

Mental illness is the leading cause of disability in the United States, resulting in 217 million days of work lost annually due to productivity decline, more than many other chronic conditions such as diabetes, asthma and arthritis.¹



How does this impact you?

1 in 5 people in Colorado will be affected by a mental health issue this year — a neighbor, sister, spouse or yourself.² Mental health and substance abuse issues do not discriminate.

When treatment is not accessible, we all pay through higher hospital costs leading to higher insurance rates, increased homelessness, more jails and lives lost to suicide. Members of communities of color experience barriers to accessing treatment because of cost, societal stigma, and fragmented delivery of services.³

In order to *Bring Wellness Home* for everyone, we must dedicate our time, our votes and our funds to the success of recovery.

Sources

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- ³ Mental Health: Culture, Race, and Ethnicity, A Supplement to Mental Health: A Report of the Surgeon General (2001)
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- ⁵ Based on 65% of 2006 Unemployment rate 114,681
- ⁶ Colorado Interagency Council on Homelessness (2006)
- ⁷ Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, 2005 Injury and Death Report
- ⁸ American Association of Suicidology (2002)
- ⁹ Moscicki EK. Epidemiology of completed and attempted suicide: toward a framework for prevention. *Clinical Neuroscience Research*, 2001; 1: 310-23
- ¹⁰ Kaiser Family Foundation State Health Facts and Annals of Emergency Medicine (2006)
- ¹¹ Foothills Behavioral Health - Estimated cost at \$1000/ER visit (2007)
- ¹² Larimer County Detention Center (February 5, 2004)
- ¹³ Joint Budget Committee 07/08 DYC briefing
- ¹⁴ The Costs and Effectiveness of Substance Use Disorder Program in the State of Colorado, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division (ADAD) report to the General Assembly (2006)

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For more information or to contact MHAC:
1385 S. Colorado Blvd., Ste. 610, Denver, Colorado 80222
P: 720.208.2220 / 800.456.3249

www.mhacolorado.org

Mental Health & Substance Abuse Conditions in Colorado

How do they impact you?



Bringing Wellness Home



2008

One man's story

Juan knows first hand the impact of mental health conditions. He was first diagnosed with major depression in his twenties and later in life, bipolar disorder. He struggled to manage his life and professional career for many years. In the beginning, he was able to access treatment through his company's insurance plan, but over time, that benefit was used up.

Mental Health Conditions Impact... **Business**

Lost productivity and absenteeism due to untreated depression and substance abuse cost Colorado businesses the equivalent of 17% of all healthcare dollars in 2006.⁴

An estimated 74,542 Colorado employees were terminated from their jobs due to a mental health issue in 2006.⁵

Without treatment, Juan's condition soon led to him losing his job...

Mental Health Conditions Impact...

Homelessness

Over 47% of Colorado's 16,203 homeless individuals have a serious mental illness or chronic substance abuse issue.⁶

...upon losing his job, Juan was no longer able to afford rent and became homeless.



Mental Health Conditions Impact... **Suicide**

Suicide exceeds auto accidents as the cause of death for all Coloradans.⁷

Colorado's suicide rate is 7th highest in the nation — almost 40% higher than the national average.⁸

More than 90% of people who die as a result of suicide have a diagnosable mental disorder.⁹

Mental Health Conditions Impact... **Hospitals**

Treatment in emergency rooms (ER) is the most expensive healthcare cost.

There were an estimated 90,000 mental health-related ER visits out of 1.5 million total visits in Colorado in 2005.¹⁰ The estimated cost for these visits was \$90 million.¹¹

Homeless and without access to treatment, Juan sought help through the only option left for him, the ER.

Mental Health Conditions Impact... **Jails**

A one-day snapshot of the adult mental health population in one jail revealed that:

- 73% had a co-occurring substance abuse issue
- 82% needed costly medications to control symptoms
- 82% were indigent
- 55% were homeless at the time of arrest¹²



Over 40% of youth in the juvenile justice system have a mental health issue¹³ and 60-80% of these youth have substance abuse issues.¹⁴

Treatment works.

Depression that is diagnosed and treated properly has an 80% success rate — a higher rate of recovery than many physical health conditions.

People who receive substance abuse treatment show decreases in use of medical and psychiatric ER services and hospital admissions.¹⁴

Providing mental health and substance abuse coverage as a part of employee insurance plans has been shown to cost an average of \$6 per employee, per year.



Success happens.

With help from mental health programs in his community, Juan eventually accessed treatment and is now successfully managing his bipolar disorder. He is employed again and is a leader in the mental health community, sharing his story and making a difference in Colorado.