

# SEMINAR TWO

## COVID-19'S EFFECT ON MENTAL HEALTH AND OPERATIONS

**K**ate Schneider, programming specialist for Reflections at The Bristol Assisted Living, and Regina Barros Rivera, associate executive director of North Shore Child & Family Guidance Center, discussed the mental health impacts on two ends of the spectrum: senior citizens and children.

Although very different in age, both groups suffer from some of the same issues, including feelings of isolation, changes to how they receive services and the impact of a "moving target" in regards to the opening and closing of both schools and assisted living facilities.

Schneider and Barros Rivera

discussed the use of technology and how they each implemented different incentives among staff to stay organized, sane and help their clientele maintain a sense of normalcy while receiving services in a pandemic-stricken world.

"It's my hope (the vaccine) is the light at the end of the tunnel and that when this will be available to the staff, everybody will feel a little bit safer," Schneider said.

Barros Rivera said she plans on educating the children and families North Shore Child & Family Guidance Center serves who are among those worried about the vaccine.

"I will launch the biggest educational

piece to inform our children and families that if you trust us, and we want to trust the medical field, we got to do this together," she said. "We're in

this together. We're going to have to be in this together because we can't continue like this."



### KATE SCHNEIDER

*Programming Specialist,  
Reflections at The Bristol Assisted Living*



**K**ate Schneider MS, CTRS, CDP, CADDCT has more than 20 years of experience in the field of therapeutic recreation. Her experience includes working with people in various venues including long term care, physical -medical -rehab, detox, senior day care and currently, assisted living.

Schneider supports the Recreation Department, promoting innovative programming within the social, physical, emotional, spiritual and cognitive domains. Schneider is an adjunct lecturer teaching Therapeutic Recreation in the Geriatric Setting at St. Joseph's College in Patchogue and is currently a board member for The Long Island Leisure Services Association. Schneider has presented at numerous conferences educating her peers and the public on

the therapeutic value of recreation.

Schneider is also the Dementia Specialist for The Bristol Assisted Living Communities and is responsible for supporting each community by providing coaching and dementia training for the Bristol team. She is certified by Second Winds to provide The Virtual Dementia Tour, by the Teepa Snow Group as a PAC certified trainer and a Certified Dementia Practitioner as well as trainer for the National Council of Certified Dementia Practitioners. Schneider has been trained as a Certified Montessori Dementia Care Professional as well. She supports the Conversations with Caregivers Support Groups within The Bristol and was instrumental in developing the Our Place Memory Cafes on Long Island.

### REGINA BARROS RIVERA

*Associate Executive Director,  
North Shore Child & Family Guidance Center*



**R**egina Barros Rivera, LCSW, is the Associate Executive Director of North Shore Child & Family Guidance Center, a leading children's mental health agency on Long Island. She works closely with the Executive Director, the Board of Directors and the top leadership staff in maintaining the highest quality of care for children, youth and their families who are undergoing serious mental health crises, including depression, anxiety, self-injury and substance abuse.

One of the programs she supervises is the Intensive Support Program, a collaborative effort developed by Nassau B.O.C.E.S and the Guidance Center that provides a therapeutic and nurturing alternative, offering intensive mental health services onsite at three schools for students ages 5-21 from all 56 Nassau

County school districts.

As a bicultural and bilingual mental health professional, Barros Rivera is particularly sensitive to the special needs of the immigrant Latino family, and she has worked diligently to implement culturally appropriate services that provide quality care for that population. One example is her founding of the Guidance Center's Latina Girls Project, an innovative program that employs individual, group and family therapy, along with monthly outings and other activities, to help first-generation Latina teens.

Barros Rivera received her Masters in Social Work from SUNY at Stony Brook in 1980 and Post Master Addictions Specialist Certificate from Adelphi University in 1989.