Dear PEARLS programs,

We have received several questions over the past several days regarding best practices for doing PEARLS given the COVID-19 climate we are in.

See below for the latest on PEARLS training and doing PEARLS sessions remotely.

This is relatively new territory for us so we welcome any learnings from the field from your telePEARLS work and we can share on our future TA calls or listserve.

Please let Lesley (mailto:lesles@uw.edu) know if you are interested in participating in some real-time research on doing PEARLS remotely.

**Spring PEARLS Training in Seattle**

We currently have a PEARLS training scheduled for April 30 - May 1, 2020 in Seattle. We will make a decision about whether to hold this training by April 3rd. If we do need to cancel based on public health recommendations, we will plan to hold an in-person training later this year and/or hold a distance training. Please let Caitlin (mailto:cmayoUe@uw.edu) know your preferences.

**Remote PEARLS sessions**

Given the circumstances, we support you developing a procedure for doing PEARLS by phone or video-conference. We recommend these protocols be in accordance with your agency or PEARLS program’s policies/procedures for new and/or existing client services and in line with current public health recommendations.

For new clients:

If possible, we’d recommend you not start new clients by phone but only do if they are at least several sessions in. New clients could then be put on a wait list and offered other tele-services in the interim like case management, peer support, etc.

For current PEARLS clients:

Here’s a few guidelines around phone or video-conferencing sessions based on what we know from a program in TX that has been piloting tele-based PEARLS.

- Mail copies of the blank Problem List to the client to fill out/follow along during phone sessions. Could also include PHQ-9 and response choice cards if in earlier sessions so less familiar with filling this out.
● Mail completed Problem List to client so they have this as a reminder.

● Program the PEARLS counselor's number into the client's home phone or cell phone so they don't think it is spam and don't answer when you call (don't do this if using personal phone for work) OR ask them to call you at scheduled appt time.

● If using video-conferencing, make sure the client has access to and can use this technology. Also, please note that many platforms are not HIPPA compliant. We know of a Zoom HIPPA compliant platform and welcome suggestions for other appropriate tech.

● It's also OK for client to pauses their PEARLS sessions if they prefer. In general, if they pause for less than several months, you may resume sessions where you left off (possibly meeting more frequently if you left off during later monthly sessions to reinforce the PST and BA skills). If it is more than 3 months pause we'd recommend restarting the PEARLS sessions if possible with your agency and funding policies.

Thanks so much for all you are doing to support older adults during this unprecedented time.

Best,
Lesley, Caitlin and Mark

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I acknowledge the land I sit and occupy today as the traditional home of the Duwamish, Tulalip, Muckleshoot, and Suguamish tribal nations. Without them I would not have access to this working, teaching, and learning environment. I take the opportunity to thank the original caretakers of this land who are still here.