



**STANISLAUS COUNTY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND RECOVERY SERVICES**

# DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

*...a newsletter to address cultural issues that enable us to effectively work in cross cultural situations.*

## Mental Health Awareness Month

**Submitted by Jennifer R. Baker, Mental Health Coordinator, BHRS Training and Luis I. Molina, Coordinator, Prevention & Early Intervention**

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**BHRS Cultural Competence, Equity and Social Justice Committee meets on the 2nd Monday of each month from 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. in the Redwood Conference Room, 800 Scenic Drive**



Mental Health Awareness Month (also referred to as "Mental Health Month") has been observed in May in the United States since 1949, reaching millions of people in the United States through the media, local events, and screenings.[1]

Mental Health Awareness Month was started in the United States in 1949 by the Mental Health America organization (then known as the National Association for Mental Health). Each year in mid-March Mental Health America releases a toolkit of materials to guide preparation for outreach activities during Mental Health Awareness Month. During the month of May, Mental Health America, its affiliates, and other organizations interested in mental health conduct a number of activities which are based on a different theme each year.

Its purpose is to raise awareness and educate the public about: mental illnesses, such as the 18.1% of Americans who suffer from depression, schizophrenia, and bipolar disorder; the realities of living with these conditions; and strategies for attaining mental health and wellness. It also aims to draw attention to suicide, which can be precipitated by some mental illnesses. Additionally, Mental Health Awareness Month strives to reduce the stigma (negative attitudes and misconceptions) that surrounds mental illnesses. The month came about by presidential proclamation.

Mental Health America is not the only organization to run campaigns throughout May. Many other similar organizations choose to host awareness observances that coincide with Mental Health Awareness month. Other months and weeks throughout the year are designated to raise awareness around specific mental health conditions or the mental health of different demographic groups (Minority Mental Health Month (July), Mental Illness Awareness Week (Sun, Oct 6, 2019 – Sat, Oct 12, 2019)...etc.). From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, (Mental Health America) [1]

People living with a mental health challenge face one of the largest debilitating issues in our society. Many of those who experience these conditions often suffer in silence due to unawareness of the condition, lack of knowledge on how to access services, and most importantly the fear of what it can look like in their life. Too often the narrative of those battling with mental health conditions is one of isolation, shame, pain, and discrimination which can pose barriers in the road to recovery.

As a community, we have an opportunity to champion a few areas in raising awareness and well-being:

- Normalize the conversation by educating yourself by taking a Mental Health First Aid Class
- Become an ambassador of Mental Health and Well-being information
- Support those with a mental health challenge and connect with the proper resources.
- Encourage peer support

It is up to each one of us to be ambassadors of well-being and begin taking an active role to bring about awareness.

Please visit: <https://www.eachmindmatters.org/>

## Highlights of April Cultural Competency, Equity and Social Justice Committee (CCESJC) Meeting

The Treatment Advocacy Center published a recent survey reviewing Assisted Outpatient Treatment in California. According to the survey, “California is home to almost one million individuals with severe and persistent mental illness, as many as half of whom are untreated on any given day.” (Treatment Advocacy Center. “A Promising Start... Results from a California Survey Assessing the Use of Laura’s Law.” 06 Feb 2019. <https://www.treatmentadvocacycenter.org/apromising-start>). These individuals often have frequent contact with emergency services and law enforcement. Through these contacts it became clear that these individuals do not appear to engage in traditional outpatient mental health treatment and fall through the cracks in the Mental Health Treatment System. California Assembly Bill 1421, signed in 2002 by then Governor Gray Davis, aims to address these issues.

If you know someone who may benefit from this program, Qualified Referring Parties (QRP) can provide a referral via the Warm Line by calling (209) 558-4600 or visit Stanislaus County’s, Assisted Outpatient Treatment webpage at: <http://www.stancounty.com/bhrs/assisted-outpatient-treatment.shtm>

### Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Newsletter Sign Ups

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Newsletter Sign Up sheet for 2019 still has slots open. The newsletter is to address cultural issues that enable us to effectively work in cross cultural situations. The parameters for the newsletter are as follows:

Prepare a half to a full-page article related to cultural competence. It could be about your program, a training you attended, a book, a person or other resource you would like to recommend, or information about a specific culture. Suggested Themes: Recovery stories, culturally competent program activities, recommended books, take-aways from training attended. Consumer/family member contributions to the newsletter are welcome.

If you would like to sign up, please email Sarai Ramos at [sramos@stanbhrs.org](mailto:sramos@stanbhrs.org).

### **Behavioral Health & Recovery Services Prevention and Early Intervention Staff at the Second Annual Mental Health Awareness Month Kick Off Event**



**If you have questions or suggestions regarding Cultural Competency, please e-mail:  
Jorge Fernandez, [jfernandez@gvhc.org](mailto:jfernandez@gvhc.org)**