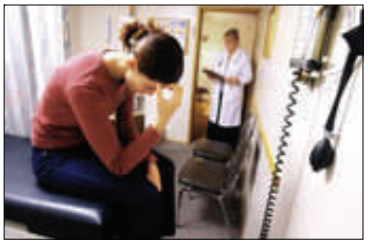
ON THE ROAD TO
WELLNESS
North Dakota Disability Health Project

Promoting the health and wellness of people with disabilities

October 2010 Issue 21

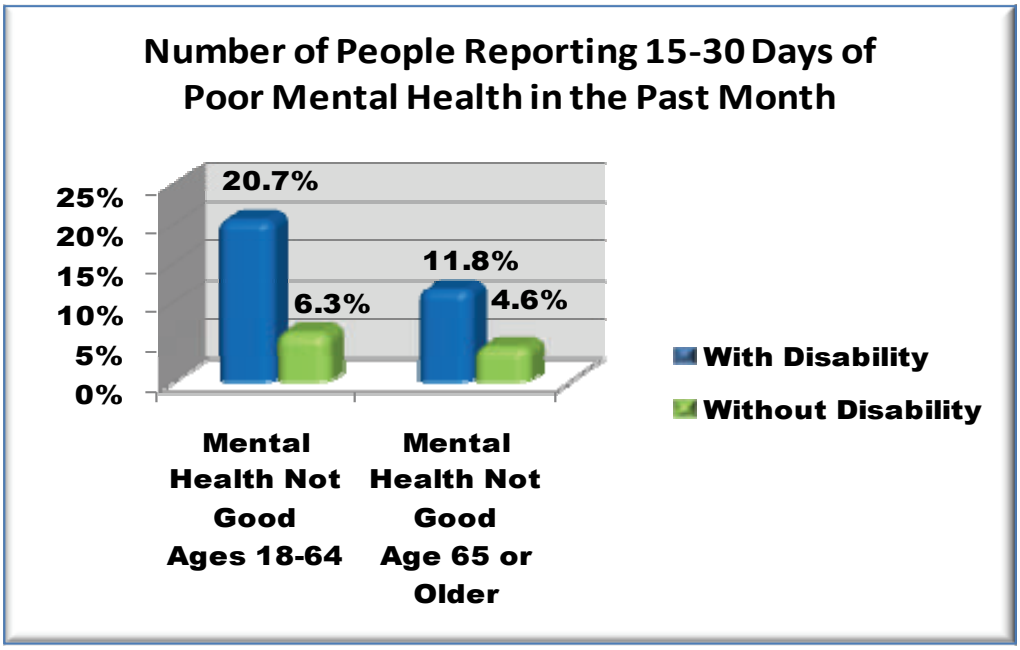
There is No Health Without Mental Health

In any given year, one in four adults in this country have a mental health problem (Helgeland, 2010). Someone with a mental health disability may be unable to carry out necessary tasks, like the ability to hold a job, attend school, or even manage their day-to-day affairs. Increased symptoms of depression and anxiety may make it difficult to carry out normal daily activities.



Often mental health and physical health go hand in hand. Many chronic physical illnesses affect an individual's mental and emotional health, as well as the emotional health of their family. At the same time, people with severe mental illness often have physical health problems that go undetected or untreated.

In North Dakota, data reflects that of people with poor mental health, 20.7 percent of people with disabilities and only 6.3 percent of people without disabilities indicated having 15-30 days per month of poor mental health that kept them from their usual activities. Among people aged 65 and older, 11.8 percent with disabilities and 4.6 percent without disabilities indicated having 15-30 days per month of poor mental health, indicating a similar disability-related disparity. People with disabilities are more likely than those without disabilities to have chronic joint symptoms, arthritis, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, cardiovascular disease, a recent fall-related injury, asthma and diabetes (BRFSS, 2010).



To receive this newsletter by email or in an alternative format, call 800-233-1737.

The Mental Health America website, **Live Your Life Well** offers these evidence-based tools that support optimal mental health for all people:

1. Connect with others. Research suggests that people who feel connected are happier and healthier, any may even live longer.
2. Stay positive. People who regularly focus on the positive in their lives become less upset over things.
3. Get physically active. Exercise relieves tense muscles, improves mood and sleep, and can even make people happier.
4. Help others. Research suggests that those who consistently help other people experience less depression, and less pain.
5. Get enough rest. People who don't get enough sleep may face possible risks, including weight gain, decreased memory, impaired driving, and heart problems. Being tired can hurt your health and your relationships.
6. Create joy and satisfaction. Positive emotions can boost one's ability to bounce back from stress. Feeling **good** is good for you, so have a laugh, or find a hobby.
7. Eat well. Eating healthy food and eating regular meals can increase your energy, fuel your mind, influence your mood, and fight certain diseases.

8. Take care of your spirit. People who have strong spiritual lives may be healthier and may live longer. Spirituality seems to cut the stress that contributes to diseases.
9. Deal better with hard times. Coping tools can help you through rough times.
10. Get professional help if you need it. If the problems in your life are stopping you from functioning well or feeling good, don't hesitate to seek professional help.

Sources:

- *Live Your Life Well* from Mental Health America: http://www.liveyourlifewell.org/
- Mental Health America of North Dakota: www.mhand.org
- Health Related Attributes of North Dakota Adults with Disabilities: Analysis of 2001-208 BRFSS Data

Additional Resources:

- ND Department of Human Service-Division of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services: http://www.nd.gov/dhs/services/mentalhealth/index.html
- National Alliance on Mental Health Illness (NAMI): www.nami.org

The ND Disability Health Project can provide technical assistance to assist with health promotion, staff training and education, and disability awareness. Contact us at 800.233.1737 or visit our website at www.ndcpd.org/health

NDCPD Minot State University Center of Excellence

North Dakota Disability Health Project

North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities
Minot State University
500 University Ave. W.
Minot, ND 58707
1.800.233.1737
701.858.3580
www.ndcpd.org/health

Project staff :

Brent Askvig
Principal Investigator
701-858-3052
brent.askvig@minotstateu.edu

Kari Schmidt
Program Director
701-858-3048
kari.schmidt@minotstateu.edu

Brenda Munson
Project Coordinator
701-858-4477
brenda.munson@minotstateu.edu

Korie Huettl
Administrative Assistant
701-858-4154
korie.huettl@minotstateu.edu

Vision:

All people in ND have access to information and services they need to maintain good health and wellness. There are no health disparities between people with and without disabilities that are based solely on the presence of a disability.

Pay It Forward…..

Pass this information on to others who may find it helpful.

Health-related information provided in this fact sheet is for informational purposes only and should not replace advice from a medical professional. The ND Disability Health Project is funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) through a grant (1 u59 DD000278) to the North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities at Minot State University. Opinions expressed here do not necessarily reflect the official policy of the CDC.