A publication for the Mental Health Association in Delaware

Spring 2014

The 12th Annual E-Racing the Blues© race will be on Sunday, October 26.

Inside:

• Q&A with Kevin Huckshorn.

• E-Racing the Blues© South is May 10 in Rehoboth Beach.

• Calling all duffers for the 2nd annual Rob Hill Memorial Golf Tournament.

Learn how you can get involved!

(302) 654-6833
(800) 287-6423
www.mhainde.org

ADAP Presentation featuring Dr. Karen Swartz.
A message from
Jim Lafferty

Executive Director, Mental Health Association in Delaware

Hello spring, goodbye winter. It’s really nice to write to you after this long, harsh winter – we made it and I hope you are enjoying spring as much as I am.

I hope you’ll find this issue of the UPDATE helpful. You’ll see an update on MHA’s suicide prevention efforts, our annual conference, E-Racing the Blues North and South and the Rob Hill memorial golf tournament. Your contributions to these events go a long way in helping us provide education programs and support groups statewide.

I’m excited to tell you about Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training for law enforcement. The first CIT class will begin training on May 5. This is the first training of many more trainings to come in Delaware for our law enforcement agencies. The first class includes State, New Castle County, Wilmington, University of Delaware, Newark, Seaford and Dover law enforcement agencies. CIT presents a model of police interaction with persons who have mental health conditions and other disabilities with the goal of improving officer and consumer safety and redirecting consumers from the judicial system to the health care system.

The forty hour training includes workshops on mental illnesses, cognitive and intellectual disabilities, autism spectrum disorders, de-escalation and interviewing techniques, community resources for children and adults, trauma and a number of scenarios designed to give police officers an opportunity to practice what they learned. Very importantly, it also includes the perspective of individuals with disabilities as well as family members.

This training has truly involved a real partnership between community members, law enforcement, advocates and treatment professionals. MHA has been honored and proud to have served as the Chair of the CIT planning committee. I have appreciated the hard work and support of all those involved.

Partners in the training program include the Delaware State Police, Wilmington Police, New Castle County Police, DHSS’ Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health, the Mental Health Association in Delaware, National Alliance on Mental Illness Delaware, Mobile Crisis, the Criminal Justice Council, Delaware Consumer Recovery Coalition, the Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence and the Developmental Disabilities Council; funding provided by the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration Grant on Trauma-Informed Care.

Thank you to all of you who read our newsletter and support MHA in so many ways. We very grateful to you for your support.

Save the Dates:
Rob Hill Memorial Golf Tournament to benefit MHA
Wednesday, May 7

E-Racing the Blues© South
Saturday, May 10

The 12th Annual E-Racing the Blues© Race
Sunday, October 26

13th Annual Community Mental Health Conference
Thursday, November 13

2014 Mental Health Association in Delaware

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Remember our designation number of 430 when the time comes to make your United Way pledge this year. If you forget, all agencies are listed alphabetically on the back of the pledge form.
When you first came to Delaware, you noticed a lot of solid mental health services but a lack of effective integration. How has that changed?

There have been two driving forces for change. The first was my boss, Rita Landgraf, who is the secretary of the Department of Health and Social Services. She came into her position with a real vision of integration, and she has carried that forward for the past five years. The other is the U.S. Department of Justice settlement. We were fortunate to have Robert Bernstein, president and executive director of the David D. Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law, as our court monitor in the implementation of the settlement. He has his finger on the pulse of all the best practices in the country.

We’re not only integrating, but we’re reallocating our resources and putting funds where they need to go. We’re focusing on recovery and what that really means for people who have serious mental health conditions.

How are things at the Delaware Psychiatric Center?

When the U.S. Department of Justice first came to Delaware, the focus was on the DPC and problems with the care and treatment there. Since then, we’ve reduced the long-term bed census at DPC by 50 percent. Now the average daily census there is 115. We transitioned beds from long-term to acute care for people in crisis — beds with a much shorter length of stay. Before we made the switch, we relied on three private facilities to handle acute care. When they were full, we were stuck.

Before the settlement, more than 100 people had been at DPC for many years — up to 20-plus. We’ve discharged 102 people who were considered institutionalized.

Were they ready to leave?

No one leaves DPC without a thorough evaluation and a team to help him or her. A few go to group homes. For those with significant medical issues, we now have care managers available 24 hours a day, seven days a week and peer service groups. We follow evidence-based models. Ten to 15 years ago, when outpatient services weren’t this effective, people wound up living at DPC.

But now, our recidivism [reentry] rate is 5.9 percent. The national average is 9.1 percent. Quality review teams do constant random checks that look at the person’s social life, friends, transportation options and vocational opportunities.

Our work in moving long-term folks out of DPC and back into the community saved $6 million between 2011 to the present, and that money is being used to help support our community work. Now only 37 percent of our budget goes to the state hospital. The rest is in community programs. When I came, the ratio was 50:50. We’ve made great progress toward the national average of 25 percent of the budget spent on the state hospitals versus funding for community programs — though we still have a way to go.

How is the division addressing substance abuse?

It’s a broad issue. My cabinet secretary, Rita Landgraf, has taken on this statewide challenge. She has developed a “Triple Aim” approach, which focuses on prevention and education, law enforcement and control and treatment and recovery. This approach recognizes that these issues affect all Delawareans and involve not just the Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health, but also the Division of Public Health, the Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families, the Department of Corrections, the Department of Education and the Department of Safety and Homeland Security, to name just a few key stakeholders. We are all working to change our approach to substance-use disorders, from a single-crisis approach to one that involves a public health chronic disease-management approach. Addiction changes the physiology of the brain, and it’s fatal if not treated.

Over the past year, we’ve had a huge revision to our licensure and contracting standards. The language is reflected in our request for proposals. We are following the American Society of Addiction Medicine criteria, which outlines the different levels of care. We’ve identified gaps in terms of provider services and how we need to fill in those gaps. We’re also working with Medicaid to get federal reimbursement waivers.

The terms of the Department of Justice settlement are expected to last until 2016. Where do we stand?

We are very hopeful that we will be able to close it out and move on. There are a lot of balls in the air, but at this point, we are very positive.
The 12th Annual
E-Racing the
Blues® Race

By Lauren Golt

Spring has just arrived, but we’re starting a countdown to fall! The 12th annual E-Racing the Blues® 5K Run/Walk and 10K Run is Sunday, October 26th!

After a snowstorm in 2011 and a hurricane in 2012, we were blessed to have beautiful weather for last year’s race. Over 30 teams and 600 individuals participated in the 5K, 10K, competitive walking and recreational walking events. Families, friends, running groups, parents with strollers and children of all ages came to Dravo Plaza on the Riverfront for a day of fun and exercise. Last year, drummers from a local high school marching band played throughout the day. We also offered face painting and a pumpkin decorating competition; both were a huge success!

Day of registration begins at 7:30 a.m., followed by the 10K run at 8:30 a.m., the 5K run at 9:45 a.m. and the 5K competitive and recreational walks shortly after. E-Racing the Blues® is one of the few races in the area that offers competitive walking. All events are chip-timed, one of the most accurate timing devices used today. Awards are given to individuals with the best time in their age group. Prizes are given to the team who raises the most money and the team with the highest number of members. Each participant receives a free long-sleeve t-shirt and enjoys a wide selection of refreshments at the conclusion of the race.

The mission of the Mental Health Association in Delaware is to promote improved mental well-being for all individuals and families in Delaware through support, education, and advocacy. The agency is committed to understanding that mental health is equal to physical health and is fundamental to achieving a healthy, balanced, and productive life.

Each year more scientific studies confirm that regular exercise has a real and significant effect on stress and depression - and may work as well as medication. A new study reported in the Journal of Psychosomatic Medicine concluded that the individuals who participated in group or individual exercise routines did as well on questionnaires of depression symptoms as those who were treated with antidepressant drugs.

E-Racing The Blues® is the MHA’s primary fundraising event. Your support helps “e-race” the stigma surrounding mental illness and depression and funds the comprehensive programming that MHA provides to thousands of Delawares each year.

Last year’s business sponsors included:

- **Gold Sponsors:** Aloysius Butler & Clark, The News Journal
- **Silver Sponsors:** Ashland, Hatzel & Buehler Inc., Christiana Care Health System, John du Pont, Highmark Delaware, KT&D Insurance, M&T Bank

E-Racing the Blues® Committee members are: Co-chair’s Lauren Golt and Niki Hawkins, Marcia Cloud, Jessica Cowperthwait, Patty Daniels, Mary DuPont, Roberta Fishgold, Jane Gibson, Bill Green, Jessica Hill, Gail Keller, Rachel Lee, Carol Shepherd Long, Laurie McArthur, Carol Osbun, Deenie Reeves, Jan Wilkinson, Wendy Wise.

If you’re interested in sponsoring E-Racing the Blues®, would like to start a team or register to participate, please visit www.eracingtheblues.org or contact the office at 654-6833.

The 1st Annual E-Racing the Blues® SOUTH

The Mental Health Association in Delaware invites you to walk in support of suicide prevention.

1st Annual
E-Racing the Blues® SOUTH
Presented by
The Delaware Rural Health Initiative

Saturday, May 10, 2014

8 AM - Register at the Bandstand on Rehoboth Ave. in Rehoboth Beach DE
9 AM - Walk down Rehoboth Ave. to Grove Park.
At Grove Park, visit exhibitors at the Knowledge Neighborhood.

Enjoy refreshments and prize drawings!

Open to everyone! All ages! Families, friends, students, co-workers!
The school with the most team members wins a pizza party!

To register and for more information contact MHA

The 1st Annual E-Racing the Blues South presented by The Delaware Rural Health Initiative will be held on Saturday, May 10 in Rehoboth Beach at 9:00 a.m. to benefit the Mental Health Association in Delaware (MHA). Registration will open at 8:00 at the Boardwalk Bandstand which is also the start of the walk. Participants will walk down Rehoboth Avenue to Grove Park. Participants will visit exhibitors in the Mental Health Knowledge Neighborhood in Grove Park, picking up a raffle ticket at each exhibitor. After visiting each exhibitor, participants will head back up Rehoboth Avenue to the Bandstand where we will enjoy refreshments and conduct the prize drawing. All tickets are eligible for great prizes including a $250 Best Buy gift card! Entry fee is $10 or 3 for $25 which entitles each participant the opportunity to win great prizes and learn more about your mental health and suicide prevention. To register or for more information, contact MHA at 800-287-6423 or at www.mhainde.org.
When a traumatic event happens in your school or community, you can be a Lifeline.

According to the American Association of Suicidology, suicide ranked as the third leading cause of death for young people (ages 15-24). While suicides accounted for 1.5% of all deaths in the U.S. annually, they comprised 12% of all deaths among 15-24 year olds. In Delaware, someone dies by suicide every 3.5 days.

To schedule a FREE Lifelines Program at your school, contact Jennifer Seo at the Mental Health Association in DE at (302) 654-6833 or jseo@mhainde.org

Lifelines: A Comprehensive Suicide Awareness and Responsiveness Program for Teens is a school-wide program made up of three components: Prevention, Intervention, and Postvention. This trilogy of programs is the only existing model of its kind available for teens. The program includes tools for administrators to assist with policy planning around crisis situations, training and educational programs for parents and school staff, and evidence based curriculum for students.

The complete Lifelines Trilogy is based on over 20 years of suicide-in-youth research that indicates an informed community can help to prevent vulnerable teens from ending their lives.

Lifelines: A Comprehensive Suicide Awareness and Responsiveness Program for Teens

ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) is a two-day training for anyone who wants to feel more comfortable, confident and competent in helping to prevent the immediate risk of suicide. Over one million caregivers have participated in this evidence based two-day, highly interactive, practical, practice-oriented workshop. ASIST is the most researched suicide prevention skills training world-wide, and evaluations have shown that interventions skills learned at ASIST are retained over time and put to use to save lives.

The emphasis of the ASIST workshop is on suicide first aid, on helping a person at risk stay safe and seek further help. Attendance at the full two days is essential.

Learn how to:
- recognize invitations for help
- reach out and offer support
- review the risk of suicide
- apply a suicide intervention model
- link people with community resources

Who to Contact:
Mental Health Association in Delaware: (302) 654-6833 or (800) 287-6423

safeTALK: a 3 hour training that prepares anyone over the age of 15 to identify persons with thoughts of suicide and connect them to suicide first aid resources. As a safeTALK-trained suicide alert helper, you will be better able to: move beyond common tendencies to miss, dismiss or avoid suicide; identify people who have thoughts of suicide; apply the TALK steps (Tell, Ask, Listen and Keep Safe) to connect a person with suicide thoughts to suicide first aid, intervention caregivers.

Statewide Suicide Prevention Gatekeeper Trainings
Year 2014 (January-March)

“Having the Mental Health Association come to St. Mark’s was truly an eye opening experience. It’s nice to know what to do in certain situations and that there are ways to help those you love.”
Kylie …senior

“I found the suicide awareness seminar to be beneficial in that it helps us to see the warning signs. Most people ignore the signs but now we know just what to look for and we had fun while learning it. The instructors were fun and didn’t just lecture. They interacted and made us interested.”
Matthew…junior

“The Lifelines program has been well received by our students. We have already had some instances in which friends referred other friends for help based on having just gone through the program here. The instructors did a great job relating to the students and engaging them in discussion.”
Kris Bonitatibus…Guidance Department Chair

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Kris Bonitatibus…Guidance Department Chair
13th Annual Community Mental Health Conference

Save the date for
Thursday November 13, 2014!

Please note that this conference will be hosting exhibitors from local businesses and nonprofits. If you are interested in exhibiting and or sponsoring this event, feel free to contact our office (302)654-6833 or e-mail Alexandra Gawel at agawel@mhainde.org.

MHA in Delaware would also like to thank last year’s participants, volunteers, sponsors, speakers, etc. who made the 2013 CMH Conference a success!

A special thanks goes out to last year’s planning committee members; Abner Santiago, Alexandra Gawel, Audwin Odom, Belinda Criddel, Cereza Hansley, Daniel Norvell, Dona Mesko, Frank Hawkins, Franzsaw Watson, Janet Kramer, Keisha Nesbitt Cohen, LaVaida Owens-White, Lonnie Edwards, Norwood Coleman, Olga Matias, Pat Evans, Phyllis Churchman-Boyd, Rev. William Rhines, Roberta Fishgold and Yvette Aviles.

This conference also would not have been possible without last year’s sponsors;

Astra Zeneica
Janssen
Attention Deficit Disorder Association (ADDA)
Rockford Center
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Radius Rx Direct
Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health (DSAMH)
The Links
Division of Prevention and Behavioral Health Services
DelARF
Horizon House
National Association of Social Workers, Delaware Chapter
SODAT – DE Inc.

The Mental Health Association in Delaware in collaboration with the Delaware Suicide Prevention Coalition is gearing up for the 4th annual Military, Veterans and Family event. The event is scheduled for Wednesday, September 10, 2014 at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Newark, Delaware. The all-day event will focus on presenting and disseminating information and resources to veterans, service members, families, and support members in Delaware. The fun-filled evening portion will include family friendly activities and many give-away prizes. More information to come soon, so stay tuned!
On Thursday, October 9, 2014, the Mental Health Association in Delaware will be collaborating statewide to bring National Depression Screening Day to sites throughout the state. Screenings will be taking place in various locations such as community health centers, community centers, health clubs, community college campuses, churches, etc.

National Depression Screening Day is designed to call attention to the illness of depression on a national level and designed to educate the public about symptoms and effective treatment, to offer individuals the opportunity to be screened for depression and to connect those in need to the mental health care system in Delaware. Depression screenings are not a professional evaluation, but are a quick and easy way to spot some of the early signs of trouble.

Over 61,000 adult Delawareans suffer from a mood disorder including major depression or bipolar disorder. Over 51,000 Delawareans reported experiencing at least one major depressive episode in the past year. An initiative such as National Depression Screening Day works to provide Delawareans options if they are reluctant to seek help and it also establishes prevention and early intervention.

If you are wondering if you may have depression, take the first step in asking for help. www.helpyourselfhelpothers.org

Thank you to last year’s sites for depression screening in Delaware including: AIDS Delaware, Beautiful Gate Outreach at Bethel AME Church, Christ Our King Parish Health Ministry, Claymont Community Center, Delaware Technical Community College (Wilmington and Stanton Campus) Dover Behavioral Health, Easter Seals/New Castle, Henrietta Johnson Medical Center, Latin American Community Center, Mobile Crisis Intervention Services, Neighborhood House INC, Newark Senior Center, SODAT – DE and University of Delaware.

Last year we screened 185 people throughout the state and 81 screened positive for depression and were referred to treatment. Join us for National Depression Screening Day!

If your organization is interested in holding a depression screening at your site or if you would like to volunteer to do screenings and have a master’s in a human services field, please contact our office (302)654-6833 or e-mail Andrea Gawel at agawel@mhainde.org.
**MHA Continues Needing Your Help**

“I learned about the MHA Depression Support Groups after I had experienced a complete psychiatric meltdown. In a state of depression and despair, I was ready to try anything to feel better. It took every ounce of energy I had to attend a meeting. As it turns out, it may have been the best thing I ever did for myself.” This is a quote from Karen (not her real name), a woman who attends one of our support groups for people with depression. When asked about the work we do at the Mental Health Association in Delaware (MHA), I often think of people like her.

Karen was homeless and jobless, in large part due to her illness - severe depression. Yes, depression is an illness just like heart disease, or cancer, or any other physical affliction. According to Karen, the experience of joining one of our support groups has been a life changing part of her journey. She has now found a home again, and is thriving in her new life. “Unlike my psychiatrist and therapist, my group participants knew what it was like to live with a mental illness. I no longer felt like I was alone. Today, I am working, and slowly putting my life back together. I never could have accomplished all that I have without the support of others who have been there! I can’t thank MHA enough!”

Fortunately for people like Karen, MHA is making a difference. For over 80 years, MHA has been providing support, education and advocacy. We now have seventeen support groups, offer a variety of trainings, and continue to advocate for laws and policies that support those living with mental illness.

We are also continuing our vital work in the area of suicide prevention through trainings and presentations. All of this could not be accomplished without the support of people like you.

A generous donation made by you today will allow us to reach out to more people needing our help and continue to provide the life saving programs and services to those currently trying to find their way back to “normalcy,” like Karen. Our organizational brochure is available simply by calling 800-287-6423 so that you can see firsthand what your donations support. Won’t you please send in a donation today?

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**Nicotine and Mental Health**

Nicotine is one of the leading preventable causes of illness, disability, and death in the United States. There is also evidence that it is associated with the development of depression and anxiety, and can worsen symptoms of these disorders.

According to the Center for Disease Control, more than 1 in 3 adults (36%) with a mental illness smoke cigarettes, compared to 1 in 5 adults (21%) with no mental illness. 3 out of every 10 cigarettes smoked by adults in the United States are smoked by those with mental illness. Studies indicate that teens who smoke are four times more likely to develop depression than those who do not smoke. Tobacco related deaths in the United States are at 430,000 annually, with 200,000 occurring in people with mental illness. Nicotine is absorbed into the bloodstream quickly through the use of tobacco products. It reaches the brain within 10 seconds, causing the release of adrenaline, dopamine and serotonin. This creates a pleasant but short lived sense of well being and energy. However, when this sensation subsides it leaves a feeling of mild fatigue, low mood and craving for another buzz. Those with depression and anxiety may use nicotine to cope with symptoms, but unfortunately over time, nicotine may exacerbate symptoms instead. Individuals who smoke or use other forms of nicotine will develop a tolerance to the nicotine and it will take more nicotine to achieve the same effects. Smoking also increases the breakdown of medicines in the body, requiring higher doses for medications to work.

Studies show that while people with mental health disorders may be more prone to use nicotine, and may need support in order to quit, they also want to and are able to quit. There are many resources available to those who want help to quit smoking and using other forms of tobacco. The Mental Health Association in DE has published a Smoking and Mental Health brochure that is made possible through the DE Division of Public Health’s Tobacco Prevention Community Outreach Contract. Funding for the Contract is provided by the Delaware Health Fund and managed by the American Lung Association in Delaware. The brochure highlights the correlation between mental health and nicotine and provides information about quitting and available resources.

Nicotine increases the risk of depression, along with its many other negative effects including heart disease, cancer and other life threatening illnesses. Take control of your life by quitting. Call 800-287-6423 to request a brochure to be sent to you free of charge.