

TOO MANY AMERICANS ARE SUFFERING FROM MENTAL ILLNESS



More than half of U.S. adults with mental health issues do not receive any treatment, says annual report

Mental Health America (MHA), a non-profit organization has just released its [third annual](#) report on the mental health of Americans. According to the report, over 40 million or twenty percent of American adults are experiencing a mental health concern, which is more than the population of New York and Florida combined. Making things worse, more than half of the adults do not receive any treatment for their mental health problem, including those whose condition is serious enough to affect their ability to function day to day.

The report which encompasses all 50 states and District of Columbia reveals that more than 1.2 million people with mental health problem are residing in prisons and are lacking access to mental health care.

Depression turned out to be a major health issue which is affecting a large number of young people. The rate of depression in youth has climbed from 8.5% in 2011 to 11.1% in 2014.

Report says that 6 out of 10 people suffering from depression go untreated while 80 percent people with severe depression get insufficient or no treatment at all.

The shortage of mental health professionals could be a reason behind this rise in mental health problems. In the states with lowest workforce, there is only 1 mental health professional per 1,000 individuals and that includes psychiatrics, psychologists, social workers counselors and psychiatric nurses. As demand for health professional is growing, the shortage of mental health related professional is getting worse.

“Once again, our report shows that too many Americans are suffering, and far too many are not receiving the treatment they need to live healthy and productive lives,” said Paul Gionfriddo, president and CEO, Mental Health America. “Mental illness touches everyone. We must improve access to care and treatments, and we need to put a premium on early identification and early intervention for everyone with mental health concerns.”

Overall, Connecticut is the top state for mental health and for access to care, while Nevada sits at the bottom of the list in terms of mental health. The findings of the report could help policy makers to assess the impact of their program and policies and to upgrade them in order to improve outcomes for individuals and families with mental health needs.

“This is ultimately about policy decisions we make. It’s not just about what states are red and what states are blue because there are some of each near the top and the bottom,” said Gionfriddo “But political environments in states do seem to matter. Those that invest more in mental health clearly have to throw away less money on jails and prisons.”

“It’s time to act – we must invest in the overall physical and mental well-being of our citizens – every day.”



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