



GOOD Mental Health.
It starts with a conversation.

DMH Young Adults Leading the Way

Strong voice transforming the system and the lives of youth living with mental health conditions



Pictured left to right: Commissioner Fowler, Gustavo Payano, Samantha Sandland, and DMH Deputy Commissioner for Child and Adolescent Services Joan Mikula.

The Department of Mental Health has continuously valued and respected the voices and participation of youth, young adults, adults and families to enhance its mental health services and supports. In particular, DMH's Transition Age Young Adult (TAY) Initiative has been largely driven by the leadership and dedication of young adults and their allies. In addition to the TAY Initiative itself, young adults have also helped shape and develop various activities or projects such as the DMH Statewide Young Adult Council (SYAC), the Success for Transition Age Youth (STAY) grant in partnership with the Children's Behavioral Health Initiative, the Youth Development Committee (YDC), trainings for young adults and staff, and representation on several committees to make sure the young adult voice is heard.

Young adults leading the way have been highlighted in two significant ways recently. The first was at UMass Medical School Work Without Limits (WWL) second annual "Raise the Bar Hire!" conference, and the second was a presentation at the Children's Behavioral Health Advisory Council by the

Council's young adult representatives.

Last month at the "Raise the Bar Hire!" conference, the SYAC was awarded the 2014 Leadership Award from the WWL program. Current SYAC Co-chairs Amanda Costa and Samantha Sandland accepted the Leadership Award on behalf of their fellow members. Recently, SYAC members in partnership with staff from Work Without Limits and MORE Advertising worked tirelessly to design and develop the ReachHireMA website (www.reachhirema.org) which provides tools and resources to help young adults in the Commonwealth achieve their employment and educational goals. Work Without Limits is a statewide network of engaged employers and innovative, collaborative partners that aims to increase employment among individuals with disabilities whose goal is to position Massachusetts as the first state in the nation where the employment rate of people with disabilities is equal to that of the general population. Visit www.workwithoutlimits.org for more information. The SYAC was recognized for leading by example in changing minds, addressing stigma and promoting employment for young adults. DMH established the SYAC in 2006 for young adults between the ages of 16 and 25 who have been or are currently involved in the mental health system to voice their concerns, needs and ideas for mental health services and supports during a young person's transition into adulthood. The SYAC serves as an advisory board to the DMH TAY Initiative and has also been involved with numerous groups to share the young adult perspective and expertise on a variety of projects.

Both Amanda Costa and Samantha Sandland share their thoughts and experiences with the SYAC here:

- "I was thinking about the success we all felt yesterday being recognized for an award that the Governor won last year. We also got recognized by the U.S. Department of Labor, which was awesome! The true success I felt was that a committed member of SYAC had her first day of work. While I watched her use her skills to assist a man who happens to have a visual disability, I felt that moment was the real reward and power of the SYAC. SYAC has taken a wonderful motion to focus on several domains of wellness, including occupational wellness. I thank a lot of that to Work Without Limits. It has been a pleasure to watch the young adults grow, advocate for themselves and others, as well as change the Department of Mental Health." - Samantha Sandland
- "The SYAC has partnered with various organizations across the state who are interested in transforming their services to better engage and support young adults in recovery and works to support diverse young adult communities. The SYAC has given young adults like myself a safe space to speak out and make a difference in the lives of youth across Massachusetts. Many SYAC members have voiced that attending the council gives them an opportunity to 'use their mental health challenges for good,' and feel empowered knowing that by sharing their own experiences, they can help prevent the same struggles for other young adults in the future. The SYAC engages young adults in ongoing leadership opportunities, and recognizes the importance of putting youth voice at the head of the table. It's exciting and inspiring to see how much positive change young adults can make, if they are given a chance. Being a part of the SYAC, I have seen first hand how much youth voice can transform the system, when it is valued and taken seriously." - Amanda Costa

Another example of young adults leading the way is the appointed membership of two young adult to the Executive Office of Health & Human Services Children's Behavioral Health Advisory Council which is chaired by DMH Commissioner Marcia Fowler. Gustavo Payano and Samantha Sandland are the young adult representatives who advocate and inform from the perspective of their peers and recently presented to CBHAC members on young adult activities and how to create young adult friendly environments to increase engagement of young adults in services.

Gustavo shares his thoughts on the presentation: "I feel it is a privilege and honor to be part of this council. With this great opportunity comes even greater responsibility to the transition age young adults in the mental health community. Presenting with Samantha today about young adults shows that DMH, the Council, and the state of Massachusetts are committed to the inclusion of young adults in the processes of care planning and policy making. It also highlights the overall cultural shift taking place in the Massachusetts mental health system.



Pictures left to right: Kathy Petkauskos, Samantha Sandland, Amanda Costa and Alexis Henry

Massachusetts is a leader when it comes to young adult services and supports, research and inclusion of young adults. Samantha and I used a lot of 'facts and stats' to inform on the condition we presently find ourselves in when it comes to the young adult demographic. But facts are only a part of it. Lived experience and young adult voice are what actually paint a clearer picture of what these numbers truly mean by giving context and dimension that numbers can't always reflect."

Stay tuned next month for more information on the many young adults and activities who are making changes and strides by leading the way!

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GOOD Mental Health Community

Conversations happening in a community near you

The DMH Community Conversations initiative is well underway. Let us know about your conversation and we'll share it in DMH Connections.



Photo courtesy of Leah Cirker-Stark Photography <http://leahcsphotography.com>

The 2nd "Many Faces of Mental Health Conversation" was held September at Roxbury Community College. The day began with a relaxation exercise and welcome remarks from Commissioner Fowler. Chief of Health and Human Services for the City of Boston Felix Arroyo, *pictured here*, delivered the keynote address followed by a morning discussion facilitated by Minister Rodney Muhammad, Marina Colonas from the Transformation Center and Brian Fernandes from the NWF Memorial Foundation.

With about 100 joining the dialogue, this year "Many Faces of Mental Health: Connecting Mind, Body and Spirit" achieved several goals:

(EOHHS) and several of its agencies on Twitter -- please follow them too. Here's a list:

- EOHHS - @Mass_HHS
- Department of Public Health - @MassDPH, @MassinMotion
- The Center for Health Information and Analysis (CHIA) - @@Mass_CHIA
- Department of Veterans Services (DVS) - @MASSDVS
- DVS Save Team - @MassVeterans
- DVS Women Veteran Network - @WomenVeterans

Follow us on 

Commonwealth Conversations BLOGS



Health and Human Services Blog

This social media platform provides news, updates and serve as a forum for open dialogue about issues related to all 16 EOHHS agencies. [Click here](#) to read blog posts by Secretary Polanowicz, Commissioner Fowler and others

Department of Public Health Blog

[Click here](#) to view the DPH blog which features expert tips on nutrition and physical activity as well as a roundup of health and wellness events

across the region for the coming months and it is our intention to promote opportunities to think and talk about ways to support people who reach out to us for help when faced with life's inevitable challenges."

DMH's Good Mental Health campaign joins the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) national conversation about mental health, launched last year. DMH developed materials for the campaign and posted on a new DMH webpage dedicated to Community Conversations, www.mass.gov/dmh/conversations.

It contains the SAMHSA community conversations toolkit, which is all anyone needs to start a conversation in their community or with their group, including links to resources and updates on where conversations are happening across the state.

For more information or technical assistance in starting your conversation, contact the DMH Office of Communications at 617-626-8124.

Any time is a good time to quit: The Great American Smokeout 2014



Every year, on the third Thursday of November, smokers across the nation take part in the American Cancer Society Great American Smokeout. They may use the date to make a plan to quit, or plan in advance and then quit smoking that day. The Great American Smokeout event challenges people to stop using tobacco and helps people know about the many

tools they can use to help them quit and stay quit. In many towns and communities, local volunteers use this event to publicize the need to quit, and press for laws that control tobacco use and discourage teens from starting, and support people who want to quit.

The Smokeout event has helped dramatically change Americans' attitudes about smoking. These changes have led to community programs and smoke-free laws that are now saving lives in many states. Annual Great American Smokeout events began in the 1970s, when smoking and secondhand smoke were commonplace.

The idea for the Great American Smokeout grew from a 1970 event in Randolph, Massachusetts, at which Arthur P. Mullaney asked people to give up cigarettes for a day and donate the money they would have spent on cigarettes to a high school scholarship fund. Then in 1974, Lynn R. Smith, editor of the Monticello Times in Minnesota, spearheaded the state's first D-Day, or Don't Smoke Day. The idea caught on, and on November 18, 1976, the California Division of the American Cancer Society got nearly 1 million smokers to quit for the day. That California event marked the first Great American Smokeout, and the Society took the program nationwide in 1977. Since then, there have been dramatic changes in the way society views tobacco advertising and tobacco use. Many public places and work areas are now smoke-free - this protects non-smokers and supports smokers who want to quit.



**December
Submission Deadline:
November 15**

**Please send all materials to
[Michelle Cormier Tallman](#)**

**[Click here](#) for Submission
Guidelines**



ReachHire offers young adults and anyone seeking a wealth of tools, advice, and resources designed to help you reach your dreams - for building a career, getting an education, and supporting yourself financially. With a positive attitude and the right support, you can make it a fun and fulfilling experience.

**Get Started Today at:
www.ReachHireMA.org**

**Connections
Correction**

In the October 2014 issue,

When smokers quit - what are the benefits over time?

20 minutes after quitting

Your heart rate and blood pressure drop.

(Effect of smoking on arterial stiffness and pulse pressure amplification, Mahmud A, Feely J. Hypertension.2003;41:183)

12 hours after quitting

The carbon monoxide level in your blood drops to normal.

(US Surgeon General's Report, 1988, p. 202)

2 weeks to 3 months after quitting

Your circulation improves and your lung function increases.

(US Surgeon General's Report, 1990, pp.193, 194,196, 285, 323)

1 to 9 months after quitting

Coughing and shortness of breath decrease; cilia (tiny hair-like structures that move mucus out of the lungs) start to regain normal function in the lungs, increasing the ability to handle mucus, clean the lungs, and reduce the risk of infection.

(US Surgeon General's Report, 1990, pp. 285-287, 304)

1 year after quitting

The excess risk of coronary heart disease is half that of a continuing smoker's.

(US Surgeon General's Report, 2010, p. 359)

5 years after quitting

Risk of cancer of the mouth, throat, esophagus, and bladder are cut in half. Cervical cancer risk falls to that of a non-smoker. Stroke risk can fall to that of a non-smoker after 2-5 years.

(A Report of the Surgeon General: How Tobacco Smoke Causes Disease - The Biology and Behavioral Basis for Smoking-Attributable Disease Fact Sheet, 2010; and Tobacco Control: Reversal of Risk After Quitting Smoking. IARC Handbooks of Cancer Prevention, Vol. 11. 2007, p 341)

10 years after quitting

The risk of dying from lung cancer is about half that of a person who is still smoking. The risk of cancer of the larynx (voice box) and pancreas decreases.

(A Report of the Surgeon General: How Tobacco Smoke Causes Disease - The Biology and Behavioral Basis for Smoking-Attributable Disease Fact Sheet, 2010; and US Surgeon General's Report, 1990, pp. vi, 155, 165)

15 years after quitting

The risk of coronary heart disease is that of a non-smoker's.

(Tobacco Control: Reversal of Risk After Quitting Smoking. IARC Handbooks of Cancer Prevention, Vol. 11. 2007. p 11)

Photo of the Month section "Photo 4. Panelist Haywood Fennell Sr. shares his recovery story at the 2013 "Many Faces of Mental Health" Community Conversation." The panelist was Steve W. Tompkins, Suffolk County Sherriff and not Haywood Fennell Sr. Steve was a panelist discussing mental health concerns with those in the criminal justice system.



DMH
YouTube
Spotlight

Celebrating the 36th Great American Smokeout®

This month **DMH Connections** features a video from the American Cancer Society as they mark the 36th Great American Smokeout. Thomas Glynn, PhD, Director of Cancer Science and Trends, talks about how the Great American Smokeout has helped reduce the rate of smoking since 1976. He also offers resources for those looking to quit.



Celebrating the 36th Great American Smokeout®

WRCH Celebrates World Mental Health Day

These are just a few of the benefits of quitting smoking for good. Quitting smoking lowers the risk of diabetes, lets blood vessels work better, and helps the heart and lungs. Quitting while you are younger will reduce your health risks more, but quitting at any age can give back years of life that would be lost by continuing to smoke.

*Information for this article provided from the [American Cancer Society Website](#).

WaRM Center Integrates Primary Care, Wellness, and Behavioral Health Services at Mass. Mental Health Center

The Department of Mental Health and Brigham and Women's Hospital (BWH) has a unique public-private partnership in which BWH operates a primary care medical clinic at the Department's Massachusetts Mental Health Center (MMHC). The clinic is part of the Wellness and Recovery Medicine (WaRM) Center, a program focused on the integration of primary care, wellness, and behavioral health services.



The onsite primary care clinic staff collaborates closely with each client's mental health team. Vision and dental services are available through local partnerships. In addition, center-wide wellness efforts include general health screenings and group therapy interventions for smoking cessation and enhanced nutrition and physical activity. Service delivery prioritizes engagement and education, allowing consumers to become informed and active partners in their healthcare.

The integration of behavioral health and physical health is an important component of health care reform and the Affordable Care Act. Section 275 of Chapter 224 of the Acts of 2012 called for the Behavioral Health Integration Task Force (BHITF), chaired by DMH Commissioner Fowler, to examine the integration of behavioral health and primary care. A report was issued last year and the results of the process were clear and hold much potential for the early intervention, prevention and improved outcomes for behavioral health and physical health as well as for achieving health care cost savings.

EOHHS Secretary John Polanowicz joined staff, consumers, providers and friends of the mental health community at a ribbon cutting celebration for the WaRM Clinic last month. Master of Ceremonies DMH Deputy Commissioner for Mental Health Services Cliff Robinson introduced the Secretary, who was joined by Commissioner Fowler; Felix Arroyo, Chief of Health and Human Services, City of



World Mental Health Day is observed in October every year to raise awareness of mental health issues around the world and mobilizing efforts in support of mental health.

The observance provides an opportunity for all stakeholders working on mental health issues to talk about their work and what more needs to be done to make mental health care a reality for people worldwide.

At Worcester Recovery Center and Hospital (WRCH), the second Annual World Mental Health Day Symposium did just that, recognizing this worldwide celebration with a Women's Mental Health Symposium. Joining the morning session by women legislative leaders Senator Harriette Chandler and Representatives Kay Khan and Ruth Balsler. All three legislators related their personal endeavors at both the grass roots and policy levels, explaining their professional work as mental health care trained professionals and as legislators. Their presentation were insightful for individuals touched in many ways by the mental health care system.

Keynote speaker was Laura Prescott, founder of Sister Witness International. Laura's talk was candid, thoughtful and inspiring. She focused on her own journey of recovery and expressed ways we can create a more trauma-informed environment of care. She also spoke to the work that is occurring elsewhere in the world where the notion of recovery is slow to be introduced and embraced. In the afternoon, Laura spent time talking

Boston; Gary Gottlieb, President and CEO, Partners Healthcare; Derri Shtasel, Executive Director, The Kraft Center for Community Health; Mark Viron, Director of Health Home Services, MMHC; Gail Levine, Medical Director of the WaRM Center; and Brendan Johnson, a recipient of integrated services at MMHC.

Also joining the celebration were Senator Sonia Chang-Díaz, Representative Jeffrey Sanchez, Representative Liz Malia and Boston City Councilor Josh Zakim.

The MMHC WaRM center is a shining example of health care integration. Any recovery-oriented healthcare system must develop a consumer-driven vision of integrated care and must engage consumers, families and other advocates in the development of new policies and systems that will truly integrate behavioral health and physical health.

[Click here](#) to view all of the photos from the ribbon cutting ceremony.

Mental Health Court Session launched at the Quincy District Court

In preparation for initiating a Mental Health Court Session in the Quincy District Court, DMH Forensic Services Division collaborated with the Trial Court Administration to host a full-day event at Quincy's Thomas Crane Public Library recently. The event, a community mapping training based on the Sequential Intercept Model www.prainc.com/sequential-intercept-mapping included chiefs and lieutenants from five regional police departments, DMH Quincy Site Office and Quincy District Court staff, local and regional Probation staff and supervisors, local community mental and behavioral health providers and Father Bill's, representatives from the Norfolk District Attorney's and the Norfolk Sheriff's offices and representatives from DPH's Bureau of Substance Abuse Services.

Four justices also participated in the training: The Honorable Mark Coven, First Justice of Quincy District Court; Judge Hogan Sullivan, overseeing Specialty Courts for the Administration of Trial Courts and presiding Justice for the Norfolk County Veteran's Treatment Court; Judge Mary Orfanello, who will preside over the Quincy Mental Health Court session; and the Honorable Mary Dacey White, First Justice of the Brookline District court.

The goal of the day was to create a coherent and shared vision for a community network that supports the mental health court session and enhances community support for clients who are at risk of criminal involvement. DMH Assistant Commissioner Debra A. Pinals, M.D. provided an overview of the Sequential Intercept Model and best practices, reinforcing the importance of intra-system education, training and collaboration to effectively identify appropriate individuals for participation in the mental health court session.

Participants worked throughout the day in small groups led by Dr. Pinals and Area Forensic Directors John Barber, LICSW; and Karin Orr, LICSW to develop their own understanding of other disciplines' mandates and limitations, as well as to create an actual "map" of

with WRCH's Violence Free Workgroup and the Peer Services Department. She was encouraged by the work being done here in Massachusetts, noting that approaches to mental health care and treatment are more advanced than other states and countries.

In the afternoon, WRCH hosted its annual Provider Fair where community providers of mental health services networked with WRCH staff and patients, talking about recent developments and offerings of community mental health services. The celebration was capped off by the Worcester Recovery Learning Community facilitated Drumming Circle, bringing music, spirit and an abundance of camaraderie to the day's event. The drumming circle encouraged people to join in the music-making and many joined the fun, interacting and connecting with each other and embracing the symposium's message of resiliency and recovery.

Congratulations to the Whole Health Action Management New Graduate Facilitators

Last month DMH 12 facilitators graduated from the Whole Health Action Management (WHAM) training, an approach that allows peers to help each other reach their wellness goals and an important component of the Department's overall strategic plan.

Designed by the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, the WHAM training is a powerful program intended to strengthen the role of the peer workforce in healthcare delivery. WHAM provides to peer support professionals and volunteers a

current resources to best serve individuals with mental and behavioral health needs who come in contact with police, courts and jails.

The day included a visit and brief presentation from a graduate of the Springfield Mental Health Court <http://recoverywithjustice.org> who gave participants a clear understanding of the vital positive change that can come from targeted support combined with appropriate treatment.

The Quincy Mental Health Court session has an anticipated start date of January 2015.



The Quincy Mental Health Court Session Team. Front row from left: Susanna Chan, DMH NES Area South Site Director; Maureen Kenney, Clerks office, Quincy District Court; Heather Schneider, Clerks office, Quincy District Court; Debra A. Pinals, M.D., DMH Assistant Commissioner for Forensic Services; First Justice Mary Dacey White, Brookline District court; Judge Mary Orfanello, Quincy District Court; John Gavin, The Gavin Foundation; Mary Haggerty Kelley, Asst. Deputy Superintendent, Norfolk County House of Correction; Back row from left: Karin Orr, LICSW, DMH NES Area Forensic Director; John Barber, LICSW, DMH Western Mass. Area Forensic Director; Jay Brennan, Chief of Probation, Quincy District Court.

Solomon Carter Fuller MHC Tops in WellMASS Health Assessments

For nearly three years EOHHS and the GIC, through the WellMASS Initiative, offer agency staff the opportunity and resources to improve their overall health and well being. Many DMH sites and facilities have been active in WellMASS activities and are role models for wellness across the state.

This month we highlight and congratulate the Solomon Carter Fuller Mental Health Center, led by WellMASS Champion Cathy Andrews. The Fuller holds the top spot for the percentage of employees who have completed their Health Assessment consistently for the past three years. They are the only site who has maintained their percentages each year with 21% in year one, 26% in year two and in just the first month of year three 33%, a new record and climbing!

format for meetings in which consumers engage in eight-week WHAM groups to support one another as they work toward, achieve, and maintain whole health goals.

The skills learned in WHAM help participants engage in self-management and crystalize goals to achieve better whole health and wellness.

At the graduation ceremony, Commissioner Fowler shared her personal health and wellness hurdles and successes with the group. Metro Boston Medical Director David Hoffman, M.D. talked about how health and wellness contributes to good mental health. WHAM facilitator instructors Sara Selkovitz and Charlotte Hett introduced each graduate and presented them with their diplomas. Sara is the Recovery Director at Bay Cove Human Services and Charlotte is the Wellness Center Coordinator at Bay Cove. Russell Pierce, Director of the DMH office of Recovery and Empowerment, closed the ceremony with his dynamic poem entitled [RUN](#) to the graduates.

Congratulations Graduates!

Idony Lisle
Metro Boston Recovery Learning Center-HOPECenter

Janel Tan
Vinfen-Metro Boston Recovery Learning Center

Jillian Buono
Metro Boston Recovery Learning Center

Janet Escobar
Metro Boston Recovery Learning Center

Debra Wheeler
Lemuel Shattuck Metro Boston Mental Health Units

Jacqueline Martinez
Lindemann Mental Health Center



Fuller Site Director Theresa Harrison completed her Health Assessment at the kick-off event

Recently, Cathy, with the help of Sarah McGhee, organized a Health Assessment kick-off event. WellMASS Program Manager Ashley Mason and WellMASS Program Coordinator Kayla Mantegazza set up a Health Assessment kiosk for staff to complete their online assessments. They sweetened the pot with a make-your-own trail mix bar for those who completed their health assessment in the spirit of promoting healthy snacks. Fuller staff brought in healthy dishes for a pot luck lunch. Following the lunch, Ashley lead a group relaxation exercise. Those who completed the Health Assessment were also entered into a drawing to win a crock pot.

If you would like to organize a similar event or a healthy topic lunch 'n learn event for your site, please contact Kayla at: KMantegazza@staywell.com, or ask your Area WellMASS Champion for assistance.

This year WellMASS and the GIC are offering employees even more benefits for taking or retaking their Health Assessment:



Complete your WellMASS Health Questionnaire TODAY!
It only takes 10 minutes!

Go to <https://wellmass.staywell.com> on your computer or smartphone.

WHY TAKE THE HEALTH QUESTIONNAIRE?

- Receive a snapshot of your current health
- Determine which health areas/behaviors need more attention
- Access resources on health topics like nutrition, stress and blood pressure
- Your results may qualify you for FREE health coaching

So you completed the Health Assessment last year? Take it again for a year-to-year-comparison!

EARN REWARDS:

- Your choice of a \$20 gift card or a deluxe gym bag *pictured right*. Please Note: the \$20 gift is taxed on your W2, the gym bag is not.
- Entry into a monthly raffle for an iPad2 -- the sooner you complete the Health Assessment the more raffle entries you receive!
- Six-month subscription to NutriSavings, a website that provides you with nutrition information about your grocery purchases and discounts for purchasing healthy foods



ArthurStead
North Suffolk Mental Health
Association

Chien-ChiHuang
Asian Women for Health

SheilaKennedy
Metro Boston Recovery Learning
Center

StephenSavage
Lindemann Mental Health Center

Paul Styczko
Metro Boston Recovery Learning
Center

Angelica Urena
Lemuel Shattuck Metro Boston
Mental Health Units

[Click here](#) to view photos from
the graduation.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

- Visit the Website: <https://wellmass.staywell.com>
- Follow WellMASS on Twitter: @GICWellMASS
- Read the Blog: <http://wellmass.wordpress.com>
- Call the HelpLine: 1-800-926-5455
- Learn More: www.mass.gov/gic/wellmass

GIC-insured employees of the Executive and Legislative Branches and Constitutional Offices are eligible to take the Health Questionnaire. Your Health Questionnaire results are never shared with the GIC, your agency or your health plan.

November Wellness Tips



Conferences and Events

Upcoming Events at The Bridge of Central Mass.

[Click here](#) for the complete
2014-2015 training calendar.
Training Institute events are
held at the DoubleTree Hotel
which is wheelchair accessible
for people with mobility
limitations. If accommodations
such as ASL interpreters or
visual aids are needed, please
contact Stephen Murphy at:
stevem@thebridgecm.org
or 508-755-0333 three weeks in
advance of the training date.

Now Available

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health Suicide Prevention Training Calendar

Please click on the link below to
register.

[Suicide Prevention Events
Calendar](#)

STABILIZING BLOOD SUGAR

After we eat carbohydrate-containing foods, sugar enters the body in the form of glucose and causes blood sugar levels to increase. Glucose is the primary source of energy used by our bodies, so carbohydrates play an essential role in ensuring that we have enough energy to perform daily functions. Insulin is the hormone that helps our bodies use glucose. It is released from the pancreas when our bodies detect our blood sugar rising. Think of insulin as the gatekeeper at the entrance of a cell; when it detects a rise in blood sugar, it allows glucose to enter the cell so it can be used for energy. Normal blood sugar levels should range between 70-99mg/dL before a meal and should not exceed 140mg/dL two hours after eating.

Diabetes is a condition in which the body does not produce enough insulin or does not use insulin properly. If your body is unable to use insulin properly, your blood sugar levels will be high. Consistently high blood sugar levels can lead to negative long-term consequences such as damage to the eyes, blood vessels, kidneys, and nerves. There are three types of diabetes: Type 1 (formerly called juvenile or insulin-dependent diabetes), Type 2 (formerly called adult-onset or non-insulin dependent diabetes) and gestational diabetes (diabetes that only occurs during pregnancy). Type 2 diabetes is the most common, affecting 90-95% of individuals with the condition. By being mindful of how diet and physical activity affect your blood glucose levels, you can help prevent Type 2 diabetes, stabilize your blood sugar, and sustain your energy throughout the day.

Factors that Raise Blood Sugar Levels:

When registering for a workshop, please note that each event has tabs titled with information regarding the workshop, available CEs and cost.

Space is very limited for each workshop and fills up quickly, please register early.

Upcoming Workshops at the Center for Professional Innovation

(formerly Community Program Innovations)

CPI offers continuing education for mental health and healthcare professionals and educators, holding day-long workshops throughout Massachusetts on clinical and management topics. Trainings are held in Billerica, Foxborough and Springfield. To view the complete schedule and to register visit

<http://bridgewellcpi.org>

All facilities are wheelchair accessible. If accommodations such as ASL interpreters or visual aids are needed, email: info@BridgewellCPI.org or call 339-883-2118.

[Click here](#) for the Transformation Center website and all the latest information and events happening throughout the mental health community.

Please send your event information to [Michelle Cormier Tallman](#) by the 15th of each month for publication in DMH Connections

DMH
Connections

- A meal or snack with more food or more carbohydrates than usual
- Inactivity

Factors that Lower Blood Sugar Levels:

- A meal or snack with less food or fewer carbohydrates than usual
- Extra activity
- Missing a meal or snack
- Drinking alcoholic beverages (especially on an empty stomach)

Tips for Stabilizing Blood Sugar:

- Choose complex carbohydrates. Instead of refined grains, opt for whole grains, which are higher in fiber and work to slow digestion and regulate blood sugar levels.
- Limit added sugars. Aim to consume fewer than 24g of added sugar per day if you are female, or fewer than 36g per day if you are male.
- Eat small meals more often. Don't go more than 4-6 hours without eating something.
- Eat lean protein or healthy fats with carbohydrates. Eating protein or fat with carbohydrates slows digestion and decreases the rate at which blood sugar increases.
- Choose food with a low glycemic index. Glycemic index (GI) is a system that ranks carbohydrates on a scale of 0-100 based on their effect on blood sugar levels. For more information on GI, visit www.diabetes.org

[Click here](#) for a printable version, take the November Challenge: Stabilizing Blood Sugar and try a delicious recipe for slow-cooker flank steak tacos.

NOVEMBER WEBINAR: PREVENTING AND MANAGING DIABETES

Wednesday, November 12

10:00-10:30 AM and 1:00-1:30 PM

To participate, call (866) 740-1260 and log on to <http://lifemasters.readytalk.com>, and enter access code 7243537.

Photo of the Month

A girl and her therapy dog



*Thank you for your readership
as DMH Connections proudly
celebrates 6 years of
continuous publication!*



*We will be posting DMH
Connections on DMH's
archives page of the DMH
Internet.
View issues from 2008 to the
Present.*



Sue Jones, LMHC, has been with DMH for close to 20 years, first as an ASL interpreter then as a rehabilitation counselor. After volunteering to be a weekend puppy raiser for NEADS, a Massachusetts service dog organization, Sue was able to bring service dogs in training to the Worcester Recovery Center and Hospital (WRCH) as part of their experience. These dogs have been skillfully trained both in the prison system with inmates and professional trainers and with volunteers like Sue and her husband Larry on weekends to expose them to any and all public situations. Sue brought three dogs to WRCH on Sundays to interact with patients and staff. It was a huge success. Everyone loved the dogs and spent hours playing and interacting with the pups. As a result, Sue applied for a fully trained therapy dog and received "Chips." He has been attending WRCH five days a week greeting folks in the downtown area, on units in groups and in one to one sessions upon request. It is well researched that therapy dogs make a difference in people's lives including helping to lower blood pressure and heart rate and increase chemicals in the brain that effect pleasure and provide unconditional love. "Chips" loves everyone and is always up for a visit, a trick or a belly rub.

Access photos of all DMH events!
Events prior to 2014 are posted on the [DMH Photo Gallery on Shutterfly](#) and all current events are on [Flickr](#)!

If you have photos from a DMH event that you would like featured as photo of the month or on our photo site, please send them to [Michelle Cormier Tallman](#).