



WASHINGTON HEALTH SYSTEM
Center for Mental Health and Wellbeing

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



THINGS

YOU

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TO

KNOW

Let's Make Prevention and Treatment of
Mental and Substance Use Disorder a Public
Health Priority!

TOP 5 ISSUES TO CONSIDER AT THE INTERSECTION OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND PUBLIC HEALTH

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) defines behavioral health as including “the promotion of emotional health; the prevention of mental illnesses and substance use disorders; and treatments and services for mental and/or substance use disorders.” Why should public health professionals care about behavioral health? Two words: disability and premature death.

Recent analysis of Global Burden of Disease data shows mental and substance use disorders were the leading causes worldwide of years lived with disability. Those researchers concluded that until we make prevention and treatment of mental and substance use disorders a public health priority, improvements in population health will face obstacles. In the United States, the SAMHSA says, “mental illnesses and substance use disorders are common, frequently recurrent, and often serious.” Comparison across states has shown that those with serious mental illness die earlier than the general population (in one study, from 13 to 30 years earlier, depending on the state).

The National Network of Public Health Institutes (NNPHI) has prioritized behavioral health as a key focus area. NNPHI’s mission is “to support national public health system initiatives and strengthen public health institutes to promote multi-sector activities resulting in measurable improvements of public health structures, systems, and outcomes.” As NNPHI engages with its 40+ member institutes, public health training centers, and national partner organizations in dialogue about the intersection of behavioral health and public health, we see this intersection evolving quickly.

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Schools are beginning to recognize the importance of mental health education within the school environment.

Last month, New York became the first state to require all schools to incorporate mental health education into their curriculum according to Yahoo.

This fall, Florida Schools Will Be Required To Provide Students With Mental Health Education, Kaiser Health News reports.

Top 5 Issues to Consider at the Intersection of Behavioral Health and Public Health

Here is our list of the top five most important issues at the intersection of behavioral health and public health.

5: Population level data-

Within the last few years, CDC completed an agency-wide compilation of data from selected CDC surveillance and information systems that measure the prevalence and impact of mental illness in the U.S. adult population. According to a more recent Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, public health has seen significant decreases in the number of potentially preventable deaths among several of the five leading causes of death, but the number of potentially preventable deaths from unintentional injuries, including overdose deaths, increased significantly during the same period...

4: Workforce

What do we know about the current and future of the public health workforce and the behavioral health workforce? At just over 800,000 professionals, the behavioral health workforce is substantially larger than a recent high end estimates of the public health workforce (500,000 professionals).

In November 2016, the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and SAMHSA released an analysis of the nation's behavioral health workforce. The report, entitled National Projections of Supply and Demand for Selected Behavioral Health Practitioners: 2013—2025, predicts that “under the most conservative projections, by 2025, shortages are projected in a number of key behavioral health professions.” Public health also projects workforce shortages...

3: Strategy

Many strategies are addressing intersections of public health and behavioral health. While the recently released Surgeon General's Report on Alcohol, Drugs, and Health is rightfully receiving wide attention, two other strategies at this intersection of public health and behavioral health deserve an amplifier.

First, the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials' (ASTHO) 2017 “President's Challenge, Public Health Approaches to Preventing Substance Misuse and Addictions” describes public health approaches to preventing substance misuse, addictions, and related consequences. This resource is particularly helpful for public health professionals because it is organized by primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention, and users can click through the website for tools, resources and strategies to help their health agency implement each level. Second, the South Carolina Institute of Medicine & Public Health (IMPH) has released its first annual progress report on the implementation of each recommendation from May 2015's Behavioral Health Taskforce report, “Hope for Tomorrow: The Collective Approach for Transforming South Carolina's Behavioral Health Systems.” ...

2: Major legislation

According to SAMHSA, the Affordable Care Act extended the impact of the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act (MHPAEA) so that many health plans must offer coverage for mental health or substance use disorders with at least an equal level of benefits as the plans offer for the treatment of physical health problems. As our nation determines the future of the ACA, it will be important to understand the intended and unintended impacts of repeal and replace on mental health parity, especially at the state and local level...

1: Funding

What is going on with funding for public health and behavioral health? One common risk across public health and behavioral health is reliance on federal discretionary dollars to fund core elements and functions. As a result, professionals working in both public health and behavioral health are on hyper alert regarding potential funding cuts at the federal, state, and local level...

To read National Network of Public Health's full article visit <https://nnphi.org>



“Mental Health Days” Oregon students will get ‘mental health days’ under new laws that’s the first of its kind in the U.S., Kaiser Health News reports.



Dear Valued Referral Sources,

We've enjoyed another month of wonderful collaboration with our referral sources. We appreciate the opportunity to continue to work and develop our community's wellness as a team.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Campbell, MSW, LSW

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