection HR has taken steps to reduce the risk of spreading the coronavirus. Efforts are posted on the website, Facebook page, and within the office setting. Should the family have any questions regarding these efforts, they can call the Local System Manager for more details.

**Sickness and Services**

The program is committed to keeping all families, providers, and staff safe from the spread of the virus. Should a member of the family or child display questionable symptoms of illness, the appointment will immediately be cancelled. Services can be followed up by telehealth as appropriate.

**Confidentiality in the Case of Infection**

In the case that a family member and/or provider test positive for coronavirus, ITCHR is required to notify local health authorities. In notifying the local health department, minimum information necessary for their data collection will be provided. The nature of the appointment will not be discussed.

A signature agrees to the above terms and conditions.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Family Signature/Legal Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Margaret Muff Perry, M.Ed.**

Local System Manager

Infant and Toddler Connection Harrisonburg Rockingham Representative

Telephone: (540) 433-3100

## Screening Questionnaire

- Proceed with asking the following questions:
  - **In the last 14 days, have you or the client had close contact (within 6 ft) with a known or suspected COVID19 patient?**
    - Yes or No
      - If answer yes, in-person appointment cannot occur for at least 14 days.
  - **In the last 14 days, have you or the client or are you or the client currently experiencing any of the following symptoms?**
    - Fever greater than equal to 100.4 F? Yes or No
    - Coughing? Yes or No
    - Shortness of Breath? Yes or No
    - Loss of taste or smell? Yes or No
      - If answer yes to any question, in-person appointment cannot occur for at least 14 days
  - **Have you or the client or someone in your or the client's household been discharged from a hospital within the last 5 days?** Yes or No
    - If YES; what was the date of discharge?
      - If discharge was less than 5 days from date of screening, an in-person appointment can be scheduled after 14 days

## **Pilot Team Guidelines**

- Preference is to schedule visits outside the home as much as possible; if not an option, in the home is okay. Review responsibilities in guidelines located in informed consent.
- Providers will choose up to 4 families to do F2F with (specific for therapist only). This will be for June and July. Multiple F2F visits cannot occur on the same day.
- Schedule appointments that will allow time for thorough disinfecting. Doing a minimum of one F2F visit per day will allow for the rest of the day to be dedicated to telehealth. After F2F visits, providers will return to home location to complete or end the day.
- Follow-up Zoom meeting for pilot team will be scheduled for 6/29/20 at 1pm and 7/27/20 at 1pm.
- The office will be available and priority to schedule here is good too. Please make sure you have access to the two conference rooms in your email so that you can schedule accordingly.
- Make note of questions or thoughts as you start back up with visits. For example, do you need more masks, hand sanitizer, etc?
- Carry a small container to hold cleaning items necessary for visits: jug of water and small hand soap for washing hands before and after visit, wipes, small cleaner, hand sanitizer, and storage for your mask. (Possibly to keep personal items in the car as well). We can supply items, but what do you need?
- Since McNulty is not keeping the screening questions in their file, you do not need to save the questions. Please document that family answered yes (when appropriate) to the screening questions so the visit did not occurred F2F.
- Scheduling with families: if families have frequent visits (i.e. place of employment) where contracting Covid 19 is significantly increased, F2F should not occur at this time.
- Assessments will need to be through telehealth at this time.

## **Service Coordinator Reminder**

- Though you may be doing the intake at the home, the assessment may still have to occur via video because not all providers are doing home visits. This will need to be discussed with the family.
- Service Coordinators can schedule F2F visits by a certain number of visits per week. 2-3 visits per week max. Multiple F2F visits cannot occur on the same day.