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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ashley Addiction Treatment Launches Virtual Counseling to Help People Cope with Isolation and Maintain Sobriety During COVID-19 Crisis

Combating addiction, anxiety and depression in the wake of a pandemic, treatment providers think outside the box to help those who feel powerless

Havre de Grace, Md. (April 22, 2020) — [Ashley Addiction Treatment \(Ashley\)](#), one of the world’s most recognizable and respected names in the substance use disorder treatment industry, announced it is now offering insurance-covered outpatient addiction treatment services virtually for people who are no longer able to continue regular counseling due to coronavirus. The new, virtual offerings include group and family therapy, individual counseling and medication supported recovery as well as 12-Step meetings for alumni and friends in recovery.

“Right now, we are focused on doing everything we can to minimize any risk associated with coronavirus for our patients and staff, but we’re fighting two wars—addiction and COVID-19,” said Dr. Gregory Hobelmann, senior vice president, chief medical and clinical officer at Ashley. “Addiction is an isolating disease, so by removing these familiar support systems, it can be detrimental to sobriety since its foundation rests on maintaining a strong connection to others. However, physical distancing doesn’t mean disconnecting from one another, and we hope that through these new virtual services, we’re able to preserve a level of comfort and normalcy in people’s lives as we navigate through this pandemic together.”

When the initial outbreak of COVID-19 took place, the Ashley team took immediate action to protect the health and safety of its patients and staff by implementing social distancing protocols and masking guidelines recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The team then quickly launched an official [COVID-19 page](#) with frequently updated information regarding Ashley’s response to the pandemic and a [free support resources page](#) for patients and the community to access at any time. During this time, the organization also began planning to bring all outpatient counseling sessions online to ensure there was no lapse in care. Then in mid-March, the Ashley team formed an Incident Command Center (ICC), an emergency protocol system that structures the organization’s processes and provides guidance for managing threats, planned events and emergency incidents and recently initiated a new, five-day stabilization program in an effort to mitigate any risk of exposure with incoming patients.

“We are in the midst of a huge transition, but the ability to provide accessible treatment to those in need is a matter of life and death. So it’s on us to think outside the box and come up with new ways to ensure people feel supported and connected to each other,” said Alex Denstman, senior vice president, chief growth officer at Ashley. “Having a telehealth system in place has always



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been a future goal of Ashley, but we didn't anticipate having to adapt so instantaneously to implement these virtual services in the capacity that was needed. Our biggest concern is always to make sure people feel like they have somewhere to turn. Although sobriety is going to look much different during this time of crisis, we're thankful to have this level of technology at our fingertips today so we can remove these barriers to treatment in hopes people don't fall through the cracks."

As a premier non-profit provider of both inpatient and outpatient treatment and recovery-support services for people who suffer from substance use disorders and those who love them, Ashley has helped more than 45,000 individuals on their path to recovery since its founding over 37 years ago. With three clinical sites throughout the state, the organization also offers education and training to other addiction professionals and businesses and remains dedicated to its life-long mission to destigmatize addiction and empower others by shining a light on this debilitating disease.

In addition to virtual outpatient treatment, Ashley will also begin offering online yoga classes for staff and alumni to help ease stress and anxiety and promote mental wellness. For more information about outpatient virtual offerings, please visit Ashley's [Outpatient Programs](#) page at ashleytreatment.org/programs/outpatient/.

ABOUT ASHLEY ADDICTION TREATMENT

Ashley Addiction Treatment (Ashley) is a nationally recognized leader in the integrated, evidence-based treatment of substance use disorders. Ashley's expert staff implements a comprehensive program for patients that integrates a full spectrum of medical, clinical and holistic treatment methods. Ashley's driving principle – "everything for recovery" – reinforces its timeless mission to heal each individual with respect and dignity, and reflects its ongoing commitment to meet new challenges. Accredited by The Joint Commission and a division of Ashley Inc., a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, Ashley has treated nearly 45,000 patients since its inception in 1983. Ashley's expansive offerings include inpatient as well as outpatient treatment, sobriety enrichment, community outreach, family and children's education and specialty programs. For more information, please visit www.ashleytreatment.org.

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