What’s New at MHA?

Check out this latest edition of the Update to find out more about our new and continued programs, including our upcoming E-Racing the Blues, happening October 3rd and 4th, our virtual mental health screenings we are implementing for National Depression Screening Day, and our virtual training and support groups.

Flyers posted in the following pages link to virtual peer training opportunities and provide zoom information for new groups developed during this time of social distancing. Make sure to save the date for our upcoming conference addressing Mental Health in Higher Education, which will take place November 12th.

We also want to give a shout-out to our wonderful volunteers, Aubrey Shearer and her Dad, Andrew Shearer, who planned the third annual, very successful One Mile An Hour event to support MHA (Pictured Above). You can learn more about the event on page 7 of the newsletter. We are so grateful to supporters like the Shearers, who help us to execute our mission of advocacy education and support!
Dear Friends and Supporters,

As the pandemic continues to pervasively impact our daily lives, mental health becomes more and more of a priority. Many experts believe that the cost of social distancing will be a new wave of behavioral health problems, and with approximately 45,000 suicides and 67,000 drug overdoses annually already in the United States, we must prepare to work even harder to meet the challenges of this new crisis.

However, there is one silver lining to this incredibly difficult situation, and that is that stigma seems to be decreasing immensely, as people talk more and more openly about their struggles with mental health during this time. People seem to be expressing genuine concern for one another’s level of depression and anxiety as we continue to be impacted by the loneliness, financial, and medical concerns caused by the pandemic.

We hope that as more and more people recognize the importance of mental health and seek treatment for disorders, the system will respond in ways that will improve the mental health of our nation.

To support our mental health system, we can advocate for the expansion of mental health education in our communities, and for allocating more funding and more attention to the field of mental health. We can advocate for programs that encourage more young people to become interested in the field as there is currently a major lack of treatment providers to meet the demand nation wide. We advocate for more peer services, which bolster the professional behavioral health workforce and provide powerful support to those in recovery. We continue to advocate for fair reimbursement rates for these vital services, and for parity laws to be strengthened so that mental health will be treated as the vital portion of overall health that it is, and be treated by insurers as equal to any other health condition, without additional restrictions and exclusions.

We are grateful to the many individuals and agencies that work alongside MHA to advocate for these improvements to address the mental health needs of Delawareans, participating along with us on the Lt Governor’s Behavioral Health Consortium and the Delaware Suicide Prevention Coalition. We are also grateful to the many individuals talking about mental health in their own communities and making it a priority.

So thank you once again to all of our supporters, who have given time and/or resources, including our active Board of Directors, our hardworking staff, and the many individuals who have been supportive to our mission of advocacy, education and support for a mentally healthier Delaware.

Gratefully,
Emily Vera
NATIONAL DEPRESSION SCREENING DAY 2020

If you are feeling sad, anxious or overwhelmed,
Take a free, anonymous mental health self-assessment.

Thursday, October 8, 2020
NEW THIS YEAR! DUE TO COVID-19 VIRUS WE ARE GOING ONLINE

Connect online with the Mental Health Association in Delaware’s website at www.mhainde.org or directly go to https://screening.mentalhealthscreening.org/mhainde
Interested in Becoming a Peer Specialist? Virtual Training is Available

We regularly offer a variety of free peer education trainings. We offer Peer 101, an introductory training explaining the role of a peer specialists and the skills needed to succeed in this challenging and rewarding career.

We also regularly offer Peer Certification Training, the required, 40 hour training needed to earn peer certification in the state of Delaware.

Finally, we offer a variety of CEU trainings on special topics.

Upcoming classes include “Supporting MAT (Medication Assisted Treatment) Patients” in September and “Social Determinants of Health” in October.

Check back to sign up for our next Peer Certification Training, as our current class is full. You can find our class schedule and registration here:

mha-in-de.corsizio.com

You can also find the information on the homepage of our website:

mhainde.org
18th ANNUAL
E-RACING THE BLUES
FOR MENTAL HEALTH

SATURDAY, OCT. 3RD
and/or SUNDAY, OCT. 4TH

Neighborhood Walk to Raise Funds and Awareness for Mental Health

No Participation Fee. Donations and Team Setup Encouraged: www.eracingtheblues.org

Wear your favorite E-Racing The Blues t-shirt while you walk!

Contests & Prizes: Have you and/or your child create a mental health awareness sign to walk with, then send a photo to rfishgold@mhainde.org. The best sign wins an e-gift card!

The team captain with the most donations will win an e-gift card!
The Military and Veterans Mental Health Summit went virtual this year! Beginning Monday, August 31, 2020, participants logged on to Zoom for a variety of workshops. Dr. Larence Kirby, LPCMH provided the Keynote Address, which was entitled “Veterans Perceptions of Behavioral Health Services.” Michael Selby, MSN, RN, from the Wilmington VAMC led a workshop called “Virtual Resources and Telehealth.” Lauren Unrath, LCSW from the Delaware National Guard and Nancy McGee from ContactLifeline presented “Suicide Prevention, Intervention, and the Crisis Hotline.” Susana Cebula, MS, CTRS, from the Wilmington VAMC presented a workshop called “Personal Self-Care.” The week ended with a presentation by Dr. Craig Gilbert, LPCMH, from the Dover Air Force Base who presented a session called “Cognitive Approach to Resiliency.” The 200+ participants in this year’s summit included students, nurses, clinicians, active military members, veterans, family members, and many more. The Military and Veterans Mental Health Summit, which is hosted by the Delaware Suicide Prevention Coalition, takes places every September to coincide with Suicide Prevention Awareness Month.
Andrew Shearer and his daughter Aubrey Shearer partnered with MHA for the 3rd annual One Mile an Hour event, which was held virtually this year. The first 2 events were held at Appoquinimink High School’s outdoor track. Aubrey just completed her senior year there, and has worked fervently with her dad to bring forth this event to align with her passion for mental health awareness. This year, due to the pandemic, the walkers, runners and donors came forth in and around their own neighborhoods.

At the top of each hour, people walked or ran anywhere from 1-24 miles. The hope and goal were to bring to light that depression, anxiety and suicidal thoughts can happen to anyone, and should be shared, rather than shamed and stigmatized. Running or walking together is symbolic of not being alone in times of darkness.

All proceeds from OMAH went to MHA to help us be able to continue our mental health and suicide prevention programs in the community, particularly teen and veteran suicide prevention. A total of 928 miles were run by 93 participants, 18 of whom did all 24 miles! MHA was the benefactor of 57 gifts totaling $4,839. Kudos to Andrew and Aubrey for another job well done, and for all the supporters of this event despite the pandemic! MHA is more than appreciative of all the donations that support our mutual goals.

Hoping and looking forward to doing it again next year!
Check Out Our Virtual Wellness Groups—Email rbalan@mhainde.org for more information
Visit mhainde.org/about/support-group-schedule for the current schedule.
Bipolar Disorder in Teens and Young Adults: Know the Signs

Bipolar disorder is a mental disorder that causes unusual shifts in mood, marked by episodes of mania and depression.

**Common Signs & Symptoms of Mania**
- Showing intense happiness or silliness for a long time
- Having a very short temper or seeming extremely irritable
- Talking very fast or having racing thoughts
- Having an inflated sense of ability, knowledge, and power
- Doing reckless things that show poor judgment

**Common Signs & Symptoms of Depression**
- Feeling very sad or hopeless
- Feeling lonely or isolating themselves from others
- Eating too much or too little
- Having little energy and no interest in usual activities
- Sleeping too much

Teens and young adults with bipolar disorder symptoms may think and talk about self-harm or suicide. If someone you know is expressing these thoughts, seek help immediately.

**National Suicide Prevention Lifeline**
1-800-273-TALK (8255)

**Crisis Text Line**
Text HELLO to 741741

[www.nimh.nih.gov/bipolardisorder](http://www.nimh.nih.gov/bipolardisorder)
Mission:
The Mental Health Association in Delaware promotes improved mental well being for all individuals and families in Delaware through education, support and advocacy.

In pursuit of our Mission, we strive to:

• Improve the community’s understanding of mental health and the mind-body connection between mental and physical health.

• Provide education and opportunities for individuals to identify early warning signs of mental illness and subsequently provide programs and an environment that supports recovery and improves resilience for these individuals.

• Assure that those who request information and need mental health care referral have confidential access to the appropriate information and know how to obtain care.

• Advocate for improved support and treatment particularly at the state and federal levels, especially where reform is needed.