

Tuesday

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University of Connecticut

Student Health and Wellness Town Hall

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[Captioner standing by]

>> COLLEEN VERNOLA-ATKINSON: Thank you, everyone, who has joined us so far, we'll be getting started in just a few moments.

>> COLLEEN VERNOLA-ATKINSON: Thank you, everyone, for joining us today. So we're going to get started. We have some of our panelists and I'm going to do a brief overview of what we are looking to accomplish today. This is the Student Health and Wellness Town Hall.

So today we're here to hopefully answer some questions that you all have about the services that we offer at Student Health and Wellness, our requirements for incoming students, and how we can help parents and guardians assist their students in accomplishing their transition to UCONN this Fall.

I know a lot of people do have questions about COVID and what that might look like on campus. We won't be able to address all of those questions today. We do encourage you all to visit reopen.uconn.edu/ page. It is actually being updated pretty much on a daily basis now with all of the new information we have, requirements, instructions and all of that. And we'll talk about student health approaches at the end.

I have some of my colleagues today from Student Health and Wellness, I'm going to let them introduce themselves. Lori, would you like to start?

>> LORI MASTERS: Yes, I'm the Director of Clinical Data Analytics and Health Information Management. I'm responsible for maintaining the students' medical records and immunization compliance.

>> COLLEEN VERNOLA-ATKINSON: Kathy, would you like to go ahead.

>> KATHY ALDRICH: Yes, my name is Kathy Aldrich, I'm a Medical Billing Specialist at the Student Health and Wellness. I take care of billing and anything related to insurance.

>> AMANDA WATER: I'm Amanda Water. I'm a Psychologist and Multicultural Specialist and I'm also serving as the Interim Assistant Director.

>> COLLEEN VERNOLA-ATKINSON: Thank you, all. So I thought we'd just jump in and start with some questions right off of the bat. Of course, for all of our participants today, if you have any other questions that come up throughout the chat today, please feel free to put them in the chat function and we'll try to answer those throughout the program. We do have some questions that were submitted ahead of time that we'll start with.

Our first question will go out to Amanda. Some parents were wondering

what services mental health offers? Are they any different depending on what student it is?

>> AMANDA WATER: Sure, we have a whole range of services available for students, from I don't know what kind of help I need to online treatment. We also have referrals for more specialized care and long-term care that might be needed as well. We provide medication and mentalist classes. Like one session for complications and individual and group therapy. We are Medication Providers for students are in need of some kind of medication to address their mental health concerns.

In terms of the difference between commuter students and residential, there is no difference. The difference might come in you are part of a regional campus and there is mental health dedicated on those campuses and I would encourage you to look on our website, but also you can go over that.

But there are Case Managers on every single one of our regional campuses and those folks are responsible and supportive of the specific needs of our regional students.

And similarly for students taking classes online, a lot of our services are done through WebEx, which is the video conferencing software we now have as you are looking at this and being able to video conference and do telehealth appointments. So many of our services are available just the same way as they would be in-person for students taking in-person classes and online.

>> COLLEEN VERNOLA-ATKINSON: Thank you, Amanda. I believe the next one is for you as well. How do students make appointments with your office? And do you take walk-in appointments?

>> AMANDA WATER: So, so students can make an appointment with us by calling our office, our phone number is 860-486-4705. And that's also on our website. But we also have online scheduling available for students who are kind of wanting to figure out how to access care, we have some descriptions on our website and it can be really helpful if you are able to log into the Health Portal and make an appointment that way.

We do take walk-in appointments. It's going to be a little different with the post-COVID world right now, so we encourage you to either call or schedule an appointment online. If you are in crisis, we are on call, we have our office available and really want to meet with you and talk with you about what we can do to best support you at this time. We have available, but we encourage you to call first.

>> COLLEEN VERNOLA-ATKINSON: Thanks, Amanda. For everyone out there wondering about the numbers, we'll have a slide at the end that also has those.

Amanda, another question out for you, what services are free and which ones do you bill insurance for?

>> AMANDA WATER: Sure. We have a ton of services that are free, which is covered under the Student Health and Wellness fee. And those that are billed are specifically for students who are involved in either individual therapy, group therapy, or medication management. So things like our [indiscernible] and support program, our yoga, our meditation classes, all of those classes are free and any additional consultations.

We want to make sure cost is not a barrier to accessing care, so if you have any questions or concerns about insurance or billing, we have some

awesome staff members who are dedicated to that and want to make sure that they can have a conversation with you and answer any questions that you have about billing or insurance.

>> COLLEEN VERNOLA-ATKINSON: Thank you.

So our next question is parents just really want to know where all of the students for Student Health are located, so Amanda, do you want to start with mental health and we'll go from there?

>> AMANDA WATER: Sure. Our mental health office is located on campus and that's across from the lake on the 4th floor, the entire 4th floor of the building and, yeah, it's lovely. [Laughter] Yeah.

>> COLLEEN VERNOLA-ATKINSON: Thank you.

So I know we don't have someone from Medical Care with us today, but our Medical Care Office is located in the Hilda May Williams Building, so if you are near Swan Lake you are near one of our buildings. It's right in the main thoroughfare is where we're located. That is where the billing department is located. And we also have [indiscernible] there, but you will see them out and about.

Our next question here is going to go out to Lori, so when is the Health History and Immunization Form due and where they need to submit it?

>> LORI MASTERS: The Health History and Immunization Form are due on August 1st to give us time to process the forms and reach out back to the students in case there are questions or they are missing any documentation that we have all of the records complete before the start of school.

And if you go to the Health Portal which is in each student's letter they

received, the e-mail they received from us, it's myhealth.uconn.edu and that is where they will submit their information and upload their forms.

>> COLLEEN VERNOLA-ATKINSON: Thank you, Lori.

And so the next question, also out to you, which vaccines are mandatory?

>> LORI MASTERS: So we require two MMR vaccinations which is Measles, Mumps, and Rubella and two Varicella vaccinations.

If the student has had the disease, we will accept documentation from the physician that the student had the disease and when they had the disease.

If the student is living on campus, we require Meningitis, the MCV4 vaccine, and that needs to have been given within the last five years from the start of school, which is August 31st this year.

And, also, the completion of the Tuberculosis Risk Questionnaire which is also found on our student Health Portal. They need to complete that and whether there's further steps required, the student can go through the questions and answer that to see if there's any further testing required.

>> COLLEEN VERNOLA-ATKINSON: Perfect, thank you, Lori.

The next question is when is the last day to waive the student health insurance plan? And how does my student waive the school's health insurance? Kathy, I'll pass that to you.

>> KATHY ALDRICH: The last day to waive the Student Health Insurance is September 15th. You can access the online waiver, it's on the screen and you will have access at the end of the presentations well. But it would be through the Student Admin account and access it that way.

>> COLLEEN VERNOLA-ATKINSON: Thank you, Kathy.

And another question for you, when does the school plan to start?

>> KATHY ALDRICH: The school plan is to start on August 15, 2020.

And the coverage [laughter] -- I'll answer the next one as well.

So the coverage for the school plan, so we do bill AETNA, Anthem Blue Cross/Blue Shield and any affiliated Blue Cross/Blue Shield plan nationwide. We're going to bill through Cigna, Connecticare, United Healthcare, United Healthcare/Oxford, the Connecticut Medicaid, the HUSKY plan, and our school insurance. And we are Certified Providers for Tricare.

>> COLLEEN VERNOLA-ATKINSON: Thank you, Kathy.

So back to you, Lori, what documentation is needed for the immunization records?

>> LORI MASTERS: So we'll need a record from the physician's office stating when a student received their MMRs and the Varicella and the Meningitis, if that one is required. It has to be an official document from your physician or you can also download the Health History Form that is on our website and bring that to the physician, have the physician fill out that form, sign the form, and bring that back to us.

Those types of forms have to be uploaded into our system so that we have them on record and those are also available on the Health Portal at myhealth.uconn.edu

>> COLLEEN VERNOLA-ATKINSON: How will the parents know if the form has been submitted?

>> LORI MASTERS: One it has been submitted, it will take a few days to complete. Once it is received, the student will receive a message stating

they have met the requirements. And if they are missing anything, it will be stated in the e-mail what they are missing and what they need to do next.

>> COLLEEN VERNOLA-ATKINSON: Thank you.

Our next question that came in is for Amanda, how do students go about initiating therapy or medication management here on campus?

>> AMANDA WATER: For the students here at Storrs, I encourage you to schedule an appointment online through the Health Portal, so the all-important Health Portal. Also, you can give us a call at our main office number to schedule an appointment.

We do request that students start and take part in an initial assessment with a therapist to figure out a little bit more about what's going on and get more information before being referred for the medication management.

Also, if a student is already taking some kind of medication, we also will be requesting records from your previous prescriber.

>> COLLEEN VERNOLA-ATKINSON: Thank you very much.

So another question for Amanda, how can I continue care for my student when they move to campus? So transitioning.

>> AMANDA WATER: Good question. In general, take the time to make sure you are staying in contact with your students. Maybe have a conversation before you leave -- or before your student leaves to either come to campus or to move to campus and have a conversation about what support might look like with them and to figure out how you can, you know, stay in contact with them and make sure they are able to take care of their needs, knowing everything is different in this post-COVID world, so being able to stay in contact is really important so that the students get to stay

connected with their families and friends back home, while also being able to make new friendships and relationships on campus. So I really encourage you to stay in contact and have those conversations with your students. And to figure out how you can best support them in the individualized kind of way.

>> COLLEEN VERNOLA-ATKINSON: Thank you very much.

So I think you actually already covered this, Amanda, how can they get their medications refilled? They have to make their appointments with you all to continue that care.

So we'll move right along. Do you all work with the Center for Students with Disabilities on accommodations for students? Amanda, I'll pass that to you for right now.

>> AMANDA WATER: Yeah, we absolutely do. So the CSD, the Center for Students with Disabilities is an office that focuses on academic accommodations and living accommodations, to make sure there is access to education for all students. And so we definitely work with them to make sure that students have access to the things that they need in order to be successful as a student here at UCONN.

So that might be some kind of [indiscernible] or working with them to make sure [indiscernible] so that kind of thing. That can be any kind of medical concern, whether that's physical health, mental health, we want to make sure students have the ability to be successful.

>> COLLEEN VERNOLA-ATKINSON: Thank you.

So a question that's come in over the live chat, and I think a few of us could probably help answer that, if a student needs to go off campus for therapy or other medical appointments, how do students travel to that

appointment? Do they walk? Is there a bus? Et cetera. Anyone want to jump in?

Go ahead, Amanda.

>> AMANDA WATER: It kind of depends on where they are. So some students who go to see a therapist off campus may walk. There are some who are within walkable distance. Some folks are a little bit farther so people can take the bus. There are also some clinics that are in this the very local area, but maybe not walkable and they actually send transportation to campus and transport them to and from there.

So we find that students take all sorts of creative liberties. There have been Zip present on campus or Uber/Lyft. There are a lot of options, it just depends on where the provider is and where the student is at.

>> COLLEEN VERNOLA-ATKINSON: Perfect. Thank you. That goes for all of our services, medical and everything.

>> AMANDA WATER: Absolutely.

>> COLLEEN VERNOLA-ATKINSON: So what costs are associated with services at Student Health and Wellness? Kathy, I'm going to pass this over to you.

>> KATHY ALDRICH: So we have different offices and it ranges for a new patient versus an established patient. For a new patient, it's from \$65 to \$296. And then established is \$38 to \$205. So it's based on the level of care and the provider determines the level of care.

Often I see, like, Level 3 visits, some Level 4, so that's to give you an idea of what will be being billed to the insurance.

>> LORI MASTERS: This is for me. I'm sorry, Colleen.

>> COLLEEN VERNOLA-ATKINSON: Lori, this is for you, are my student's medical records accessible?

>> LORI MASTERS: The student's medical records are available to the students. They can access them by filling out a form and asking for release of the records to them if they want them to be released elsewhere, so another physician or to another facility, they also fill out the same form and we will honor their request.

>> COLLEEN VERNOLA-ATKINSON: Thank you.

So the next question is, what is AlcoholEdu and when is it due?

I'll take this one. AlcoholEdu is a mandatory session for all incoming students, commuter, and transfer students.

There are two parts. Before the student gets to campus we want to make sure they have plenty of education and knowledge for themselves and their fellow classmates once they are here. That part is due just before classes start, so right on the 27th.

And then Part II opens 45 days later. There's no exact start date for Part II because it's contingent on when the student does Part I. But that is due by October 21st, so that's why students want to meet the August 27th deadline so everything is done ahead of time.

Students will be receiving an e-mail in early August with all of the details, how they're going to access it, everything like that. It will go to their UCONN e-mail address, so they want to be checking that if they haven't already been doing that. And it will be coming from alcholedu@uconn.edu.

The next question, can Mental Health Services be billed to insurance?

>> AMANDA WATER: Yes, as I noted before we have Providers here.

So if students are looking for on-going individual therapy or group therapy or medication management, those services can be billed to insurance.

And then for students who are engaging in other services that have no added cost, they are not billed because there's no added cost to those.

>> COLLEEN VERNOLA-ATKINSON: Perfect. Thank you.

I'll take a moment since we have gotten to the end of our pre-scheduled questions from you all. If you have any questions, feel free to put them in the chat, we're happy to answer those.

While that is going on, I'll put up those numbers I promised a few moments ago so you can jot those down.

Our Medical Team was not able to join us today, but they were able to join us at one of our previous Town Halls. It's studenthealth.uconn.edu/town-hall/.

They do answer many of the questions some parents have been asking about, what is COVID testing going to look like when students arrive to move in in mid-August? What might happen if a student does test positive while they are on campus? Our Medical Director was able to answer that during that Town Hall. She also speaks with the medical services we offer, pharmacy, nutrition services, et cetera.

So a question came in for you, Amanda, to follow-up on a statement you made, it says some Providers do not participate in insurance, therefore, the cost would be out-of-pocket, is that correct?

>> AMANDA WATER: Yes. So for our Providers who are either not yet licensed or not yet paneled with insurance companies, they take a flat fee of \$15 for either group therapy, individual therapy, and so it's a hopefully

low-cost acceptable option for students who either can't use their insurance for some reason or are looking for low-cost because they, like, have a [indiscernible] or something like that.

We, again, try to make sure cost is not a barrier to accessing care. But if you have any questions or concerns about the cost or what it might look like or anything like that, please do call because we want to make sure that we're getting you specific information for your particular situation because we know that insurance is really complicated and there's a lot of different plans out there, so in order to get you the best answer, I really encourage you to call.

>> COLLEEN VERNOLA-ATKINSON: Thank you, Amanda.

So I did want to also point out some other opportunities, I kind of started to mention some of these, but I'll put them up on the screen.

So the areas represented here are also offering virtual 10-minute appointments with parents and students for one-on-one questions because I know sometimes questions you have are not meant for the group environment. Maybe it's a specific medical condition you want to continue care for, specific insurance questions or billing questions, you know, maybe you're immunization came back not complied and you want to figure out exactly what you need, you are more than welcome to visit this website and schedule a visit with our Providers. We have this week and next week to answer the questions you have.

Also, our previous Town Halls are all recorded and up on the website for anyone to watch. We did note on the one on July 9th about the COVID questions, so if you want to fast forward to that session.

And we did create a website for new students and parents, so how to waive your health insurance, how to get into the Health Portal, the Health History and Immunization Forms are all there to walk you through it step-by-step.

With that being said, I'm going to check real quick to see if there are any other questions.

So I do see there are some COVID questions about when the testing will happen and if the doctor can do it ahead of time. I would encourage you to watch that section on our last Town Hall or you can also check our re-open UCONN website. A lot of that is being spelled out. You can also call our main line to speak to one of our Medical Care Providers about that.

>> AMANDA WATER: And [indiscernible] is providing COVID tests in particular Residence Halls. There are a lot of logistical things, so please check out the website because it will give you some more information than we can give you specifically in our time period here today.

>> COLLEEN VERNOLA-ATKINSON: I think that addresses all of the questions that we can address in a large group setting. There does look like there are one or two questions in here that would be better suited for our one-on-one session, so I would encourage you to visit our website to sign up for one of those to speak with our staff particularly because a lot of those are case-by-case situations.

So without seeing any other questions coming in, I do appreciate everyone who joined us today. Again, if you have further questions, don't hesitate to reach out to us, we are really here to support you and your student during this transition and support your student while they are on campus.

Again, thank you all for joining and have a great rest of your afternoon!

[Town Hall concluded]

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