The Importance of Early Detection and Appropriate Care for Mental Illnesses

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Mental Health

• An important part of overall health
• Cognitive and emotional wellbeing
• Can be measured by functioning at home, work, school, in relationships, and in community
• Is not the same as lack of mental illness
Mental Illness

• Refers to all the different types of mental disorders, including disorders of thought, mood or behavior
• Must cause distress and result in a reduced ability to function psychologically, socially, occupationally or interpersonally
• Range from Mild to Severe and Persistent
Mental Illness

Common- up to 20% of American Adults will have a diagnosable mental illness each year

Early Age of Onset – depression, bipolar mood disorder, anxiety disorders, and schizophrenia often start in teenage-young adult years

Treatable- Most illnesses are very treatable, especially with early treatment initiation

Chronic—Most of these illnesses are now considered to have a chronic or lifelong course especially when there is a delay in detection and initiation of treatment

Disability- mental illnesses are among the leading causes of disability
Causes of Mental Illness

• Certain Inherited Dispositions (Genetic) interact with triggering environmental factors

• Distinction between “physical illness” and “mental illness” can be misleading.
  – Mental illnesses have a biological basis.
  – Many “physical illnesses” can also have a strong emotional component.
Importance of Early Detection and Effective Treatment

• Early Treatment can keep illness from getting worse or lasting a long time
• Helps people return to their “normal selves” and restores functioning
• Minimizes disability
• This is true for depression, schizophrenia, bipolar mood disorder, alcohol and drug abuse, and many other illnesses.
Barriers to Early Treatment

• Public Lack of Awareness
  – of common symptoms of illnesses
  – Of effectiveness and necessity for treatment
• Stigma against seeking help
  increased for men, as a group, and for many minority groups
• Difficulty Initiating treatment
  – Primary care often not well connected with mental health resources
Barriers to Early Treatment

• Lack of resources
  – Access to mental health providers
  – Insurance to cover services and medications
    • Noninsured
    • Insured with lack of parity for mental health coverage
  – Inadequate numbers of hospital beds for mental illness
  – Inadequate urgent services in most communities
Innovative programs at MSU

• Counseling Center, Psychiatry, and Primary Care Services linked
• Active outreach to dorms and students groups
  – MECCA
• Question, Persuade, Refer training for housing, academic, advising, counseling and health care staff
• Goal is to provide web of services, many ways for students to enter services
Major Depression

• One out of 4 young adults will experience depression by age 24.

• Nearly half of all college students report feeling so depressed at some point in time that they have trouble functioning.

• If left untreated, depression can lead to suicide. Suicide is the second leading cause of death in college students.

• Depression is highly treatable.
College Depression Collaborative

- Twenty Universities and colleges working together to improve recognition and treatment of depression in college students
- Screening for depression in primary care
- Using a care manager to provide additional education and make sure student follows through with treatment
- Coordination with counseling services
College Depression Collaborative

- Follow through using standard screening tools to treat depression to remission
- Flourishing scale