

### *Statistics, general information and resources for the mentally ill.*

Decades of culture change and recent scientific studies have blurred the line between these types of disorders. Now a critical moment has been reached in a 15-year debate in statehouses and in Congress over whether treatment for problems like depression, addiction and schizophrenia should get the same coverage by insurance companies as, say, diabetes, heart disease and cancer (Kershaw, 2008).

Individuals with worse mental health consistently report a deterioration of access to care compared to individuals with better mental health (Sturm, 2000).

During a 1-year period, 83% of adults with a probable depressive or anxiety disorder saw a health care provider (95% confidence interval [CI], 81%-85%) and 30% received some appropriate treatment (95% CI, 28%-33%). Most visited primary care providers only. Appropriate care was received by 19% in this group (95% CI, 16%-23%) and by 90% of individuals visiting mental health specialists (95% CI, 85%-94%). Appropriate treatment was less likely for men and those who were black, less educated, or younger than 30 or older than 59 years (range, 19-97 years). Insurance and income had no effect on receipt of appropriate care (Young, 2001).

Mental health professionals serving mentally ill homeless populations would best serve them by focusing on creative and innovative ways to improve the availability and attractiveness of ambulatory care services (North, 1992).

NAMI Connection Recovery Support Group: a 90-minute weekly support group run by persons who live with mental illness for other persons with any diagnosis who also live with mental illness (NAMI, 2008).

Mental illnesses can affect persons of any age, race, religion, or income. Mental illnesses are not the result of personal weakness, lack of character, or poor upbringing. Mental illnesses are treatable. Most people diagnosed with a serious mental illness can experience relief from their symptoms by actively participating in an individual treatment plan (NAMI, 2008).

Mental health disorders occur from childhood to old age, to both men and women, and to people of all socio-economic groups. During any year, 1 in 10 Americans overall experience some disability from a mental health disorder. The pervasiveness of mental health disorders is further underlined by a 3-year study of a large corporation reported by the American Psychological Association, which showed that 60% of employee absences were due to psychological problems (apa.org).

One-quarter of all Americans met the criteria for having a mental illness within the past year, and fully a quarter of those had a "serious" disorder that significantly disrupted their ability to function day to day, according to the largest and most detailed survey of the nation's mental health, published yesterday (Weiss, 2005).