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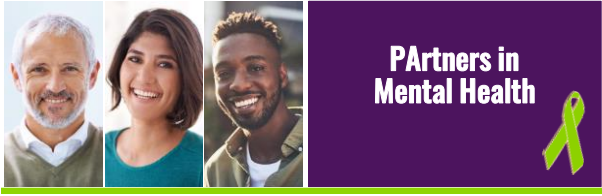


 **Disclosures & Conflicts of Interest**

Erin C. Crown, MHS, PA-C, has no financial or other relationships to disclose.

 **Learning Objectives**

1. Recognize the importance of mental health as part of overall health.
2. Explain the role and contributions of certified PAs to screen, manage, and, when needed, coordinate and refer for mental health care.
3. Describe tools and resources to enhance PA readiness to provide mental health services and to support integration of mental health in practice.
4. Discuss current and emerging issues related to the health professions and mental health.



Why Mental Health Matters

PA Health Foundation **Epidemiology**

1 in 5
US Adults experience a mental illness

1 in 20
US Adults experience a serious mental illness

50%
of all lifetime mental illness begins by age 14

75% by age 24 More information

PA Health Foundation **Impact – Mortality**

- Suicide is the **2nd leading cause of death** for ages 10 to 34
- Suicide is the **10th leading cause of death** in US adults
- In 2020, there were an estimated **1.2 million** suicide attempts

As of July 2022

More statistics
More information

IPA Health Foundation. **Impact – Mortality: Vulnerable Populations**

- **Veterans:** Suicide rate of **31.6 per 100K**, higher than the rate among US adults (16.8 per 100,000).
- **Lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth:** **4X** more likely to attempt suicide than straight youth.
- **Black populations:** At 7.4 per 100,000, the age-adjusted suicide rate in 2019 was **over half** the overall U.S. suicide rate.

[More statistics](#)
[More information](#)

IPA Health Foundation. **Impact – Economy**



\$210.5 billion annually
Total economic burden of MDD in the US



Nearly HALF of these costs are attributed to absenteeism and presenteeism



62% of costs incurred were from co-occurring disorders

Depression is a leading cause of disability worldwide and is a major contributor to the overall global burden of disease.

IPA Health Foundation. **Workforce Supply**

- Shortages of mental health professionals
- Aging of the current workforce
- Limited/low rates of reimbursement
- Burdensome documentation requirements
- Restrictive regulations affecting the ability to practice at full scope
- Perceptions of outcomes as long-term, hard to measure, and no "cure"
- Burnout

155M
live in Designated Mental Health Shortage Areas as of August 15, 2022

PA Health Foundation **Lack of Access**

57%

of those affected by mental illness did NOT receive treatment in 2021

55%

of U.S. counties do not have a single practicing psychiatrist

PA Health Foundation **Challenging Stigma**

- **Public stigma:** Negative or discriminatory attitudes others have about mental illness
- **Self-stigma:** Negative attitudes, including internalized shame, people with mental illness have about their own condition
- **Institutional stigma:** More systemic, involving policies that may limit opportunities for people with mental illness

Persons with SMI
11x
MORE likely to be a victim of violent crime than the general population



Why PAs?

PA Health Foundation Why PAs?

- Expand access to care
- Practice in all settings and specialties
- Educated in the medical model
- Manage and prescribe related to whole-person care
- Are collaborative care providers
- Focus on prevention
- Improve patient satisfaction



PA Health Foundation Every PA is a Psych PA



Rates of depression are **2x higher** in individuals with diabetes

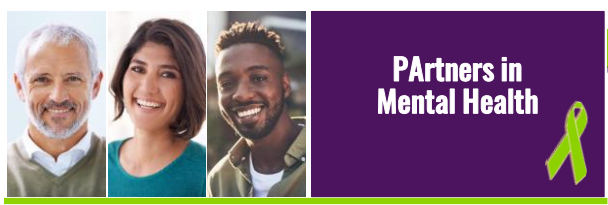


Physiologic effects such as increased cardiac reactivity and heightened levels of cortisol can lead to **atherosclerosis**



Mood and anxiety disorders are associated with a **25% increased odds** of obesity.

[listen.in/_Every_PA_is_a_Psych_PA](#)



Risk Factors



The History

- Various risk factors for mental illness may be identified through a thorough history
- Patients at high risk for developing mental health disorders may not openly offer information leading to that risk assessment – Consider your relationship with your patient.
- Important to ask the right questions and be direct especially regarding thoughts of self harm or suicide



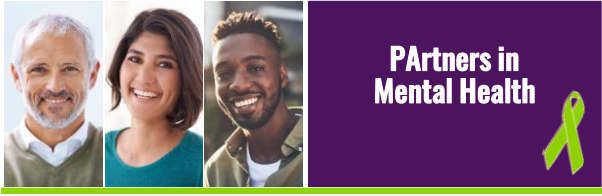
Predisposing Risk Factors

- Genetic predisposition or a positive family history of mental illness
- Perinatal insult
- History of sexual, physical or emotional abuse
- History of trauma
- Chronic co-occurring medical issues
 - Chronic pain (50% of these patients have serious thoughts about suicide)
 - Diabetes
 - Cancer
 - Traumatic brain injury



Environmental Risk Factors

- Socioeconomic strain
- High stress lifestyle
- Lack of access to healthcare and other resources
- Bereavement
- Substance abuse
- Pandemic-related issues



Mental Health & Overall Health

PA Health Foundation **The Mind-Body Connection**

- Historically a clear distinction between “mind” and “body”
- Increasing evidence of reciprocal influence on each other
 - Poor mental health can negatively impact physical health
 - Poor physical health can lead to development of mental illness
 - Lifestyle factors can influence both, physical and mental health

[More information](#)

PA Health Foundation **Exercise**

- Promotes release and uptake of endorphins
- Anti-inflammatory effects protective for chronic disease
- Effective for reduction of anxiety
- Effective antidepressant for some people
 - Studies suggest potential to reduce risk of relapse

[More information](#)
[More information](#)



Diet

- Mood may impact dietary intake
- Dietary intake may impact mood
- Omega-3 fatty acids, B vitamins, some minerals and amino acids are precursors to neurotransmitters
- Nutritional neuroscience emerging discipline
- Poor diet can lead to physical health problems

[More information](#)



Smoking

- People with mental illness use tobacco at higher rate than individuals with no underlying mental illness
- Nicotine has mood altering effects
- Cigarette smoke can interfere with effectiveness of some medications in some patients
- Smoking increases physical health risks
 - Respiratory
 - Cardiovascular
 - Cancer

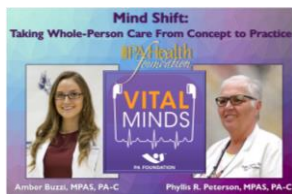


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Impacted by Mental Illness

- **Cardiovascular**
 - High blood pressure
 - Heart disease
- **Respiratory**
 - Asthma
- **Integumentary**
 - Eczema
 - Psoriasis
 - Immune system
- **Neurological**
 - Headaches
 - Chronic Fatigue Syndrome
 - Alzheimer's Disease



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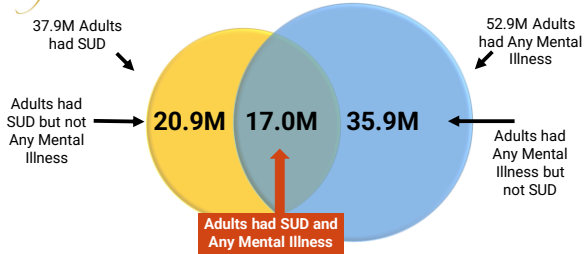
IPA Health Foundation **Impacted by Mental Illness**

- **Gastrointestinal**
 - GERD
 - IBS
- **Musculoskeletal**
 - Chronic Pain Conditions
- **Women's Health**
 - Postpartum depression
 - Pelvic pain
 - Infertility
- **Obesity**
- **Sleep**



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IPA Health Foundation **Substance Use & Mental Illness**

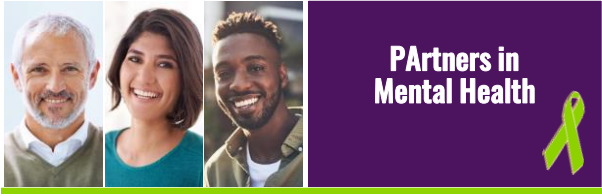


Key Substance Use and Mental Health Indicators in the United States: Results from the 2020 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, October 2021: [More information](#)

IPA Health Foundation **Complications in Treatment**

- Adherence with treatment plan challenging for those with mental illness
- Cognitive decline in SMI population with multiple relapses
 - Cognitive symptoms can also be part of mood/anxiety disorder
- Low energy and motivation key symptoms in depression
- Polypharmacy
- Support structure lacking

[More information](#)



Mental Health Screening Tools

IPA Health Foundation **Potential Warning Signs**

When patients don't seem themselves, consider these potential signs of mental illness:

- Significant weight loss or gain
- Feeling very sad or withdrawn for more than 2 weeks
- Trying to harm or end one's life or making plans to do so
- Severe, out-of-control, risk-taking behavior that causes harm to self or others
- Sudden overwhelming fear for no reason, sometimes with a racing heart, physical discomfort, or difficulty breathing

IPA Health Foundation **Potential Warning Signs**

- Seeing, hearing, or believing things that aren't real*
- Excessive use of alcohol or drugs
- Drastic changes in mood, behavior, personality or sleeping habits
- Extreme difficulties concentrating or staying still
- Superficial skin lacerations or burns
- Intense worries or fear that get in the way of daily activities

"You just don't seem your usual self, is there anything you'd like to talk about?"

*Various communities and backgrounds might view this sign differently based on their beliefs and experiences. Some people within these communities and cultures may not interpret hearing voices as unusual.

IPA Health Foundation **Illness to Recognize**

- Schizophrenia
- Bipolar Disorder
- Substance Use Disorder, including opioid addiction
- Depression with and without Psychosis
- Depression with suicidal ideation/attempt
- Treatment-Resistant Depression
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Recurrent Panic Disorder
- Eating Disorders
- Personality Disorders
- Behavioral Disturbances Associated with Autism
- Specific Phobias
- Pediatric Conduct or Mood Disorder

IPA Health Foundation **When and How to Refer**

If the patient has a psychiatry provider ...

- Encourage them to contact their provider.
- Determine any steps (i.e., release) that might be needed for you to contact their provider.

If the patient doesn't have a psychiatry provider ...

- Contact a local provider by phone and explain the concern and suspected diagnosis. Try to set-up an appointment.
- *If possible*, contact a patient family member.
- Consider a crisis hotline or send with safe accompaniment to the ED for evaluation.
- If you have a legitimate concern for safety and as a last resort, call 9-1-1.



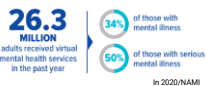
Mental Health in the Now

IPA Health Foundation **Telehealth and Mental Health**

- Increased utilization during pandemic
- Fosters access to care
- Decreases delay in treatment

Be mindful ...

- Patient assessment should be the same as an in-person assessment
- Ensure HIPAA compliant technology with an encrypted service and data transmission
- Insurance reimbursement
- Differing comfort levels when utilizing technology-based care systems
- Your state's legislative rules related to PAs and telehealth.



IPA Health Foundation **Pandemic's Impact on Mental Health**

Post-COVID symptoms in mental health space:

- Anxiety
- Depression or other mood changes
- Concentration or memory problems
- Sleep disturbance

Why is still unclear ... Some possibilities:

- Potential side effects of COVID-19 on the brain, immune, or other organ systems
- Result of the traumatic aspects of having COVID-19
- Result of despair that patients experience from long-term breathing problems or fatigue



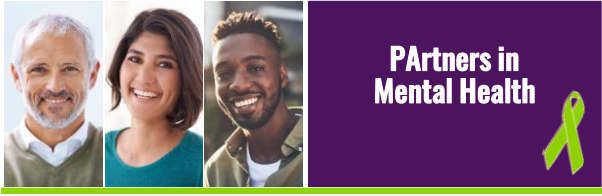
[Additional Resources](#)

IPA Health Foundation **Provider Mental Health**

- Recognize the signs of provider burnout
 - emotional exhaustion
 - depersonalization
 - lack of personal accomplishment
- May present physically, emotionally and socially
- No provider is without risk
- Must manage your own mental health in order to effectively care for others
- Be aware of your colleague in need



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[Find Resources](#)



Resources

IPA Health Foundation **Be Resource Ready**

- [Suicide Prevention Hotline](#) – 800.273.8255 or 988
- [Substance Use Helpline](#) – 800.662.4357
- [Sexual Assault Hotline](#) – 800.656.4673
- [Domestic Violence Hotline](#) – 800.799.7233
- [Trevor Project Support Center](#) – 866.488.7386
- [Crisis Text Line](#): Text HELLO to 741741
- Check for state and local resources too!
 - [Oklahoma Mental Health & Substance Abuse](#)
 - [NAMI: Oklahoma](#)



IPA Health Foundation **PA Efforts Support Mental Health**



Get Involved!

- **nccPA Health Foundation**
 - Mental health \$1000 outreach [grant](#)
 - Mental health PA [spotlight](#)
 - Support Steering Committee
 - Release Proceedings and Reports
- **PA Foundation**
 - PA Mental Health First Aid Fellows
 - Mental health focused IMPACT grant
 - Vital Minds mental health podcasts, including collaboration with nccPAHF
 - PA Student SUD Symposium
- **AAPA**
 - National health priority
 - Continued advocacy
 - New partnerships
- **NCCPA**
 - Release new content blueprint
 - Mine practice/Profile data
 - Share [podcasts](#) and articles
- **PAEA**
 - SAMHSA grant for opioid education & advocacy
- **ARC-PA**
 - Updated *Standards*

PA Health Foundation Additional Points to Consider

- Encourage patients to look for a provider/counselor they are comfortable with ... otherwise, encourage them to keep looking.
- For serious mental illness, consider behavioral or psychotherapy *and* medication.
- Mental health/mental illness doesn't just affect the patient. It affects caregivers, families and communities.
- Not everyone has mental illness, but everyone has **mental health to care for.**





You Tell Us

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PAs4MentalHealth>

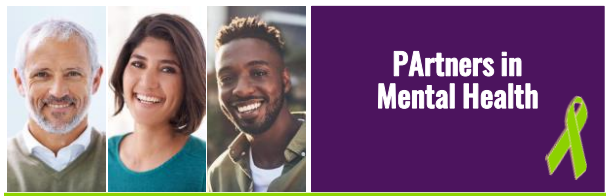


PA Health Foundation Additional Resources

- [Mental Health First Aid](#) teaches community members the risk factors and warning signs for mental illness and addiction concerns, how to help someone, and where to turn for help.
- [SMI Adviser](#) provides a clinical support system for serious mental illness, including resources/apps for clinicians and resources for individuals/families.
- [SAMHSA-HRSA Center for Integrated Solutions](#) promotes the development of integrated primary and behavioral health services and includes screening tools for clinicians.
- The [Suicide Prevention Resource Center](#) provides training and resources for professionals serving people at risk for suicide.
- [American Foundation for Suicide Prevention](#) gives those affected by suicide a community empowered by research, education, and advocacy.

 **Additional Resources cont'd**

- [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#) offers tools, apps, and resources for mental health conditions.
- [Providers Clinical Support System](#) trains primary care providers in the prevention and treatment of opioid use disorders (OUD) and the treatment of chronic pain. Learn about education, training, and the MAT Waiver.
- [Psych U](#) is a free community and online resource library for mental health professionals, including Certified PAs.
- [National Alliance for Mental Illness](#) provides advocacy, education, support, and public awareness to all individuals and families affected by mental illness.



Questions?





www.nccPAHealthFoundation.net
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