



Family News

Summer 2020

All people at Bridgeway are treated with dignity, respect, understanding, and compassion. We Stand By These Words.



By Earsala Cromartie, Director of Human Resources

At Bridgeway, we stand in solidarity with the global outcry regarding the recent killing of George Floyd, and other injustices. We lend our sympathy and support for Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and countless others. All around the world people are peacefully protesting because the senseless attacks on the black community must stop. We all may not be able to truly understand the frustration and fear the members of our black community have faced for generations, but we want to stand with them.

Our hearts are heavy and our minds are filled with compassion as we stand with our employees and our persons served in their pain. Our organization has a long history of supporting vulnerable people in our communities by serving their needs. We owe it to our employees, our persons served, and our communities to be very clear in condemning these acts of senseless violence that have occurred around the nation. We pride ourselves as being the leaders in our field serving people who experience mental health and substance abuse conditions, and we want to continue to do so with social equality, pride, and inclusion.

There is much work to do to foster a true environment of equality, acceptance, and cultural inclusion amongst our Bridgeway family. Bridgeway's Cultural Competency program operates across the whole organization. We are collaborating with thought leaders to implement open dialogue and positive change.

Our country and our Bridgeway family need healing in this tumultuous time. We don't have all the answers, but know that we want to be a part of the change. Most of all, we are grateful for the courage of our employees as they break the SILENCE and share their stories. We are proud to stand with them. We welcome your feedback as we work to make meaningful change together.

Ms. Cromartie can be reached at 908-355-7886 Ext. 1029, or by email at earsala.cromartie@bridgewayrehab.org

The Impact Of Racism On Mental Health:

- Feeling disconnected / lonely
- Increase risk of depression and anxiety
- Second-guessing things
- Trauma (both from the present and triggering past instances / generational trauma)
- Decreased hope (in the future, justice, the government etc.)
- Existential questioning "How can the world be so cruel?"
- Increased "Survival Mode"
- Decreased trust
- Worry
- Feelings of powerlessness (You can do the right thing and still end up with a horrific outcome)
- Panic

#BlackLivesMatter @RealDepressionProject

Join Our Online Community!



www.bridgewayrehab.org

Policing During Times of Crisis



By Captain Guy Patterson, Cranford Police Department, Distinguished member of Bridgeway's Board of Trustees

By the very nature of their jobs, first responders operate in times of crisis. Typically, that crisis is confined to specific instances that are limited in scope and short in duration. Throughout my career, myself and fellow officers have responded to widespread events such as Y2K, the September 11th Attacks, SARS, the Anthrax attacks, hurricanes, floods and blizzards. These prolonged periods of crisis increase stress levels and anxiety amongst both first responders and the community.

During the Covid-19 Pandemic, Police Departments took steps to provide enhanced personal protective equipment and limit unnecessary exposures for police personnel. Regardless of these measures, officers would continue to respond to emergencies and continue to respond to circumstances where they would encounter individuals with confirmed or suspected Covid-19.

Risk is inherent to policing. When the risk is a biological threat, both invisible and surrounded by uncertainty, it naturally increases anxiety. Law enforcement responding to a public health emergency is a concept that prior to a few months ago was foreign to the average officer. Communication with our personnel and community is the main tool we have available to mitigate both the spread and fear surrounding Covid-19. We are seeing that as the understanding of the virus increases, the anxiety surrounding it decreases.

As we began to transition out of the management of the pandemic, almost immediately, we transitioned into matters of public safety and community support related to the killing of George Floyd at the hands of the Minneapolis Police Department. The disgusting display of disregard for human life exhibited by the Minneapolis officers intensified the fear and distrust of the police in all our communities. Our police department recognized the need to mobilize to support our communities during this crisis.

Protests demanding social justice and police reform continue to be commonplace. Safeguarding these protests are complicated by the fact that the officers in place to ensure traffic control, pedestrian safety and event security are often the very focus of the protest. As with the response to Covid-19, anxieties and uncertainty run high. And just like with Covid-19 our main tool is communication. Communication with protest organizers and officers assigned to the events has been invaluable in providing for successful protests where individuals have gathered in mass and safely had their voices heard. I'm proud to say that New Jersey has had over 350 organized protests and with very few exceptions, the protests have been meaningful and peaceful.

The looming challenge for law enforcement is to restore the trust of our communities. Policing can not be successful without the trust and support of the community. We have a lot of work to do. There are areas where policing needs to change and certainly areas where we need to improve. We will again rely on communication and engagement with our community partners. This level of engagement and listening to understand how the black and brown community feel will help to build trust. Unlike during Covid-19, where our goal was to deliver as much information as possible outward to our officers and community, we will work to primarily listen and garner as much information as possible so that we can achieve meaningful, impactful change.

I am extremely proud of the way our organization has responded to support our communities in recent months. I'm equally as proud of the men and women of Bridgeway and all they have done to continue to provide mental health and rehabilitation services under extraordinary circumstances. Both policing and providing mental health services incorporate a baseline of stress during normal times. Operating under challenging conditions for a prolonged amount of time will only exacerbate the stress load. Please take care of yourselves. Speak with colleagues and supervisors. Stay in close contact with your Bridgeway teams. Check on each other and reach out for help if you need it. If you don't take care of yourself, you won't be able to help anyone else.



Bridgeway Partial Care Union staff continue to organize weekly food and essential supplies to the people we serve. Thank you Debra and Sonja! Bridgeway programs are open for phone referrals and we continue to provide a full range of tele-health services. Please click on the website map for information in your county: www.bridgewayrehab.org

Mental Health Month Video Workshop Series



Special thanks to the members of the Bridgeway family who lent their time, talents, and knowledge in video format in honor of Mental Health Awareness Month. You can view these videos any time by visiting Youtube.com, and searching for the Bridgeway Rehabilitation Services channel. If you have feedback that you would like to share, or suggestions for future videos, please write to: feedback@bridgewayrehab.org



Gov. Murphy Signs Executive Orders Lifting Limits on Some Gatherings

“With more of our businesses reopening, we are no longer requiring New Jerseyans to stay at home, but we are asking you to continue to be responsible and safe,” said Governor Murphy. To read the Governor’s Executive Orders in their entirety, please go to: www.nj.gov/governor/news/news/562020/approved/20200609a.shtml

What Does This Mean For Bridgeway?

Bridgeway’s COVID-19 Task Force is currently in discussions with program directors and staff about when and how to re-open each facility and program. Bridgeway’s many programs operate differently, from in-house partial care programs, to homeless street outreach, with several variations in-between. Each program requires careful planning and consideration. There will be continuing needs for personal protective equipment, extensive cleaning schedules, and limits regarding how many people will be permitted in person at Bridgeway facilities at any one time. Physical distancing regulations will be instituted in all programs, and strictly enforced. As always, the safety and health of the Bridgeway family is our highest priority. All persons served by Bridgeway will be contacted directly and updated regarding continuity of services and our plans for achieving graduated levels of normalcy.

What Makes Bridgeway a Non-Profit Organization?

The most well-known distinguishing characteristic of an organization that receives nonprofit status from the IRS, is that the organization has been deemed to be such a benefit to their community, that they are not required to collect and pay taxes. They become a **tax-exempt entity**. They are also able to accept donations, and the donor’s gift becomes a tax liability reduction as allowable by state and federal tax laws.

The second distinguishing characteristic of a non-profit organization is that they are governed by a Board of Directors, or Trustees, whose role is mission and fiscal oversight. The most common management structure utilizes a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and management team to make the daily operational decisions that keep the organization true to its mission, while running efficiently and effectively.

Non-profit organizations can only fulfill their missions when they have dedicated and passionate people who give their time, talents, and treasure to volunteer and serve on non-profits’ volunteer boards of directors and trustees.

Welcome to Bridgeway’s newest Board Trustees!



James O'Connor
President
CBIZ
Employee Benefits



Mary Jo Lopez
President
The DFL Group



Marcie Courtney, Esq.
Principal
Post & Schell
Attorneys at Law



Dr. Carol Ash
Chief Medical Officer
RWJ University Hospital
Rahway

A NEW

A NEW START

A NEW DAY

A FRESH THOUGHT

A NEW WAY

A NEW ROAD

A NEW BEND

A NEW GOAL

A HAPPY END.....

Special thanks to the contributor who wishes to remain anonymous



SUMMER IS HERE!

Bridgeway would like to remind family members, and significant others to be aware of the summer heat and sun risks that this season can pose. Risk factors such as antipsychotic medication usage, chronic medical conditions, obesity, diabetes, alcohol use, and age can place the individuals we care about at higher risk of heat-related illness. During the summer season family members may want to review safety precautions, such as staying hydrated, keeping plenty of cool drinking water available, monitoring the outside temperature and planning activities accordingly, and staying in air-conditioned facilities when possible. Individuals should reassess and reconsider any activities that would expose them to prolonged periods of high heat and humidity, as this can lead to heat exhaustion or heat stroke, requiring immediate medical attention. Symptoms of heat stroke that may require emergency medical attention include:

- High body temperature. A body temperature of 104 F (40 C) or higher is the main sign of heatstroke.
- Altered mental state or behavior
- Alteration in sweating
- Nausea and vomiting

NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE
1-800-273-TALK
 NEWS3LV.COM
 @News3LV News3LasVegas News3LV News3LasVegas

During the COVID-19 Pandemic your mental health is vital.
 Call for free emotional support from trained staff.
866-202-Help (4357)
 7 Days per Week 8am to 8pm
 Multilingual Services Available
 New Jersey Mental HealthCares NJ Hope and Healing

Durante la pandemia de COVID-19, su salud mental es vital.
 Solicite apoyo emocional gratuito de personal capacitado.
866-202-Help (4357)
 7 Días por Semana de 8am a 8pm
 Servicios multilingües disponibles
 New Jersey Mental HealthCares NJ Hope and Healing



Speaking your worries out loud helps you realize how you speak to yourself and identify thoughts that may sound ridiculous when verbalized.

Distract yourself by putting down the phone and playing upbeat music.



Illustrations: THOMAS PITILLI

Seven Ways to Reduce Stress in Anxious Times by Elizabeth Bernstein, THE WALL STREET JOURNAL
 Large-scale worries are sabotaging our ability to cope, therapists say, and they have some tips for staying calm.
 Read the whole articles at <https://www.wsj.com/articles/seven-ways-to-reduce-stress-in-anxious-times>

Online Resources:

- www.nih.gov/wellnesstoolkits
- www.r1learning.com/blog/2020/which-relapse-triggers-trigger-your-emotions
- www.nutrition.gov/topics/shopping-cooking-and-food-safety/food-shopping-and-meal-planning
- www.positivepsychology.com/cbt-cognitive-behavioral-therapy-techniques-worksheets/
- www.njbia.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/ReturnToWork.pdf

Thanks to Dave D'Antonio

**Anonymous Compliance Hotline - If you suspect fraud, waste, or abuse
 Call 732-317-5098**

* If you would like to be removed from our mailing list, please call 908-469-6517 ext.1006 or write to erica.smith@bridgewayrehab.org