

### A Message From Mona

The month of May is Mental Health Month. This year marks Mental Health America's 70<sup>th</sup> year celebrating the event. Mental Health America says, "When we talk about health, we can't just focus on heart health or liver health or brain health and not whole health. You have to see the whole person. It means empowering people as agents of their own recovery."

#### Some Key Stats:

- ◆ Over 44 million American adults have a mental health condition.
- ◆ Rate of youth experiencing a mental health condition continues to rise.
- ◆ The Affordable Care Act has led to more Americans accessing health insurance permitting them to seek therapy.
- ◆ Estimates suggest only half of people with mental illness receive treatment.
- ◆ Mental health workforce shortages remain. In states that have fewer mental health professionals, there was almost 4 times the number of individuals who needed counseling than providers available.
- ◆ Suicide is among the leading causes of death.

It is truly my pleasure to provide support to all of my providers who, in turn, support thousands of patients in need of mental health therapy. I very much welcome the opportunity to speak with patients when they call our office and have a question regarding their insurance.

Effective Behavioral Health Revenue Cycle Management is an absolute essential to support stable and growing practices. Our job is to ensure that you are properly reimbursed for services provided in the most expedient manner possible. Our active membership in the American Medical Billing Association keeps us aware of the latest trends and requirements in the mental health billing arena. We are here for you, our client. Please call your Account Manager or myself with questions or concerns. That's why we are here!

Best Regards,

*Mona*



### Some Physicians Need to Heal Themselves



The growing number of patients that many doctors see in a day is taking a toll on their mental health. Recent statistics show that two in five physicians suffer from psychological and emotional distress.

A British Medical Association survey reports that more than one in four doctors have been diagnosed with a mental condition at some point in their lives. On average, two in five respondents suffered from depression, anxiety, burnout, stress, emotional distress and/or another mental health condition. Younger physicians were especially in danger of suffering from mental illness. Contributing stress factors for medical students include debt and long hours interning.

A startling statistic: The survey reports that instead of reaching out to a mental health therapist for counseling, many doctors turn to alcohol, drugs and self medication.

Researchers with Aired Alliance, a non-profit that seeks to protect and enhance the rights of health care consumers, reports that some doctors are so filled with anxiety that fully two-thirds would recommend against pursuing a career in medicine. Their stress originates in administrative tasks, the number of patients they see, and the lack of personal time.

A recent study found that physicians give a patient an average of just 11 seconds to describe their issues before cutting them off. No, it's not their preference. Some feel they are forced into time constraints by administrative tasks. The results showed that just 36 percent of doctors ask questions that allowed patients to set the agenda, but two-thirds of those patients were interrupted after responding.

Doctors are prone to more mental health problems than any other profession. The Guardian reports that Caroline Elton, an occupational psychologist who has worked with physicians for more than 20 years says, "That while technological and medical advances in medicine are breathtaking, this has not been matched by understanding about the psychological load doctors bear. We're absolutely in the dark ages".

Source: Gary R'nel

## Stigma-Affecting More Than Adults

The Stigma surrounding adults afflicted with mental health challenges can sometimes prevent individuals from seeking therapy. Now, research indicates that the same holds true for school aged children.

Schools across the country are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of addressing mental health issues within their population. One example is the Hartford County Public Schools in the Baltimore area. The school system reports that students from each middle and high school in the district are organizing a new Student Mental Health Council. The council will promote mental health and reduce the Stigma surrounding therapy.

HCPS Mental Health Specialist, Christina Alton, says the council will strive for each student to have access to support for stress, anxiety, depression and other mental health challenges.

The [Child Mind Institute](#) reports that half of all mental illness occurs before the age of 14 and 75 percent by the age of 24. One in five students in this country needs treatment, according to the Institute.

Kathy Reamy is a school counselor in La Plata, Md. and chair of the National Education Association's School Counselor Caucus. "The public's natural response is to say we need more mental health services and programs and we do" Reamy says, but much of the national conversation has been inherently reactive, focusing on "crisis response", to school shootings in particular, rather than a systematic approach to helping students with their mental health needs.

According to a study by the Center for Health and Health Care in Schools, students who receive positive behavioral health interventions see improvements on a range of behaviors related to academic achievement, beyond letter grades and test scores. Today's high school students are facing higher stress and anxiety rates than any other generation. Let's remove the stigma and get students the therapy they need.

Source: Gary R'nel

## Laugh a Little or Maybe A Lot: It's Good Therapy



- Patient to Therapist: "No one believes a word I say." Therapist to Patient: "Tell me the truth now, what's your real problem?"
- Patient to Therapist: "People keep telling me I'm ugly." Therapist to Patient: "Lay on the couch face down."
- Patient to Therapist: "I can't concentrate, one minute I'm ok, and the next minute, I'm blank." Therapist to Patient: "And how long have you had this complaint?" Patient to Therapist: "What complaint?"
- Therapist to her receptionist: "Just say we're very busy. Do not keep saying it's a madhouse."
- Patient to Therapist: "People tell me I'm a wheelbarrow." Therapist to Patient: "Don't let people push you around."

Source: free-funnyjokes.com

- A person calls a therapist's office and she is not sure whether she needs to make an appointment. Patient to Therapist: "I am always calm and have never had a disagreement with anyone in my life." Therapist to Patient: "I would make an appointment as soon as possible."
- A patient complains that there is no couch in the therapist's office and because of that she does not want to write a check for her co-pay. The therapist promptly rectifies the matter. He goes out to his car where his camping equipment is in the trunk. He drags a blow up mattress into his office-pulls the cord, inflates it and promptly collects his full co-pay.



Just because I'm blue does not mean I'm not happy.



I am usually juggling twelve things at once. This is actually a pretty good day.

A sense of humor refers to the ability to find things funny, general enjoyment in doing so, and discovering that laughter is worth the effort. Source: Gary R'nel/Source pictures: pixabay.com

## Yes! A Woman Could be the First

When the Red Planet hosts its first human visitor, that person could be a woman. NASA head, Jim Bridenstine, maintains that this could be the reality. He says that women are at the forefront of the agency's future plans. In addition, Bridenstine says a woman will probably be the next person on the moon. And you thought Ralph Kramden had the corner on this one! We are not finished yet. The NASA administrator says that the agency will have its first all female space walk soon. Anne McClain and Christina Koch will walk on air. Both were part of the agency's 2013 astronaut class, half of which were women. A little NASA Trivia: It was 1978 when the first six women joined NASA's astronaut corps. Today females comprise 34 percent of NASA astronauts.

Among the most famous of female astronauts: Sally Ride-the first American woman in space, Ellen Ochoa-former astronaut and the 11<sup>th</sup> Director of the Johnson Space Center, Mae Jemison-the first African American woman to travel in space, Judith Resnik-who died when the Challenger was destroyed, Eileen Collins-the first female commander of a space shuttle, Kalpana Chawla-the first Indian American astronaut in space, Peggy Whitson-former Chief Astronaut, Roberta Bondar-Canada's first female astronaut, Lisa Marie Mowak-a mission specialist in robotics, Anousheh Ansari-the first Muslim woman in space. Speculation is that a mission to Mars will be all female. There are observations that a mixed crew could get "frisky" during a one and a half year journey to the Red Planet and that women work better as a team and are less likely to express disagreement concerning leadership roles. Source: Gary R'nel

## Education Box-Behind the Scenes

Many times while following up on why a claim was not paid, the EOB states that the patient needs to contact the insurance company concerning a **COB**. The Coordination of Benefits is the process of determining which of two or more insurance policies will contribute. Many times patients fail to inform their therapist about the possibility of a secondary insurance. Be advised that many health care insurers will request a Coordination of Benefits update annually from patients regardless of whether or not they have more than one insurance. It is important that they respond so processing of claims will not be delayed. Please call me with any questions or concerns.

Mona

## Stories You Simply Need to Know About



pixabay.com

✓ Some parents are professing enough is enough! "I understand putting my infant in a car seat makes perfect sense, but buckling up a toddler just short of four feet nine inches is literally out of control." Washington State Governor, Jay Inslee, has signed legislation mandating stricter booster seat regulations stipulating that such a child must remain in a booster until the vehicle lap and shoulder seat belt fits properly, typically when the child is between the ages of eight and twelve years old. One Washington state parent was outraged saying, "Can you imagine dropping my nine year old, who is just less than four feet nine, to middle school and taking him out of his booster seat?" If a driver is found in violation of the new law, they can be cited with a traffic infraction. Although the law has only been passed in Washington State, it's likely that other states will follow suit. The Washington State legislation goes into effect on Jan.1, 2020. Dr. Beth Ebel, a professor of pediatrics at the University of Washington School of Medicine, says that the law will allow more kids to arrive home safely after a trip in the car. Supporters of the law say that it will prevent serious injury in an accident. Another parent said, "Unbuckling her ten year old child from a car seat in front of his peers will most certainly lead to the first of many mental health therapy sessions."



✓ Not so fast. With employers getting increasingly concerned about sexual harassment charges in the workplace, some companies are actually contemplating, if not imposing a ban, on handshakes in the office. In addition, some employers are deciding whether or not a total no contact policy in the workplace would help safeguard against allegations of sexual harassment. Kate Palmer, an associate director of HR consultancy Peninsula, says this is partially in response to the #MeeToo movement, with management rethinking its policies and heading to a more black and white stance. The Mirror reports that, according to a survey of 2,000 adults, three out of four were keen for a complete physical contact ban. Our Note: Banning handshakes in the office? Yes, we realize that a handshake can be conducted in such a way that could be interpreted as suggestive or excessive. But, are we not putting human contact in the workplace on the extinct species list? Critics of the proposal say that this is just another example of how social media, emailing and texting is the new pathway to human beings communicating with each other. Sexual harassment in the workplace is a serious issue. If you feel you are a victim report it to your HR office.



✓ Want to impress your friends and tell them you and the family went on a fantastic vacation? A Nebraska-based business will design social media pages with expertly faked photos of your family on vacations you never took. A recent study suggested that more than half of millennials have lied about taking a vacation. Some of the reasons include affordability and last minute cancellations. The company even provides you with facts about your destination so that you can write extensively about your "experience on line".  
Source: Gary R'nel

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