

Practice Management Insight

A report on events affecting behavioral health and substance abuse providers

January 2020

Celebrating a the New Year

OrionNet Systems is celebrating a New Year and new decade. Last year was a successful year for OrionNet Systems with the upgrade to ThinkHealth 3.0. Everyone at OrionNet Systems worked very hard to make ThinkHealth 3.0 a success. In this New Year there is going to be more updates that our customers can benefit from.

Our team here at OrionNet Systems, wants to thank each and every member for being a loyal customer and member of the ThinkHealth family. As always your commitment and dedication is what keeps us striving towards perfecting a system that will benefit your company and the use of ThinkHealth.

Study shows mental health services key for handling heart failure

Heart failure patients that were given access to behavioral health services were better able to manage their conditions, according to the study, conducted by New York-based behavioral telehealth company [AbleTo](#) and [Humana](#).

The small study surveyed 194 patients with minimal to moderately-severe heart disease, covered through Humana's Medicare Advantage plan. They participated in an eight- to 10-week telehealth program offered by Able To, which included access to cognitive behavioral therapy and a coach to help turn those instructions into a plan.

According to the results, patients saw a marked improvement in their mental health and understanding of physician instructions.

At the beginning of the study, 47 percent of participants reported depression symptoms. Fewer than 41 percent had an adequate Self-Care of Heart Failure Index (SCHFI) score, which measures an individual's ability to recognize symptoms, seek treatment and adhere to important health measures, such as taking medication and maintaining a low-sodium diet.

[More Information](#)

3 Techniques Masterful Psychotherapists Use in Every Session

There are many helpful lenses and methods that psychotherapists employ in the course of their work. Ultimately faith, hope, relationship, and an unfathomable number of factors impossible to proceduralize may catalyze therapeutic transformation. Yet with many competing priorities in our age of [innovation](#) and managed care, we must narrow our focus. Master psychotherapists use these three techniques in every session:

1. Approach problems with warmth, empathy, and curiosity.

Years ago at a middle school, a student ran from class yelling obscenities at his teacher, who was chasing him and demanding obedience. I was asked to quickly make my way outside to assist. For 10 minutes I watched the teacher run in circles after him, demanding compliance. She gave up and retreated only after reciting her demands, not only to him but to me.

[More Information](#)

The Hidden Crisis in Rural America

It's prohibitively difficult to access mental-health services in rural America. That's because, relative to urban areas, rural counties have so few mental-health professionals. The majority of nonmetropolitan counties in the U.S. don't have a psychiatrist, and almost half lack a psychologist. The paucity has resulted in a public-health crisis—rural Americans suffering from a psychiatric condition are more likely to encounter police than receive treatment. Each year, 2 million mentally ill Americans, most of whom aren't violent criminals, end up in jail.

This is the case in Cochise County, Arizona, a sprawling area nearly the size of Rhode Island and Connecticut combined, but with 3.8 million fewer residents.

[More Information](#)

All the lonely people: Why more of us will feel disconnected than ever before

Despite popular belief, baby boomers between 55 and 75 aren't more lonely than prior generations, according to two new studies published Tuesday by the American Psychological Association.

But that doesn't mean we won't have a loneliness epidemic in the future, as the baby-boomer population continues to age and younger generations struggle with feelings of isolation.

"While the data show we don't need to worry, at this point at least, that our older adults are suffering loneliness at rates higher than they have been suffering in the past, the concern about loneliness is real," said lead author Louise Hawkley, a senior scientist at the nonpartisan research organization NORC at the University of Chicago.

"It has real consequences for health, for wellbeing, for cognition," she added. "So we can't ignore it. We just need to get smarter about how we deal with loneliness."

Google "loneliness" and you'll see the word "epidemic" widely used.

[More Information](#)



Mental health myth: It's not possible to prevent mental illness

What an important myth to disprove! While it is not possible to prevent mental illness in every instance, it can sometimes be prevented.

There are risk factors that can increase the chance of developing a mental illness. According to the Mayo Clinic, these risk factors are things like stress (financial, family, job, etc.), chronic medical condition, trauma, alcohol or drug use, and lack of healthy relationships.

Stress is probably the most common risk factor; many of us experience inordinate amounts of stress at different points in our lives, and it can seem impossible to de-stress when the situation is particularly bad. While no one can eliminate all stress from their life, it is possible to reduce the stress.

[More Information](#)

Health experts say: take seasonal depression seriously

This time of year can be challenging. The holidays bring up a lot of emotions, and the gloomy weather can lead to seasonal depression.

Counselors at Lourdes Medical Center say it's something you need to take seriously, and should never feel ashamed to admit.

What was once called the winter blues, is Seasonal Affective Disorder. It's a mood disorder characterized by depression that happens every fall and into winter.

"Having that lack of vitamin D can really depress your mood," said Designated Crisis Responder Jessie Arambul.

According to Arambul, some signs of Seasonal Affective Disorder are becoming more depressed during the colder months and isolating from friends and family.

[More Information](#)

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

January 1-31

[Mental Awareness Month](#)

January 1

[Happy New Year!](#)

January 6

[National Technology Day](#)

January 8

[National Winter Skin Relief Day](#)

January 9

[National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day](#)

January 11

[National Human Trafficking Awareness Day](#)

January 15

[Wellness Coach Training](#)

January 16

[Seeking Safety: A model for Trauma and/or Substance Abuse](#)

January 20

[Martin Luther King Jr. Day](#)

January 24

[American Society of Addiction Medicine and the Oklahoma Determination of the ASAM Service Level](#)

January 24

[National Compliment Day](#)

January 28

[Data Privacy Day](#)

Being strong doesn't mean you don't feel pain. It means you feel it & try to understand it so you can grow from it.



HealthyPlaces.com

To Boost Mental Health, Spend Time in 'Blue' Spaces

Officials are increasingly recognizing that integrating nature into cities is an effective public health strategy to improve mental health. Doctors around the world now administer "[green prescriptions](#)" — where patients are encouraged to spend time in local nature spaces — based on hundreds of studies showing that [time in nature can benefit people's](#) psychological well-being and increase social engagement.

Much of this research to date has focused on the role of green space in improving mental health. But what about "blue" space — water settings such as riverside trails, a lake, a waterfront or even urban fountains?

You probably intuitively know that being close to water can induce feelings of calm.

[More Information](#)

NEVER APOLOGIZE FOR BEING SENSITIVE OR EMOTIONAL. LET THIS BE A SIGN THAT YOU'VE GOT A BIG HEART AND AREN'T AFRAID TO LET OTHERS SEE IT. SHOWING YOUR EMOTIONS IS A SIGN OF STRENGTH. -BRIGITTE NICOLE



HealthyPlaces.com

Suicide prevention hotline to have three-digit number for mental health emergencies: 988

A three-digit suicide prevention hotline number will soon make seeking emergency mental health help more like calling 911, federal regulators announced Thursday.

When the months-long process is completed, U.S. residents will be able to call 988 for help in a mental health emergency, just as 911 connects people in need to first-responders for other emergencies.

Currently, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline uses a 10-digit number, 800-273-TALK (8255). That number routes callers to one of 163 crisis centers, where counselors answered 2.2 million calls last year.

"The three-digit number is really going to be a breakthrough in terms of reaching people in a crisis," said Dwight Holton, CEO of Lines for Life, a suicide prevention nonprofit.

[More Information](#)



National Alliance on Mental Illness



Questions or comments? Email us at OrionNet@coxinet.net or call 405.286.1674
To remove your name from our mailing list, please [click here](#).