



NORTHEAST DELTA HUMAN SERVICES AUTHORITY RELEASES COVID-19 SOCIAL HEALTH IMPACT RESULTS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MONROE, LA – Northeast Delta Human Services Authority (NEDHSA) conducted a social health impact assessment with current, active agency clients, and citizens of this region. This effort was to determine how the COVID-19 pandemic affects our agency clients in a variety of behavioral and social health ways.

Of note, 30 percent of respondents were concerned with having a loved one or household member get COVID-19, and more than 18 percent were worried about unknowingly giving someone the disease while they showed no symptoms themselves.

"COVID-19 is having a profound effect on all of us. The high character the people of our region share is clear considering their focus is not on themselves, but others," said Dr. Monteic A. Sizer, executive director of NEDHSA. "We understand many people in our region are experiencing significant mental, physical, spiritual and financial difficulties due to this disease. Knowing the full extent and nuisances of the problems our clients are facing helps us better meet their needs."

While focused on their impact on others, participants expressed other concerns. Some included contracting COVID-19, paying household bills, or being unable to visit relatives and friends' homes for social interaction. Some clients have been negatively affected by the disease. More than 21 percent reported increased loneliness, sadness, depression, frustration, irritability or anger. Each age group of clients reported feeling an overall decline in mental health, with 31 percent of the 18 to 25 age group reporting a decline in mental health.

"Mental health concerns are of paramount importance to communities, and while the people of our region focus on their fellow citizens, they are individually suffering," Sizer said. "We will continue to use this information and our agency's skills to meet head-on the mental health, addiction, and developmental challenges faced by so many in Northeast Louisiana."

A webinar on the client-based findings will be presented today at 2:00 p.m. via Zoom. A recording will be made available on the agency website following the webinar.

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