Digital age offers new techniques in mental health

FEATURES

A Three-part Series

April 23: What is the impact of other mental illness and of Ohlone and other college campuses?

May 2: What is being done to improve mental health on campus and in the community as a whole?

May 14: What is the future of mental health treatment? What can be done to increase awareness about the issue?

Resources

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
Anyone who needs help, or knows who does, can call the 24-hour National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-273-TALK. For more information, go to http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org.

Crisis Support Services of Alameda County
People of all ages and backgrounds in Alameda County can call the 24-hour crisis hotline at 800-309-2131.

The Trevor Project
The project offers a 24-hour toll-free confidential crisis and suicide-prevention hotline for teenagers, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth. Call 666-4TREVOR.

STEP Up Ohlone
Ohlone College’s campaign to promote student mental health, prevent suicide, and reduce stigma and discrimination about the issue. For more information and resources, go to http://stepupohlone.org.

Ohlone Student Health Center
The Health Center is in Room 7002 on the third floor of Building 7 on the Fremont campus. It is Room NC 1214 on the second floor at Wing 2 on the Newark campus. For more information, call 510-459-8258 or go to http://www.ohlone.edu/healthcenter/.

A three-part series that allows a photo and notes to be added to the report, making it easier for the responder to find the incident and provide the best help possible.

Already in partnership with the Las Vegas Downtown Rangers, a group that assists the community, Concor also is teaming up with universities such as Stanford to share their approach on compassionate care. Although responders might not be available in every area, Concor encourages reports to be made so that small governments and nonprofit organizations recognize the need it is in their communities as well. While advances in technology can play an essential role, discrimination and other barriers still must be broken. Mental health experts say the media can play a major role in this.

The Associated Press in March added an entry on mental illnesses to its ASPL (Stylebook) and usage guide, published by newspapers and other news outlets. “It’s the right time to address journalism and the media’s role in covering.” Katherine Carr, AP’s vice president and executive editor, said in a statement. “This isn’t only a question of which unnecessary labels are used, but it’s a question of who someone else’s mental health should be and experts say the media can play a major role in this.

One major problem, McCoy said, is news coverage about mental illness tends to focus on mass shootings and other acts of violence. In fact, she said, people with mental illnesses are responsible for only a small percentage of violent acts against others.

“We’re very good at talking about violence as it regards mental health,” she said. “Mental illness equals violence – and it’s just not true. We know that people are much more likely to be victims of crime than the perpetrators of crime, when they have a mental illness.”

Other institutions, including colleges like Ohlone, also are trying to dispel misconceptions about mental illness. As part of that effort, instructors of the STEP Up Ohlone team and the Health Center would like to see mental health incorporated into the curricula and teaching process in the future. The promotion of mental health should be needed to help students stay healthy in their communities as well. To think it’s starting to be talked about more of a mental health issue in our communities is not something that McCoy said it’s a problem.

“Mental illness is something that they need to be thought of as something that we need to be talking about, and it’s not just going to go away,” she said.

In one scenario, “Within hours we were able to have this student in a safe place,” Roberts said.

When used the right way, “Some people learn by engaging in interactive role-play conversations with emotionally responsive student avatars. The suite is available for free to all California community college faculty, staff and students, thanks to a grant from the California Mental Health Services Authority.”

To take the training, go to www.kognito.com/ccc.

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