MEMORANDUM

TO: Genetics and Healthy Childhood (GHC) Home Visiting Program contracted Local Implementing Agency Home Visiting Program Staff

FROM: D. Adam Crumbliss, Director
Division of Community and Public Health (DCPH)
Maternal and Child Health Home Visiting Programs


DATE: March 17, 2020

This memorandum is to advise of changes to early childhood home visits due to the ongoing COVID-19 outbreak.

The World Health Organization declared this specific novel coronavirus (COVID-19) a global pandemic. On Friday, March 13, 2020, the President declared a national emergency and Governor Parson declared a State of Emergency in Missouri. Many team members at DHSS have been leading the effort to keep our state healthy and safe. Department leadership has been activating networks, establishing protocols, and engaging partnerships to prepare Missouri for this point in time. In addition, the Bureau of Communicable Disease Control and Prevention team, Emergency Response Center team, and others have been performing around the clock for several weeks now to ensure our public health preparedness. The Department has established a 24-hour hotline operated by medical professionals and can be reached at 877-435-8411. The Department has also created a centralized website for up to date COVID-19 information. Visit www.health.mo.gov/coronavirus/ to learn more.

Effective immediately, in order to protect both home visitors and those vulnerable Missourians we serve, the GHC Home Visiting Program urges contracted home visiting agencies to continue to support home visiting participants by following the alternative practice of tele-visits as outlined by each evidence-based home visiting model: Early Head Start Home-Based Option (EHS-HBO), Healthy Families America (HFA), Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP), and Parents as Teachers (PAT). This recommendation applies to all GHC contracted home visiting agencies and is being put in place in order to minimize any unnecessary exposure to those we serve.

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The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services will be the leader in promoting, protecting and partnering for health.

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER: Services provided on a nondiscriminatory basis.
If a contracted home visiting agency allows home visitors to continue face-to-face visitation, please take the following precautions prior to EVERY face-to-face visit:

- When possible, call the person prior to the visit. If unable to reach the person by phone, then prior to a face-to-face visit, from a minimum distance of six (6) feet, ask the following safety questions:
  - How are you and/or anyone in your household currently feeling?
  - Have you and/or anyone in your household had a fever in the last 48 hours?
  - Have you and/or anyone in your household experienced a cough or shortness of breath in the last 48 hours?
  - Have you and/or anyone in your household been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for Influenza or COVID-19 in the last week?
  - Have you and/or anyone in your household traveled to an area with widespread or ongoing spread of COVID-19, either within the United States or abroad in the last 14 days?

- If the person indicates that they and/or anyone in their household are ill, had a fever, cough or shortness of breath in the last 48 hours, have been exposed to Influenza and/or COVID-19, or have traveled to an area with widespread or ongoing spread of COVID-19, the home visitor shall postpone the visit.

In any instance in which a home visitor finds that a participant indicates they and/or anyone in their household are ill and/or concerned for possible COVID-19, please encourage the participant to contact their primary care provider or contact the DHSS 24-hour hotline operated by medical professionals at 877-435-8411.

Questions regarding this memorandum should be directed to the GHC Visiting Program staff at 573-751-6266/800-877-6246 or via email:
- EHS-HBO and PAT Program Manager: Melinda.Kirsch@health.mo.gov
- HFA Program Manager: Tracy.Marshall@health.mo.gov
- NFP Program Manager: Beth.Stieferman@health.mo.gov
- GHC Home Visiting Program Coordinator: Christina.Elwood@health.mo.gov

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