Every year, we celebrate **Global Mental Health Awareness Day** on October 10—a day dedicated to looking out for everyone's emotional, psychological, and social well-being. Mental health affects how people think, feel, and act; moreover, it determines how everyone handles stress, makes healthy lifestyle choices, and relates to others.
This year's Mental Health Day theme is that health is a universal human right.

Our Minds, Our Right

"The world was sick, and the ills from which it was suffering were mainly due to the perversion of man, his inability to live at peace with himself"
-George Brock Chisholm

Everyone is to thank George Brock Chisholm, a psychiatrist and the first Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO), for suggesting that the World Federation of Mental Health (WFMH) become constructed. World Mental Health Day was created on October 10, 1992, and has aimed every year to raise awareness of mental health worldwide and educate its effective ways on individuals, work, family, and stability in communities/countries.

Key Fact: One in eight people globally are living with mental health conditions (WHO)

Health **should** be a universal right; however, it is not. The lack of health insurance goes hand in hand with limited access to mental healthcare. Therefore, people who do not have health insurance or people that have governmental health insurance may receive low-quality healthcare services.

One's health insurance status can be related to one's level of stress.

In the Stress in America survey (2017)

43% of respondents indicated that healthcare concerns were a source of stress and 66% reported that health insurance costs were also a source of stress (American Psychological Association, 2018).

Having public insurance (Medicaid) can be associated with higher levels of anxiety (Jacobs, Hill, & Burdette, 2015).

Adults without health insurance reported higher levels of overall stress than those adults with health insurance (American Psychological Association, 2018).

Harmful effects of mental health stigma:

- Hesitancy to seek help or treatment
- Lack of understanding by others
- Bullying, physical violence, or harassment
- Health insurance that doesn't adequately cover your mental illness treatment
- The belief that you'll never succeed

Stop the stigma. Let's cope.

- **Get treatment.** Treatment can provide relief and reduce symptoms that interfere with your life.
- **Don't let stigma create self-doubt and shame.** You are not weak; asking for help is not a sign of weakness. Seek counseling.
- **Don't isolate yourself.** Reach out to people you trust for the compassion, support, and understanding you need.
- **Don't equate yourself with your illness.** You are not an illness.
- **Join a support group.** Local - Rutgers Student Wellbeing Resources, National - National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)
- **Speak out against stigma.** Educate the public about mental illness.

Resources

"History." *World Federation for Mental Health*, wfmh.global/who-we-are/history. Accessed 16 Oct. 2023.

"Mental Disorders." *World Health Organization*, World Health Organization, 8 June 2022, www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/mental-disorders.

"Mental Health: Overcoming the Stigma of Mental Illness." *Mayo Clinic*, Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research, 24 May 2017, www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/mental-illness/in-depth/mental-health/art-20046477.

"Stress about Health Insurance Costs Reported by Majority of Americans, Apa Stress in America Survey Reveals." *American Psychological Association*, American Psychological Association, 24 Jan. 2018, www.apa.org/news/press/releases/2018/01/insurance-costs.

Self-Care Tool Kit - https://socialwork.rutgers.edu/community-resources/self-care/student-well-being

Student Well-Being Resources

CAPS/Wellness Counseling Services

Medical Services