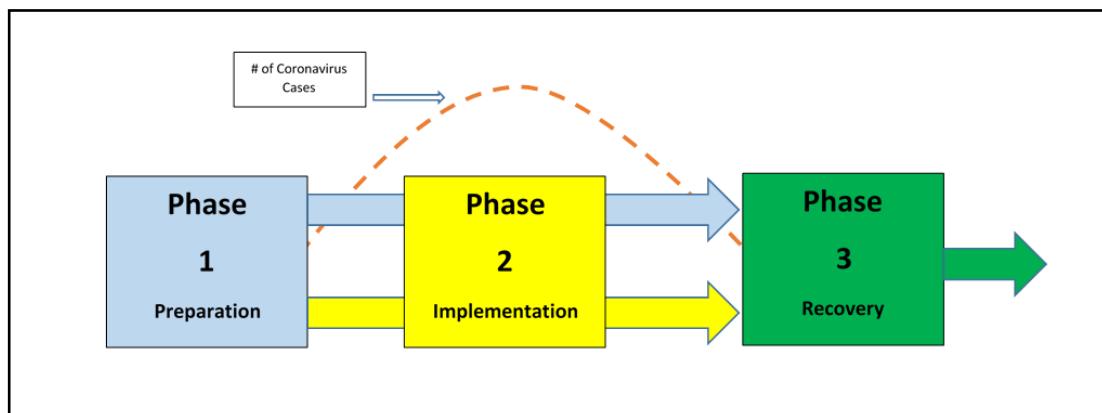# Addressing the Spread of the Coronavirus:

A Local Strategy

We recognize the gravity and the potential impact of the coronavirus on our system. We believe you, Ohio's Developmental Disability Community will step up and do whatever is necessary to see this situation through to a positive end. There are 3 phases when we look at addressing this challenge:

We believe for the most part we have made it through the initial phase of preparation for the impact of the coronavirus. We have acknowledged that it is a real and credible threat to the people we serve and the people who serve them. We are into Phase 2, the Implementation phase. In this phase we are focused on ensuring our organizations and communities are able to address the potential spread of the virus.

We have heard daily that the number of people with the virus is growing. It is time to ask the question, what if a person you serve gets infected. Who should you call? What are the first steps? Who do we quarantine and for how long?

A lot of these discussions and decisions will have to be made locally/per county, as the network of local health departments and hospitals will be making health determinations that reflect the local situation at a given time. Many of you may have already started the process of preparing for an outbreak in your community. It is recommended that you begin having discussions and begin to discuss plans with your team for your organization and key members of your communities.

The following are some items to consider in preparation for an emergency response:

- Support and inform your staff. Include them in the problem solving process. Empower them with knowledge and the tools they will need to be successful.
- Educate your staff on the Department of Health's Stay-At-Home order and how crucial it is for staff to follow special precautions to ensure they do not catch the virus and accidently spread it to the people they serve.
- There may be people who will not be tested due to limited testing and we need to assume it is COVID-19 if someone has the symptoms and use the proper procedures while treating.
- Providers should stay in contact with the person's physician or the ICF's medical director to know exactly how to monitory the health symptoms and identify the need for emergency care.
- Contact your local County Board. Ask what type of resources and support they are able to offer.
- If the virus is diagnosed at one of your locations contact your local health department.
- Work with your local Emergency Management Agency. Ask your local authorities to have table-top exercise/strategy session about what will be done in the case of multiple infections.
- Identify emergency isolation/quarantine locations (day services facilities, schools, recreational centers, colleges, hotels, vacant retail space, etc.). Once a site is identified, work with your local partners to stockpile necessary supplies:
  - Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
  - Cots/beds and bedding
  - Food and medicine
  - Identify a pool of medical professionals, DD staff and volunteers who will be identified to work and/or support these sites.
- If a person is quarantined in their own home here are some questions to consider.
  - How will the community support those who are working living and working in that home?
  - Who will supply the food, medicine, supplies and emotional support?
  - How will you monitor changes in condition and what is the plan if the person's conditions worsen?
- Connect with your county OhioMeansJobs Center to let them know if you have workforce needs.
- Use the Provider Search tool to identify and reach out to other providers in your area and build a network of support.
- DODD support teams consisting of Community Resource Coordinators (CRC), the Office of System Support and Standards (OSSAS), Community Life Engagement (Policy-CLE), and regional liaisons for dual diagnosis in mental illness and intellectual disabilities (Policy-MI/IDD), are ready to help county boards and providers answer questions about the latest state guidance and resources that are published on at DODD's dedicated web page.

- Stay current with COVID-19 health information at the Ohio Department of Health's coronavirus website.

This is a very challenging time. One of the best things you can do is to inform your staff of your emergency preparedness plans and what you will do if someone is infected with the Coronavirus. Your efforts are appreciated.