

Planning for Mental Health

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Presentation Overview

- ▶ Overview of Mental Health in the US
- ▶ Components of Mental Health
 - ▶ Psychological (Think)
 - ▶ Emotional (Feel)
 - ▶ Behavioral (Act)
- ▶ Most Common Mental Health Conditions
- ▶ Impact of Mental Health Concerns on Decision-making
- ▶ Warning Signs of Mental Illness
- ▶ Management of Mental Health Concerns



Mental Health

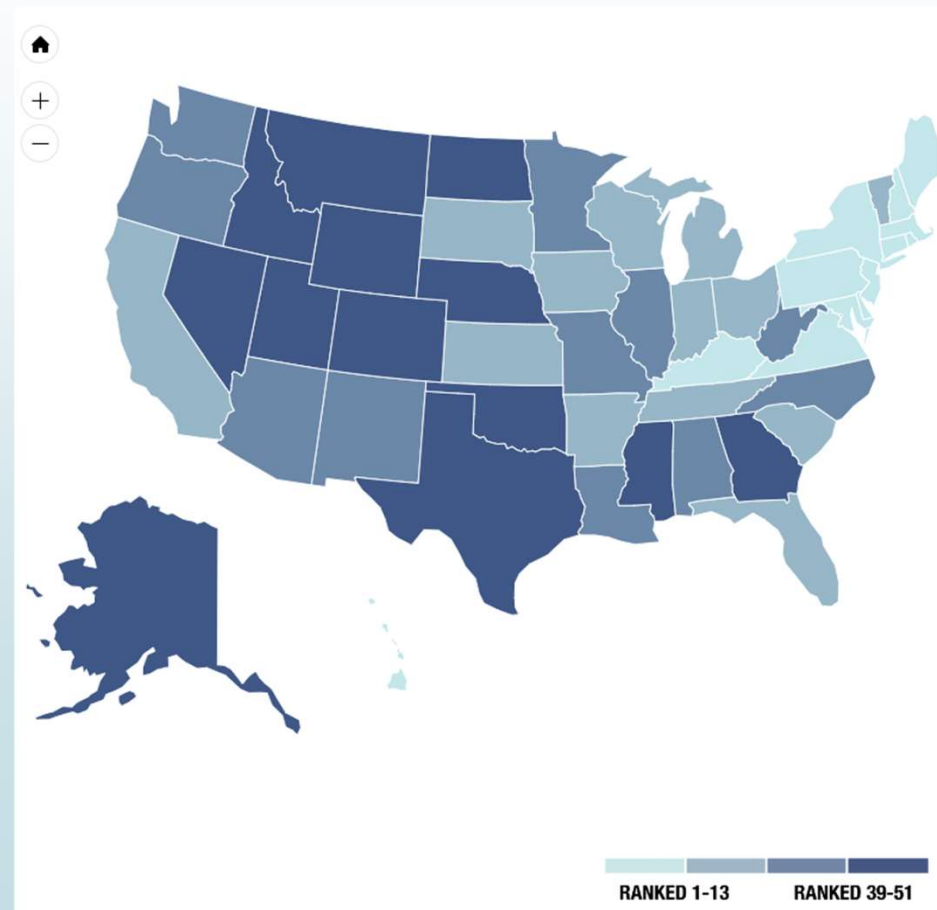
- Mental health is a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community.
- It is an integral component of health and well-being that underpins our individual and collective abilities to make decisions, build relationships and shape the world we live in.

World Health Organization

<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/mental-health-strengthening-our-response>

Mental Health in the United States and Texas

- 1 in 5 Americans experienced a mental illness in the last year.
- 50% of mental illness begins by age 14 and 75% begins by age 24.
- 55% of adults with mental illness are not receiving treatment (62.3% in Texas).





Most Common Mental Health Disorders

Adults

In 2023, 32.3% adults reported anxiety or depressive disorder (36.8% in Texas).

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Bipolar

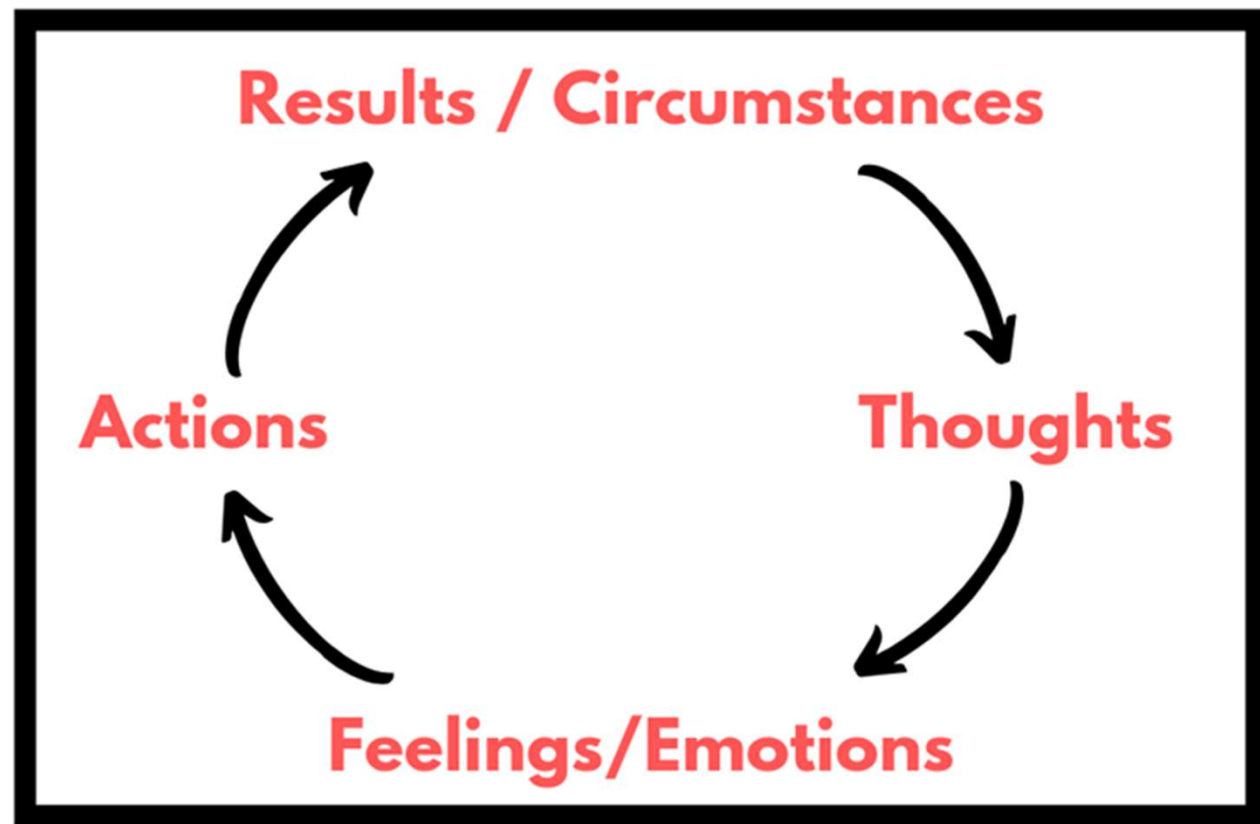
Elderly

- Depression
- Dementia
- Anxiety

1 in 3 seniors die with Alzheimer's or another dementia.

Men age 75 and older face the highest overall rate of suicide.

Does mental health affect decision-making?





Warning Signs of Mental Illness

- ▶ Sleep or appetite changes
- ▶ Mood changes
- ▶ Withdrawal
- ▶ Drop in functioning
- ▶ Problems thinking
- ▶ Increased sensitivity
- ▶ Apathy
- ▶ Feeling disconnected
- ▶ Illogical thinking
- ▶ Nervousness
- ▶ Unusual behavior
- ▶ Changes in school or work



What do you do if warning signs are present, and you are concerned?

- ▶ How have you been feeling lately, you haven't seemed like yourself.
- ▶ I've noticed _____ and I'm concerned for you. Have you noticed it?
- ▶ There are lots of things that could be causing this, your health care provider will help figure out what's going on.
- ▶ I think it would give us both peace of mind if you talked with your provider.
- ▶ Medicare pays for an Annual wellness exam that includes a brief mental health assessment.



Talking Mental Health with Providers

- ▶ 46% report they won't bring up a problem if their provider doesn't ask
- ▶ 57% didn't know who they should talk to about their mental health concerns
- ▶ 59% are afraid of how their providers would respond if they had a mental health condition
- ▶ 63% adults didn't know how to bring it up or explain what they are feeling
- ▶ 64% didn't know if their mental health concerns were enough of a problem to mention
- ▶ 67% reported they were afraid to talk about mental health concerns or admit there was a problem
- ▶ 72% felt like they already had enough to deal with and didn't have the time or energy to deal with another illness
- ▶ 79% were nervous about what would happen if they were diagnosed with a mental health condition



The Value of Decision Aids

- ▶ Using a decision aid can help when things are not clear, and you are not sure how to help.
- ▶ A decision aid is most valuable when it is made *BEFORE* situations arise
- ▶ Crisis Support Plan
- ▶ Advanced Directives
 - ▶ Declaration for Mental Health Treatment (DMHT)
 - ▶ Directive to Physicians and Family or Surrogates (Living Will)
 - ▶ Medical power of attorney (MPOA)



Mental Health Management

► Watchful Waiting
with 

► Talk Therapy

► Medication

► Socialization

► Healthy eating

► Physical activity

► Restful sleep



#1 Risk factor for dementia is age

- **MYTH** – every older person develops dementia
- **BUSTED** – every older person does NOT have dementia
 - A 70-year-old may have dementia while a 90-year-old will not
 - No known cause or cure for dementia or Alzheimer's disease
 - Symptoms are NOT reversible

Forgetfulness – Is it a problem?

Common

- ▶ Where are my glasses?
- ▶ Where are my car keys?
- ▶ Forgetting new or unusual names
- ▶ Walking into a room and forgetting why you came there



Problem

- ▶ Eyeglasses are in the trash
- ▶ Car keys are in the freezer
- ▶ Forgetting names of close friends or family
- ▶ Forgetting to pay routine bills
- ▶ Unexplained spending or bank withdrawals



Cognitive Decline

Delirium

May be reversible

- **Sudden confusion**
- Infections – sepsis, pneumonia, urinary
- Multiple medications including anesthesia
- Head injury, stroke, seizures
- Exposure to toxins (ex. carbon monoxide)

Dementia

Is not reversible

- **Slow decline** in memory and problem-solving
- Most common dementia is Alzheimer's disease
- Problems speaking/writing
- Vision changes – balance, reading, understanding
- Confusion with time, dates, seasons



Cognitive Decline & Financial Exploitation

► **Definition:** Person (family/caregiver) uses financial resources of a vulnerable adult under false pretenses, intimidation, or manipulation for personal gain.

► **TIPS:**

- Unusual banking activity; new credit cards
- Names added to accounts or signature cards
- Unusual ATM withdrawals
- Naming a POA who the elder recently met
- Changing names on Will, bank account, life insurance policy, or title to house/car/property
- Involvement in financial scams; large losses of money

Do you think someone is experiencing financial exploitation?

➤ Call Adult Protective Services

➤ 800-252-5400

➤ Report online

www.txabusehotline.org



Guardianship

- ▶ Individual appointed by a court to make decisions, manage personal and financial affairs of an incapacitated person.
 - ▶ Attorney must prepare legal documents
 - ▶ Files a court application
 - ▶ Physician must provide a letter of medical exam
 - ▶ Assesses mental capacity to provide food, clothing, shelter, physical health, and manage finances



Less Restrictive Options

- ▶ Money management programs to pay bills, manage finances
- ▶ A representative payee receives, manages government benefits
- ▶ Designate a Financial Power of Attorney
- ▶ Surrogate decision-maker for health care decision
- ▶ Community resources – home-delivered meals, transportation options, homemaker services





How to approach memory and cognitive concerns with someone?

- ▶ What is the person doing or not doing that is causing concerns? Do others notice this?
- ▶ What can you say to this person?
 - ▶ “You haven’t seemed like yourself. How have you been feeling lately?”
 - ▶ “I’ve noticed _____ and I’m concerned for you. Have you noticed it?”
 - ▶ “There are lots of things that could be causing this. Your health provider can help figure out what’s going on. That would give us both peace of mind.”
- ▶ Medicare pays for an Annual Wellness Exam that includes a cognitive assessment



Resources

- ▶ **Alzheimer's Association** 24/7 helpline at 800-7272-3900
- ▶ **Alzheimer's Association & AARP** community resource finder for local resources at www.alz.org/CRF
- ▶ **Area Agency on Aging** (Amarillo – 806-331-2227)
 - ▶ Information, referrals, community resources
 - ▶ Benefits counseling – information on Medicare, Prescription plans, Social security benefits, and financial assistance programs
 - ▶ Short-term homemaker assistance for adults > 60 to remain at home after a health crisis
 - ▶ Funding for home delivered meals and transportation

Optimize Brain Health

- ❖ Challenge your brain
- ❖ Engage in healthy exercises
- ❖ Eat moderately and make it colorful
- ❖ Be smoke-free
- ❖ Control blood pressure, blood sugar
- ❖ Stay socially engaged
- ❖ Screen for hearing loss
- ❖ Review prescriptions, OTC meds, supplements, herbals for side effects
- ❖ Sleep well





Thank you!

Questions?

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