



## *Stop the stigma*

### Strive to understand mental health challenges

Despite progress in recent years, many people still maintain inaccurate and stigmatizing stereotypes toward others with mental health difficulties. As a leader, it's important for you to demonstrate understanding of those with mental health challenges, and to encourage treatment.

- Fear of stigma—the prejudice, avoidance and/or rejection of those with mental health problems—often causes people to be reluctant to seek help.
- Mental disorders are illnesses that can be successfully treated with therapy and medications. Those suffering with them should be treated with the same respect as those dealing with illnesses like diabetes, heart disease and cancer.
- If you are facing mental health problems, consider sharing your personal struggles and successes so that others will feel similarly empowered to seek treatment when they need it.

### Helping employees overcome stigma

1. If a team member doesn't seem to be getting the behavioral healthcare they need, encourage them to **access their program** for professional, confidential assistance. Don't try to diagnose; just offer options.
2. Learning more about someone's mental health condition and connecting with others who have mental health difficulties can **help people overcome potentially destructive self-judgment**.
3. If you speak out against stigma at events, in letters to the editor or in online forums, you'll **help instill courage in others facing mental health challenges**.

*Additional sources: Mayo Clinic, National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, National Institutes of Health, National Alliance on Mental Illness.*



**Live Webinar**—On Wednesday, September 23, join our managers' webinar: *Mental Health, Substance Abuse and Suicide Prevention Awareness for Leaders*. Register [here](#).

## Mind Your Mental Health

### September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month

This is a time to show compassion for those affected by suicide, to raise awareness about suicide risk and to connect individuals with suicidal thoughts to treatment services.

1. **Suicide affects everyone, not just victims.** Suicide impacts family and friends long after the loss of a loved one.
2. **If you feel someone is at risk, take time to talk with them.** Research shows that people who are having thoughts of suicide feel relief when someone asks after them in a caring, non-judgmental way.
3. **Help them stay safe.** Studies show that fewer suicides occur when people have less access to lethal means (firearms, certain medications, etc.).
4. **Encourage supportive connections.** If someone is at risk, help them create a network of people and resources for support. This will help them take positive action and reduce feelings of isolation and hopelessness.

Visit [www.MagellanHealth.com/MYMH](http://www.MagellanHealth.com/MYMH) or call your program for confidential mental health resources.

## Working on Wellness

### Don't let pain rule your life

- September is Pain Awareness Month—promoting better understanding of chronic pain and removing barriers to effective pain management. Learn about the causes of pain and the many available treatment options.
- If pain persists, see your primary care doctor or a pain specialist. Pain treatment can include medications, acupuncture, local electrical stimulation, relaxation techniques, biofeedback, exercise and behavior modification.

## Daily Diligence

### Be an advocate for your staff's wellness

- Leaders can communicate about mental illness across the whole organization to reduce fear, stigma, and discrimination in the workplace. Speak with dignity and respect about those dealing with mental health problems.
- Also, leaders can maintain a culture that supports staff's mental health by raising awareness of workplace programs and policies that promote mental and physical health and wellness.

An estimated quarter million people each year become suicide survivors.

*Source: American Association of Suicidology*

