



# Memo

TO: Addus Employees  
FROM: Risk/Human Resources  
RE: COVID-19

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As you know, the outbreak of the new Coronavirus, also known as COVID-19, is all over the news. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the risk in the United States is still low for the spread of the COVID-19. Organizations around the world are keeping watch on the new virus and its path. Updates are made daily from the [CDC](#) and the World Health Organization ([WHO](#)).

Addus is concerned for everyone's safety and we want to make sure that you have the most up-to-date information about the company's activities relative to COVID-19.

A lot of social media contains misinformation relative to the virus. If looking for information on COVID-19, make sure you are on a fact-based website for accurate information. [CDC.gov](#) remains the go-to for reliable and up-to-date information here in the United States.

Symptoms of the virus may appear 2-14 days after exposure; they include:

- ❖ Fever (not in all cases);
- ❖ Cough;
- ❖ Shortness of breath; and
- ❖ Diarrhea (in very few cases)

The best advice from the CDC and the WHO is to remain calm and practice activities that reduce and eliminate the spread of communicable diseases such as influenza, the common cold, and the like.

As caregivers, you always hold a special place in the hearts and minds of Addus as well as your clients/patients. Please make sure to follow the guide listed below:

- ❖ The most effective thing you can do to help is handwashing - and often! Soap and water for 20 seconds, 2 rounds of happy birthday should help you time it. If soap is not immediately unavailable, use hand sanitizer similar to Purell (at least 60% alcohol) until you can get to soap and water.
  - Be sure to wash your hands when entering a home or facility, whenever necessary while there, and again before you leave.
- ❖ Avoiding close contact (no closer than 6 feet) with people who are sick.
- ❖ No handshaking/hugging etc. We realize you have close relationships with your clients/patients, this is for your safety and theirs.
- ❖ Avoiding touching your eyes, nose and mouth – it is amazing how often we do this without realizing it.
- ❖ Covering your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then immediately throwing the tissue in the trash, and washing your hands. If you don't have a tissue handy, cough or sneeze into your inner elbow.
- ❖ Cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.

- ❖ Face Masks: The CDC does not recommend that people who are well wear a facemask. Facemasks should be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of the disease to others.
- ❖ Clinical staff: Continue using proper nursing bag technique.
- ❖ While always a good practice, staying home when you are sick is especially important now, and should always be followed, particularly if you are running a fever.
  - If you remain home, please contact your branch as soon as possible so a replacement can be found if necessary. You should only return to work once you have been symptom-free for 24 hours. Close contact with your branch will ensure everyone is in the loop.
- ❖ Employees who develop symptoms while at work should go home, and the affected employee's workspace should be wiped down thoroughly with disinfecting wipes upon their departure.
  - If you become ill at work, contact your branch immediately for instructions and maintain a safe distance from anyone in the home/facility.
- ❖ Employees should never travel if they are suffering from symptoms of acute respiratory illness (fever, cough, and shortness of breath). Before starting travel, they should notify their supervisor and stay home if sick. If you are traveling back home and symptoms develop, wear a mask to avoid infecting others. This is particularly important when traveling by air or in other confined spaces with multiple people.
- ❖ Client/patient safety is also of great importance to Addus. Please help us educate clients by:
  - Encouraging them to get the flu shot.
  - Instructing them to wash hands often throughout the day. If warm running water and soap are not available, use alcohol-based hand gel. You should always wash or sanitize your hands on entering a client's residence and prior to leaving the client's residence.
  - Reminding them to cover their cough or sneeze with a tissue, then immediately throw the tissue in the trash, and wash their hands. Also remind them that if they do not have a tissue handy, they should cough or sneeze into their inner elbow.
  - Reminding them to avoid touching their eyes, nose, or mouth.
  - Providing education about keeping surfaces (especially bedside tables, surfaces in the bathroom, and toys for children) clean by wiping them down with a household disinfectant.

### **Do you think your client may have been exposed to or has contracted the COVID-19 virus?**

If you have reason to believe your client may have COVID-19, you should keep the client as isolated as possible and then call your supervisor for guidance. Do not leave the client's home until you receive clear guidance and direction to do so. If you have reason to believe you may have COVID-19, please contact your supervisor immediately for further instruction.

Should the impact of COVID-19 escalate to a more critical degree in the United States, the Addus corporate office will follow the CDC's recommendations for businesses and institute the necessary measures to keep employees and clients/patients as safe as possible.

Your best source for information is your branch. We have also set up an email inbox for any questions that you may have at [CoronavirusQandA@addus.com](mailto:CoronavirusQandA@addus.com).

## Have you heard of Virtual Doctor Visits?

If you think you are experiencing symptoms, you can contact a virtual doctor or therapist – anytime, anywhere. With your virtual visits benefit, provided by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas (BCBSTX) and powered by [MDLIVE](#), the doctor is in at all times. These visits allow you to consult an independently contracted, board-certified doctor or therapist by phone, mobile app or online video for an appointment without leaving the comfort of home.

PLEASE NOTE: Virtual visits are a benefit for those on the BCBSTX plan, however any individual can access services by registering online with direct-payment options.

MDLIVE doctors can treat a variety of non-emergency conditions, such as:

- ❖ Cold/Flu
- ❖ Fever (age 3+)
- ❖ Headache
- ❖ Nausea
- ❖ Sinus Infections
- ❖ And more

An account can be set-up by anyone free of charge, however your visit may be charged depending on your current benefit plan. Activate your account by picking the way that is easiest for you:

- ❖ Call MDLIVE at 888.680.8646
- ❖ Go to [MDLIVE.com/bcbstx](#)
- ❖ Text BCBSTX to 635-483
- ❖ Download the MDLIVE app

Virtual visits doctors may also send an e-prescription to your local pharmacy if necessary.