

Practice Management Insight

A report on events affecting behavioral health and substance abuse providers

November 2019

Agency Audit Points

OrionNet Systems offers many services to its members. One of the most popular is called "Agency Audit Points." Our members share audit details from ODMHSAS, JACHO, CARF, etc. With well over 150 agencies, we compile a list of audit information to share, such as; findings, tips, deficiencies or even a needed form. We then create a document that we share with our members so they can learn from the feedback of other agencies. This is an invaluable tool when it comes time for an audit, so you can benefit from "voice of experience." This service is offered by OrionNet Systems to help our member agencies stay on top and "in the know."

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How To Make Social Media Less Depressing (Without Quitting Entirely)

Does any of this sound familiar? Open up Instagram, Facebook, or Twitter; start scrolling, next thing you know it's 30 minutes later, you've forgotten where you're sitting, and you're in a dark digital hole that began by clicking on the profile of someone you barely know. By now, your breathing is shallow (take notice next time – it's called screen apnea), and you've begun thinking you're less than the queen you actually are: your body doesn't look like theirs, your relationship status or lack thereof becomes apparent, your job seems lame, the world feels like it's basically falling apart. So dramatic but also practically cliché at this point, and we've all been there. Now, we're learning how to climb our way out.

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Analysis pins down prevalence of mental health conditions in autism

Eight mental health conditions occur unusually often in autistic people, a new analysis of 96 studies suggests¹. Certain mental health conditions are known to accompany autism, but estimates of their prevalence in autistic people vary widely². The new study establishes prevalence by pooling data from the studies and conducting a separate statistical analysis for each set of conditions: **attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), anxiety, depression, schizophrenia** and psychotic disorders, bipolar disorder, **obsessive-compulsive disorder**, impulse-control and conduct disorders and **sleep-wake conditions**. The prevalence of these conditions was consistently elevated in autistic people.

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How PTSD and Depression Haunts First Responders Even After the Job is done

Thousands of emergency medical technicians and paramedics are on the front lines of disasters, and potentially deadly circumstances every day. Caleb Henry was one of them until he quit his job in 2018 because of the constant barrage of trauma he witnessed on the job in California.

"There are calls that I do not forget," Henry told HuffPost. "There are calls that I still think about."

The 21-year-old former EMT has been diagnosed with **depression**, anxiety and **PTSD**. After a couple of years of long workdays and nightmarish memories from on-the-job horrors with zero in-house health resources, Henry said the work took a toll on his mental health.

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Stop the Stigma: Why we need more conversations surrounding mental health

An estimated 47.6 million adults in the United States experienced mental illness last year, according to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). That amounts to one in five adults in the nation.

Dr. Sue Varma, a board certified psychiatrist and one of the experts who will be participating in the town hall, told "CBS This Morning" that stigma has a "detrimental" effect on people's ability to get the help they need.

"Stigma is about lack of education, lack of awareness, and sometimes even when people have both, it comes down to a lack of compassion and empathy," she said, adding, "When we have stigma, we are creating shame and we're creating blame. Would we blame somebody for having Type 1 diabetes? No, absolutely not. Would we blame somebody for having the flu? Would we blame someone for having a broken arm? This is no different."

It is also important to identify the symptoms, she said. "When we see somebody's behavior, we think that they have the capacity to change. But the reality is, a lot of times people are not even aware of the symptoms that they're having half the time, right?"

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Taking police officers out of mental health-related 911 rescues

Every day that Janet van der Laak drives between car dealerships in her sales job, she keeps size 12 shoes, some clothes and a packed lunch — a PB&J sandwich, fruit and a granola bar — beside her in case she sees her 27-year-old son on the streets.

"Jito, come home," she always tells him, using a Spanish endearment. There he can have a bed and food, but her son, Matt Vinnola, rarely returns home. If he does, it is temporary. The streets are easier for him. Home can be too peaceful.

But the same streets that give Vinnola comfort are also unsafe for a man battling dual demons of drug use and chronic paranoid schizophrenia.

Police and criminal courts often intervene before Vinnola gets treatment or care. Since his first diagnosis of severe mental illness in 2014, Vinnola has collected a litany of charges from misdemeanors to felony trespassing and drug offenses. Over the past four years, Vinnola has been charged in four separate Colorado courts and arrested multiple times almost every month either for new offenses or on warrants for failing to appear in court.

But soon, he might encounter mental health professionals on the street instead of cops.

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The Obstacle to Mental Illness Treatment We Need To Talk About

Mental illness can take an incredible toll on someone's life. Whether it be **mania, depression, anxiety, psychosis** or any number of different disorders, one of the hardest things to do is reach out for help. But one thing all of us who fight daily with this can agree on is **how important it is to seek support**. The level of courage, bravery, vulnerability and mental exertion it takes to seek that help is astounding. But something that isn't spoken about much is how the lengthy time it can take to get psychiatric support can be incredibly dangerous.

The first severe episode I had, which prompted my diagnosis, lasted months. I was extremely depressed and slipping between catatonic, hysterical and suicidal. After having to quit my job and not being able to leave my room for two months, the cyclical nature of my disease finally kicked in and I was beginning to come up from the state I was in. needed help.

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Mental health days for students: An increasingly accepted reason to stay home from school

Public school students would be allowed to cite the need for a **mental health day** as an excuse to miss school, under a bill filed in the Florida Legislature for the 2020 session. The proposal is part of a growing movement in multiple states aimed at improving students' mental well-being.

Rep. Susan Valdes, D-Tampa, says she wants to elevate mental and behavior health issues to the same level as the flu, colds and dental appointments as a legitimate reason for students to call in sick.

"It is time for us to take mental health as a whole more seriously," said Valdes, as she explained that kids today are under a lot of pressure.

Supporters of similar measures approved in other states cited studies that indicate the mental health of teens and young adults has dropped dramatically in the past decade.

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR

November 3
[Daylight saving time](#)

November 4
[National Candy Day](#)

November 6
[Wellness Coach Training](#)

November 11
[Veterans Day](#)

November 12
[Housing First Training](#)

November 13
[Adult Treatment Court Best Practices](#)

November 14
[World Diabetes Day](#)

November 19
[Wellness Coach Training](#)

November 20
[Tobacco Free Support Group Facilitation](#)

November 21
[Mental Health First Aid Youth](#)

November 25
[Elimination of Violence Against Women Day](#)

November 28
[Thanksgiving Day](#)

It hurts the most when the person that made you feel so special yesterday, makes you feel so unwanted today.



Why Do We Keep Bullies in our Lives?

For years I had a colleague who made fun of me for working hard or for stepping up to offer to take on a task. She called me a "goody two shoes," dripping with sarcasm. I laughed and had lunch with her. At staff meetings she told new hires that they better get her coffee because she decided on their continued employment, smiling but her tone threatening. We senior employees laughed and shrugged it off. The new hires brought her coffee.

Then I studied **empathy**, and I realized that she did not share emotional feelings with those of us she teased. She was a bully.

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Social Media Is Not To Blame For Children's Poor Mental Health

Social media is often accused of damaging children's mental health - but a new study suggests it is not to blame.

Instead, bullying, lack of sleep and problems with friendships are more important factors, with no strong link between social media use and psychological problems.

And in fact, social media use may even be linked to a greater sense of well-being among older teenagers, according to researchers.

The findings are contained in the U.K. government's first ever State of the Nation **report** into children's mental well-being, launched to mark World Mental Health Day today.

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