

COVID-19 Related News Items - July 2020

Priscila Norris is a member:

[\[Video\] Feeling anxious? Doctors say it's normal given current events](#)

WITN

Thrivemind Counseling and Wellness Owner Priscila Norris says her caseload dipped back in March as people lost their jobs and their healthcare, but since then her cases have doubled and now her entire practice is fully booked. She traces that increase to the global coronavirus, leading to uncertainty in careers and in family life, and also the national socio-political climate with riots creating tension between Black Lives Matter protestors and law enforcement.

Kay Castillo is director of Advocacy Policy and Legislation for NASW-NC:

[COVID-19 puts pressure on already fractured prison health system](#)

North Carolina Health News

While prisons have received some money from the state to help with staffing problems, the system as a whole has been plagued by budget stagnation going back [more than a decade](#). DPS and prison advocates have worked to find hiring solutions outside of simply asking the General Assembly for more money, said **Kay Castillo, a lobbyist for the North Carolina chapter of the National Association of Social Workers**. When there is extra money, politicians are more likely to spend it on other community needs, such as schools, rather than prisons, Castillo said.

Jennifer Thompson is executive director of NASW-NJ:

[Workforce in Crisis: Thousands of Social Workers Prevented From Contributing to COVID-19 Response](#)

Digital Journal

“We have waited patiently, giving the benefit of the doubt to the state entities who play a role in licensing social workers—we were in the midst of a crisis, they were doing the best they could do, we want to keep our relationship positive and work collaboratively,” says **Jennifer Thompson, MSW, Executive Director of the New Jersey Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW-NJ)**. “Four months later a solution has still not been presented. While the BSWE has moved to allow for temporary licenses to address some of the concerns we are still awaiting rule-making necessary to allow for us to move forward...”

Jill Johnson-Young is a member:

[How Nick Cordero's 1-Year-Old & Other Young Children Feel the Loss of a Parent](#)

She Knows

“They need to see that grief includes missing someone after they die and being sad when we can't see them or talk to them,” **Jill A. Johnson-Young, LCSW**, told SheKnows. “They also need to understand that it is perfectly normal to talk to them anyway — and that saying their name and talking about them is how we keep them in our world for the rest of our lives.”

Jonathon Novello is a member:

[COVID-19 – Steep rise in staff needing mental health support](#)

[University World News](#)

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a massive impact on mental health on campuses in the United States these past four months – massive not only in levels of fear, anxiety and stress, but also in the large numbers of people who have needed emotional support, says **Jonathon Novello, a clinical social worker and counsellor at Michigan State University** in the United States.

Betsy Kammerud is a member:

[Honor Your Grief](#)

[Beacon Magazine \(Savannah, GA\)](#)

Betsy R. Kammerud, a licensed clinical social worker who manages Full Circle Grief and Loss and the Edel employee assistance program for Hospice Savannah, helps her patients identify their feelings and unpack those layers. “Sometimes we have to put one grief aside to be able to focus and do what we have to do in life. If you’re worried about losing your home and not keeping your job and trying to find a job, well maybe that’s where your energy and focus had to be – and that’s OK, giving yourself permission.

La’Tasha Sampson is a member:

[A Discussion with La’Tasha Sampson About Safeguarding your Mental Health](#)

[Thrive Global](#)

La’Tasha Sampson is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker who has leveraged years of professional experience to cultivate positive change within her community. Her conviction towards helping those in need is what fueled her ongoing academic success, and she is now a prominent author, grant writer, non-profit trainer, and program facilitator. Dr. Sampson is a proud graduate of Syracuse University, where she earned her bachelor’s degree before completing a Master’s in Public Administration from the Metropolitan College of New York, a Master’s in Social work from Kean University, and a PhD in Christian Counselling from Northern Theological Seminary.

Laura Guise is a member:

[Pandemic illuminates need for eating disorder resources](#)

[WDBJ](#)

Counseling is impacted as well. **Laura Guise, a licensed clinical social worker with Thriveworks in Lynchburg**, says as sessions moved online, video conferencing created it’s own set of problems. “Somebody who has body dysmorphia and sees themselves in a way that is less than favorable is now doing a clinical session where they now have a video camera showing them back what they look like, which can often cause an incredible amount of increased anxiety,” Guise said.

Christopher Brown is a member:

[What is it Like Going Through a Divorce During COVID-19](#)

[Reform Austin](#)

What is it like to be going through a divorce in the middle of a pandemic? For many, it's about waiting. "The pandemic that we are in has spurred a lot of self-examination in my clients, but also really looking at their relationships," said **clinical social worker and psychotherapist Christopher Brown**. Marriages are being challenged more than ever due to close proximity and some couples are realizing that they are not a good fit, according to Brown.

Lauren Zingraff is a member:

[NC still lacks plan for regular mass testing in nursing homes](#)

[The News & Observer](#)

Though nursing homes are on lockdown, the staff leave, go home, go to the grocery store and mingle in the community, said **Lauren Zingraff, the executive director of Friends of Residents in Long-Term Care**, an advocacy group. "We continue to have people all over North Carolina who refuse to wear a mask," Zingraff said. "Wearing a mask is not a political statement. Wearing a mask is a public health need to protect not only yourself but others."

Shari Botwin is a member:

[Will We All Have PTSD from Dealing with COVID-19?](#)

[Philadelphia Magazine](#)

Anxiety is skyrocketing during the COVID-19 pandemic, with 30 percent of Americans saying the crisis is having a "serious impact" on their mental health, and most saying it is affecting their daily lives, according to the [American Psychiatric Association](#). Local **trauma therapist Shari Botwin, LCSW** and author of [Thriving After Trauma: Stories of Living and Healing](#) explains that the social upheaval and anxiety from the virus may have long-term effects on our mental health, including causing [post-traumatic stress disorder](#).

Jessica Capuozzo is a member:

[Artists teach hospice nurses how to cope with grief through song, dance](#)

[Staten Island Live](#)

Amplified by the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, Rynders has brought her concept of merging frontline workers and empathetic artists together to work through the job's taxing emotional impact.... The Staten Island University Hospital staff involved in the project includes Paula McAvoy, senior administrative director, hospice and palliative care, University Hospice; Elizabeth Marino LCSW; Maura Ellis RN; Debbie Mary Mendez RN and **Jessica Capuozzo LCSW**. The artists include Rynders, Jadd Tank, Abby Ahmad, Lia Bonfilio, Clare Hammor and Mary Lynn Lewark.

Jennifer Dritt is a member:

[Among advocates' fears for Florida's incarcerated youth during pandemic: sexual abuse](#)

[Orlando Sentinel](#)

Jennifer Dritt, the executive director of Florida Council Against Sexual Violence who is also a licensed clinical social worker, said it's hard for adults, let alone youth, to report issues at facilities because they feel as if the system works

against them. In juvenile facilities, the adult is in a position of authority, which can pose additional fear or hopelessness when abuse occurs. “People in correctional facilities do not believe that the institution is interested in their well being, whether the institution is or isn’t, its unlikely they believe that,” Dritt said.

Roxanne Pacheco is a member:

[\[Video\] Free support available for medical professionals at the COVID-19 frontline](#)
KRGV (TX)

Medical professionals on the frontline of the COVID-19 crisis described the situation as “emotionally draining” **Roxanne Pacheco is a licensed clinical social worker in Weslaco.** She says it’s important for everyone, especially health care workers to reach out for help when they need it. The Texas Health and Human Services Commission is offering help for free. It’s expanding its support line services by launching Virtual Support Groups for Frontline Workers in Texas. The number is 1-833-986-1919 and it’s available 24/7.

Kelsey Blahnik is a member:

[\[Video\] Health Beat: COVID impacting OCD](#)
WFMZ (FL)

Experts said the fear of the virus can intensify symptoms. "I have actually seen that it's affecting people more in the way that their routines have changed," said **Kelsey Blahnik, a licensed clinical social worker.** But there are ways to regain control. "The number one thing would be to limit media absorption to maybe once a day," continued Blahnik.

Tyra Goodman is a member:

[Finding happiness during times of collective grief](#)
Mountain Xpress

Whether you’re grieving a personal loss, the absence of your pre-COVID-19 existence, the killing of George Floyd or some combination of the above, so many of us are in mourning these days. Fatigue, apathy and volatility are common symptoms of grief, says local **clinical social worker Tyra L. Goodman.** Often, she notes, clients struggling with loss “feel like their brains are failing. And meanwhile, the rest of the world is just going on as normal.”

Ellen Fink-Sammick is a member:

[COVID-19 Creates Vicarious Trauma Among Healthcare Workforce](#)
Health Leaders Media

"We have a whole interprofessional workforce that is on not only the frontlines, but also in other areas that are not getting as much attention, like primary care clinics and outpatient programming and outpatient clinics where nurses, nurse practitioners, social workers, and different types of case managers and rehabilitation professionals are," says **Ellen Fink-Sammick, MSW, ACSW, LCSW, CCM, CRP, DBH(s), of EFS Supervision Strategies, LLC,** a company that provides professional speaking,

training, and consultation to empower the interprofessional workforce. "You've got the whole workforce impacted directly by having to work amid so many unknowns."

Katie Augustyn is a member:

[Suicide inside a global pandemic](#)

Reader

Research shows the impact [social withdrawal](#) can have on stunting the individual, occasionally leading to death from circumstances other than suicide.

"[In eastern Europe](#) there was this orphanage with a lot of kids and only a few nuns to run it and these children had their diapers changed, they were fed," says **Katie Augustyn, a clinical social worker** situated in Chicago. "Their basic needs were met but nobody cuddled them and what they found was these kids stopped crying, became listless, started to lose weight, and eventually some of them died."

Lauren Zingraff is a member:

[\[Video\] Advocates on Coronavirus Testing in Long-Term Care Facilities](#)

Spectrum News

Long-term health care advocates say that the state can do more to protect residents and staffers from coronavirus. We talk with Dr. Catherine Sevier of AARP North Carolina and **Lauren Zingraff of Friends of Residents in Long-Term Care**.

Danielle Stouder is a member:

[A social workers' duty was challenging and sad](#)

US Department of Veterans Affairs

It was a virtual connection Latasha Cardenas and **Danielle Stouder** will never forget. While a Veteran was getting inpatient treatment for COVID-19, the Veteran's wife was in another hospital, fighting the same virus. Staff didn't expect her to make it through the next day. The Veteran's daughter, the caregiver for both, was quarantined at home. The two [Iowa City VA](#) social workers collaborated with the outside hospital to pull together a last FaceTime connection for the Veteran and his wife. After 58 years of marriage, they were able to have a last conversation and say their goodbyes. The Veteran's wife died shortly after they spoke.

Sonya Richardson is a member:

[Governor Appoints Social Work Professor to Statewide Task Force](#)

Inside UNC-Charlotte

Gov. Roy Cooper has appointed **UNC Charlotte social work professor Sonya Richardson, Ph.D.**, to a statewide task force on health inequities. The move comes as part of an [executive order](#) aimed at addressing the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on communities of color. As a member of the 35-person [Andrea Harris Social, Economic, Environmental and Health Equity Task Force](#), Richardson will work with leaders from across North Carolina to identify best practices to create economic stability, eliminate health disparities, and achieve environmental justice in North Carolina.

Jim Kendall is a member:

[How Vanderbilt is working to protect the mental health of its staff](#)
WSMV (Nashville, TN)

Hospitals are ensuring frontline workers are focusing on their mental health throughout this pandemic. **Jim Kendall is a licensed clinical social worker and manager of the Work Life Connections program at Vanderbilt University Medical Center.** He said their healthcare workers are experiencing a variety of emotions. “There is a significant emotional toll on our healthcare heroes caring for those very vulnerable folks with COVID, said Kendall.

Denise Duval Tsoles is a member:

[\[Video\] Local Expert Offers Parents Advice For Summer Learning Slump](#)
NCTV

Knowing that her kids may not always be up for learning, Glass has allowed them to play more video games, which she says has reduced their stress because they’re not always thinking about learning. It’s a good idea according to **Denise Duval Tsoles, a licensed clinical social worker at Child Therapy Naperville.** “I think the biggest things parents can do right now is say ‘you know what it’s not always going to be like this. We’re going to do the best that we can. If the kids are on the screen too much after they’ve done their school work, maybe that’s ok right now,’” said Tsoles.

Robert Ciampi is a member:

[\[Video\] COVID-19 fatigue is real; suggestions on how to combat it](#)
WTVF

“[Fatigue] can be internal, where you feel like you’ve got these sandbags on your shoulders and you can’t take another step,” added Bob Ciampi. **Ciampi is a licensed clinical social worker** and says the feeling is something a lot of us are familiar with: burnout. The same kind you might feel at work or at home when you are overwhelmed. To ‘refill the tank,’ many people might go out for a night of fun with friends, or go to the gym, but COVID-19 has closed many of these places nationwide only exacerbating the issue.

Tab Ballis is a member:

[Wilmington mental health services see more depression, anxiety during COVID-19](#)
Jacksonville Daily News

Tab Ballis, a licensed clinical social worker and addictions specialist at Insight Wellness Services, agrees. He offers telehealth services as well, but continues to meet with clients face-to-face, mandating masks, appropriate distancing and frequent sanitizing in the office. Wearing a mask changes the therapy experience, Ballis said. “A lot of how human beings observe and interpret each other’s emotions and thoughts are by facial expression, so that’s one source of information that may be less available to both clinicians and the client,” Ballis said. “How does that affect the value of the service or the usefulness of it if the giver and the receiver of service can’t fully observe each other?”

Gordon Capp, Michael S. Kelly, and Ron Avi Astor are members:

[Social Workers Author Report on Opening Schools Safely Amid COVID-19](#)

[CSUF News Center](#)

As school officials debate how to safely reopen schools amid the COVID-19 pandemic, a new report surveying 1,275 school social workers across the country offers insights and recommendations. Gordon Capp, a Cal State Fullerton assistant professor of social work, is one of the authors of the report, "[Opening Schools Safely in the COVID-19 Era: School Social Workers' Experiences and Recommendations](#)," alongside **Michael S. Kelly of Loyola University Chicago, Ron Avi Astor** and Kate R. Watson of UCLA, and Rami Benbenishty of Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

Jana Svoboda is a member:

[\[Video\] Local Experts Address COVID Forecasts & Staying Mentally Healthy](#)

[The Corvallis Advocate](#)

For its most recent rendition of CitySpeak, *The Advocate* assembled local health officials to discuss impacts of the coronavirus pandemic – including mental health ramifications. The forum's panel featured Benton County Health Department Co-Directors Charlie Fautin and Danielle Brown as well as **Clinical Social Worker Jana Svoboda**, bringing 35 years of experience.

Sam Hickman is executive director of NASW-WV:

[West Virginians wait on word on whether additional pandemic unemployment will continue](#)

[Metro News](#)

On Thursday, those with West Virginia Citizen Action, West Virginians for Affordable Health Care and the West Virginia Association of Social Workers detailed their stimulus priorities on a conference call prior to the U.S. Senate draft release. On their list, along with the extension of the additional unemployment payments, were measures to increase access to Medicaid, help state and local governments and protect workers, both physically and economically. "I think we need to treat this like the first round of support we're giving to families. It has to be robust and huge for families, communities and states," said **Sam Hickman, CEO of the National Association of Social Workers West Virginia**.

Sarah Gugliuzza is a member:

[COVID-19 pandemic leaves pregnant women feeling isolated, 'invisible'](#)

[Today](#)

Moorman's sentiments echo those of many pregnant women she has worked with during the pandemic, said **Sarah Gugliuzza, a licensed clinical social worker** who has both a private practice and provides mental health support to women and families through virtual clinic [Maven](#). "There is a real sense of isolation, loneliness, and grieving around the whole process," Gugliuzza told TODAY Parents.

Catherine McCallum is a member:

[After Covid-19: A Health Care Forecast For Older Americans](#)

Forbes

Florida Blue, like other health insurers, envisions even greater use of technology and virtual visits in the future to monitor patients with chronic conditions and as a post-surgical tool, to reduce the risk of infection. That prediction was echoed by **Catherine McCallum, a clinical social worker and aging care management consultant who runs Coral Life Strategies in Bethesda, Md.** McCallum also likes telehealth patients' ability to schedule appointments quickly, rather than having to wait too long for an appointment. "But," she adds, "not all medical practices set up their own secure line; some rely on Zoom or another platform, which has shown to be less secure."