

Monday, June 13, 2020

Re: COVID -19 Pandemic Business Continuation and Re-entry Update

Our doors have been closed since March 18th 2020 to walk-in traffic Jewish Family Services has continued to serve clients remotely in our Counselling Services, Grief and Loss groups and Community Links programs, in some programs client participation has increased.

In exceptional circumstances we have accommodated counselling clients in-person with safety measures in place to protect clients and staff. We pride ourselves on accessible service, made possible by the generosity of community - for sliding fee scale counselling service please call Carolyn at 780454-1194.

Our Home Support Services and Holocaust Survivor Support have also continued with adaptations, safety protocols and increased communications and food deliveries to combat isolation. Our clients have appreciated the attention, made possible by Claims Conference and Azrieli Foundation COVID Response funding, communicating in response to the kosher food for Passover, thanks also to NCJW and Beth Israel, the Russian food for Victory day and the Shavuot comfort package, which also included PPE, remarking, *"It is so good to know that someone cares about us! Especially now, when we stay at home most of the time due to the pandemic. I appreciate all the gifts, even the smallest ones! I thank you for bringing me the food from the store I love! I am so grateful for all the phone calls I receive from you! It means a lot!"*

With the Alberta re-entry beginning, we are remaining cautious to manage the risk in consideration of the vulnerable population we serve. While our doors remain closed for walk-in traffic until the end of June, and perhaps longer dependent upon any surge in COVID-19 cases, several office staff members and Therapists are now returning to the office and seeing clients in person by appointment only.

We are managing schedules to limit traffic and have safety protocols in place. We were fortunate to receive FCSS COVID 19 special funding to increase our online therapy and English language groups, in partnership with Project Adult Literacy (PALS) Jewish Seniors Center and SAGE.

We have developed a new series **"Staying Well & Thrive during Uncertain Times."** We are currently offering **"COVID-19: Finding Opportunities for Positive Change. How to Build Strength and Resilience"** an online series via Zoom in both daytime and evening time slots. The series covers topics like grieving our losses due to the COVID-19 pandemic; jobs, security, structure, human connection, privacy (either too much or too little), hobbies, sports, anxiety. It also addresses worries related to the crisis, parenting, and the all the secondary effects of being isolated at home, alone, with a partner, family or roommates. **Note, we can also offer this to other organizations, specifically for your members.** Participants of previous COVID-19 Seminars praise Anna's warm disposition and practical approach. One client affirmed, "I have more tools to cope and calm down and I have a better understanding about myself and my fears. Going underneath my initial frustration and upset was really helpful. I am now in touch with my fears and sadness more and feel more grounded."

Call Anna at (780) 454-1194 ext.233 or ajongeleen@jfse.org to register, book, or for more information.

We look forward to continued community service to fulfil our values: Tikkun Olam - Healing the World