



The ANSWER

Fayette County Behavioral Health Administration Newsletter

Winter 2013

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FCBHA CLOSINGS

Christmas Holiday
December 24 & 25, 2013

New Years Day
January 1, 2014

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
January 20, 2014

Contact Us:
(724) 430-1370
www.FCBHA.org



*Snowflakes Are One of
Natures Most Fragile Things
But Look at What They Can Do
When They Stick Together*

**WISHING YOU A WARM AND HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON.
WE LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH YOU IN 2014.**

MISSION: To enrich lives by providing choice and access to resources that encourage hope, independence and recovery.



THE FACTS ABOUT SEASONAL—AFFECTIVE DISORDER (SAD)

During the fall and winter months, some people suffer from symptoms of depression that can appear gradually or come on all at once. These symptoms often dissipate as spring arrives and stay in remission through the summer months. For some people, this is a sign that they suffer from Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD).

Symptoms usually appear during the colder months of fall and winter, when there is less exposure to sunlight during the day. Depression symptoms can be mild to moderate, but they can become severe. Those who work long hours inside office buildings with few windows may experience symptoms all year, and some individuals may note changes in mood during long stretches of cloudy weather. Symptoms can include, but are not limited to:

- * fatigue
- * lack of interest in normal activities
- * social withdrawal
- * craving foods high in carbohydrates
- * weight gain

Those with SAD may not experience every symptom. For example, energy level may be normal while carbohydrate craving may be extreme. Sometimes a symptom is opposite the norm, such as weight loss as opposed to weight gain. In a small number of cases, annual relapse occurs in the summer instead of the fall and winter, possibly in response to high heat and humidity. During this period, the depression is more likely to be characterized by insomnia, decreased appetite, weight loss, and agitation or anxiety.

How Does SAD Develop?

SAD has been linked to a biochemical imbalance in the brain prompted by shorter daylight hours and a lack of sunlight in winter. Just as sunlight affects the seasonal activities of animals, SAD may be an effect of this seasonal light variation in humans. As seasons change, people experience a shift in their biological internal clock or circadian rhythm that can cause them to be out of step with their daily schedule.

Melatonin, a sleep-related hormone, also has been associated to SAD. This hormone, which has been linked to depression, is produced at increased levels in the dark. When the days are shorter and darker, more melatonin is produced. Researchers have proved that bright light makes a difference to the brain chemistry, although the exact means by which sufferers are affected is not yet known. Some evidence suggests that the farther someone lives from the equator, the more likely they are to develop SAD. The most difficult months for SAD sufferers seem to be January and February. SAD may begin at any age, but the main age of onset is between 18 and 30 years.

Treatment

Increased exposure to sunlight can improve symptoms of SAD. This can be a long walk outside or arranging your home or office so that you are exposed to a window during the day. If your depressive symptoms are severe enough to significantly affect your daily living, light therapy (phototherapy) has proven an effective treatment option. Researchers have proved that bright light makes a difference to the brain chemistry, although the exact means by which sufferers are affected is not yet known.

This form of therapy involves exposure to very bright light (usually from a special fluorescent lamp) between 30 and 90 minutes a day during the winter. Additional relief has been found with psychotherapy sessions, and in some cases prescription of antidepressants.

If you feel you are suffering from SAD, it is important to seek the help of a trained medical professional. SAD can be misdiagnosed as hypothyroidism, hypoglycemia, infectious mononucleosis, and other viral infections, so proper evaluation is necessary. For some people, SAD may be confused with a more serious condition like severe depression or bipolar disorder.

However, if you feel the depression is severe or if you are experiencing suicidal thoughts, consult a doctor immediately regarding treatment options or seek help at the closest emergency room. A mental health professional can diagnose the symptoms and suggest therapy options. With the right course of treatment, SAD can be a manageable condition.

SUPER STARSTHEY

GLIMMER

At the November Commissioners meeting, staff member, Ken Dillinger, was promoted from County Caseworker to Mental Health Program Specialist. Ken's main focus will be on forensic services . We think he'll be great and wish him well in his new position.

Congratulations Ken !

SHIMMER

In July, Marianne Mehalik joined the FCBHA staff as an Administrative Secretary in Medical Records. She has lived and worked in the area all her life. She described herself as somewhat of a homebody when she's not traveling, which is one of her passions. On the road, she loves to sight-see, swim, and snorkel and when she's home, she finds ways to surround herself with nature. She loves her plants and garden, two dogs, and a variety of fish in her massive aquarium. We hope to hear some of her stories about Hawaii, one of her favorite places.

**Welcome
Marianne!**

SHINE

“... We all shine on, like the moon, and the stars, and the sun” (John Lennon)

We lost some of our shining stars this year, people who were such a big part of the FCBHA family.

We said goodbye to staff member Carol Jenkins who first retired in May but then passed away suddenly in late July. She worked for Fayette County at both the Public Assistance Office and Behavioral Health Administration for about 24 years...We loved her funny ways...she'll be missed.



We also said goodbye to an amazing Advisory Board Member, Mr. Joseph Mickens. In May of this year, we celebrated Joe and presented him with an award for his time on the FCBHA Advisory Board (10 years). He had also been selected as the Community Recognition Award recipient in 1999. Joe will be remembered fondly for his honesty and true desire to help make Fayette County a better place to live.



**“Two hearts of Gold stopped beating.
Their shining eyes at rest,
So broke our hearts to understand
He only takes the best.”**

VETERANS DAY AT FCBHA— NOVEMBER 6, 2013



It was a clear and beautiful day as we walked outside to pay homage to our Staff Veterans around noon that Wednesday. The wind was blowing, the sun was shining, and smiles were plentiful. Our event began with Kim Bowser-Murtha, Behavioral Health Director, who spoke a few words of gratitude and inspiration. She asked us to take a moment to remember those who sacrificed their lives to achieve peace, democracy, and the way of life we've come to enjoy. She also reminded us that each day, someone's Mother, Father, Sister, Brother, Son or Daughter continues to fight for the freedom and liberty that is often taken for granted. We lingered on each word feeling a true sense of how lucky we are to have the opportunity to come together today in appreciation of our friends and neighbors who served. We then joined in the Pledge of Allegiance and the finale was a fabulous feast that had been prepared by the staff (who really outdid themselves for this celebration).

God Bless America...Land of the Free, Home of the Brave!

Staff Veterans shown in the upper-left corner from left to right are:
Aaron Trincia, Carmen Hall, Darrell Tallerico, Chris Homer, Dave Rider
Not Pictured: Ken Dillinger



INFORMATION ON THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT FROM OUR FRIENDS AT STAUNTON FARM FOUNDATION

With the passage of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) in 2010, and less than a month away from full implementation, individuals and families previously uninsured or underinsured can access health insurance. Most plans must have

10 essential benefits:

1. Ambulatory Patient Services
2. Emergency Services
3. Hospitalization
4. Maternity and Newborn Care
5. Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Services, including Behavioral Health Treatment
6. Prescription Drugs
7. Rehabilitative (after an injury) and Habilitative (non-injury related) Therapies, Services, and Devices
8. Laboratory Services
9. Prevention/Wellness Services and Chronic Disease Services
10. Pediatric Services, including Dental and Vision

According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, almost 11 million (24%) of adults in the United States affected by mental illness have no health coverage. With the passage of the ACA, all psychiatric illnesses must be covered by employers who offer benefits. Additionally, market reforms mandate that premiums will no longer be based on mental health status, lifetime caps are prohibited, all plans must cover preventative services without co-pays and a minimum of premiums are earmarked for prevention/wellness services.

Preventative services are included with the essential benefits. Adults will have access to alcohol misuse screenings, depression screenings, tobacco use screenings and cessation interventions, expanded tobacco use counseling for pregnant women and domestic and interpersonal violence screenings. Under preventative services, children will have access to behavioral assessments, depression screenings and substance use assessments.

Governor Corbett did not expand Medicaid, but is proposing Healthy Pennsylvania. The plan has re-authorized CHIP (Children's Health Insurance Program) until 2015, and eliminated a six-month waiting period for authorization. Governor Corbett proposes to use the Federal Medicaid Expansion dollars not to expand Medicaid, but to offer access to private healthcare coverage options through the exchange to uninsured, low-income, newly eligible Pennsylvanians living at up to 133% of the federal poverty level.

The Federal government has prolonged enrollment for six more weeks, until March 31st. For assistance with enrollment, click here: <https://localhelp.healthcare.gov>. The site will direct individuals to healthcare navigators or certified application counselors. Individuals can also call the toll free number to enroll: 1-800-318-2596.

REFLECTION.....PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY (1917–1963)

A Veteran and Patriot, we remembered this President in November, 50 years after his tragic death. Below find the speech he would have delivered that day, November 22, 1963 ... the speech never spoken.

For this Country is moving and it must not stop. It cannot stop. For this is a time for courage and a time for challenge. Neither conformity nor complacency will do. Neither the fanatics nor the faint-hearted are needed. And our duty as a party is not to our party alone, but to the Nation, and indeed, to all mankind. Our duty is not merely the preservation of political power, but the preservation of peace and freedom.

So let us not be petty when our cause is so great. Let us not quarrel amongst ourselves when our nation's future is at stake. Let us stand together with renewed confidence in our cause—united in our heritage of the past and our hopes for the future—and determined that this land we love shall lead all mankind into new frontiers of peace and abundance.

...A WISDOM QUITE TIMELESS

2013

Was it somewhat of a blur?

We thought so too...

Enjoy this little snapshot,...the year in review.



The Joy of Giving

The staff at FCBHA picks a charity each month and does an internal fund-raiser for that group. **In 2013, over \$1200 was raised. Contributions were made to:**

January—Big Brothers/Big Sisters
February—American Heart Association
March—Fayette County Special Olympics
April—American Cancer Society
May—Fayette Veterans Advocacy Association
June—Employee Flower Fund
July—Miracle League of PA's Laurel Highlands
August—Employee Flower Fund
September—Veterans Day Event
October—Domestic Violence Services of SWPA
November—Local Food Bank and Shelter
December—Caring Corner



Looking Forward to 2014

ADVOCACY Stakeholders meetings will be held on January 6th at 11:00 AM and the 16th at 5:30 PM (snow dates are the 13th and the 23rd). If Uniontown School District is closed, the planned meeting will move to the snow date. Both meetings will be held at the Oak House Drop-In Center located at 31 Connellsville Street in Uniontown. They will last approximately 2.5 hours and refreshments will be provided. **Everyone who receives services, provides services, or is an advocate for individuals receiving mental health services is invited.** The purpose of the meetings is to get a better understanding of the pros and cons of existing services and supports from the people they are designed to help. Local members of the following groups have taken a big role in this initiative; YouthMOVE, NAMI, Partners in Recovery, MHA in Fayette County, CALL, and others. For More information, please call (724) 430-1370 or go to <http://www.fcbha.org/Current.html>. We hope you'll join us in 2014 to help bring awareness to total Health that includes mental health and eliminate the stigma that still exists today.

Who “Said It” ? (guess first—then look at the answers on the next page.)

1. **Music is my religion.**
2. **Better 3 hours too soon than a minute too late.**
3. **Keep your face to the sunshine and you cannot see a shadow**
4. **All great achievements require time.**
5. **It always seems impossible until it is done.**
6. **We can't help everyone, but everyone can help someone.**
7. **Do not pray for easier lives, pray to be stronger men.**
8. **Imagination is more important than knowledge.**

1. **Maya Angelou**
2. **Albert Einstein**
3. **John F. Kennedy**
4. **Helen Keller**
5. **Jimmy Hendrix**
6. **Nelson Mandela**
7. **Ronald Reagan**
8. **William Shakespeare**

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Fayette County Behavioral Health Administration
215 Jacob Murphy Lane
Uniontown, PA 15401

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Fayette County
Behavioral Health
Administration
(724) 430-1370
Lisa A. Ferris
Chief Executive Officer

Fayette County
Board of Commissioners
Alfred F. Ambrosini, Chairman
Vince Zapotosky
Angela M. Zimmerlink
www.FCBHA.org

Who Said It Answers—5-7-4-1-6-8-3-2



FCBHA Advisory Board 2014 Meeting Dates

February 19, 2014
April 16, 2014
September 17, 2014
November 19, 2014

215 Jacob Murphy Lane
Uniontown, PA 15401
724-430-1370

Upcoming Video Conferences At FCBHA

December 11, 2013
Treatment of Juvenile Sex Offenders

January 15, 2014
ASD and Intellectual Disability
in DSM-5 (T279)

January 29, 2014
Psychosis in the DSM-5:
Evolution or Revolution? (T280)

February 12, 2014
DSM- 5: Changes in
Substance Abuse – (T281)

February 26, 2014
Mood Disorders in DSM-5:
What's New and What's Not (T282)

Go to
<http://www.fcbha.org/Current.html>
For more information.

The ANSWER is a publication of the Fayette County Behavioral Health Administration.

Comments, questions or suggestions may be submitted to the Newsletter Editor at www.fcbha.org or
Fayette County Behavioral Health Administration, 215 Jacob Murphy Lane, Uniontown, PA 15401.