



Transforming Mental Health Services

San Joaquin County Behavioral Health Services MHSa Prevention and Early Intervention Planning Process

Putting Prevention and Early Intervention in Context

The following statistics indicate the urgency for mental illness prevention and early intervention. The consequences of not acting early and effectively, before initial onset of mental illness are presented below.

Fact Sheet

Prevalence

- Half of all mental disorders emerge by age 14; 75% by age 24.
- 5.4% of adults have a serious mental illness, and overall about 28% of adults have either a mental health concern or struggle with addictive behaviors during their lifetime.
- The prevalence of mental disorders is higher amongst the poor and under-insured.
- As many as 20% of older adults may experience psychological distress.
- In Washington State, amongst the General Assistance Population, 52% had a mental illness or substance abuse problems, and 13% had co-occurring mental health disorders, alcohol and drug addiction, and other chronic health conditions.
- In Florida, mental health problems were found in 35% of children with health-related disabilities who are Medicaid enrolled.

Consequences

- In the United States, a person takes his/her life approximately every 16 minutes.
- People with serious mental illnesses die, on average, 25 years earlier than the general population.
- Mental illnesses are the leading cause of illness-related disability in the US.
- The annual medical costs of persons with chronic illnesses are two and three times higher for patients with depression
- 44% of all cigarettes consumed in America are smoked by someone with a mental disorder or a drug and alcohol problem.

Notes: All statistics reported by Dr. David Shern, Executive Director of Mental Health America, or by Barbara Mauer, MSW, National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare, at the California Mental Health Policy Forum Conference, February 7, 2008