



COMMUNITY GRANT OUTCOME REPORT

Addressing Mental Health Issues in the Workplace

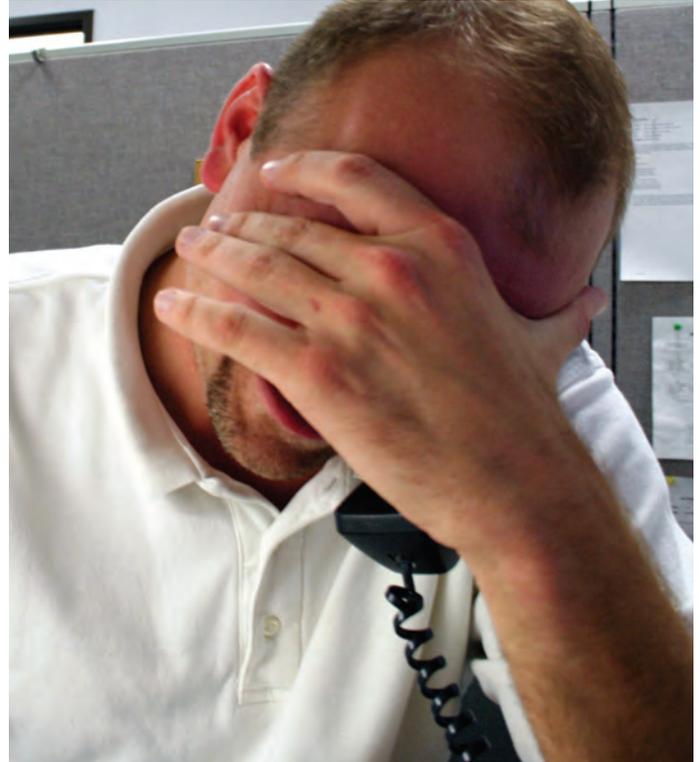
Project findings suggest that reducing stigma related to mental illness can help employers respond more effectively.

► **Description:** The **Improving Employer Mental Health Practices** project identified two interventions to help employers respond more effectively to employees experiencing problems in the workplace related to mental illnesses: manager training on mental illness and employee education to reduce stigma and increase help-seeking behavior.

► **Relevance:** The prevalence of mental health disorders in Wisconsin and the significant gap in treatment creates a need to find new ways to provide early identification and education of individuals with such disorders.

► **Partnerships:** Through a survey of employer members of The Alliance (a nonprofit employer-owned health cooperative) and the Business Health Care Group, key informant interviews and focus groups, the project team explored employer attitudes and activities related to mental health in the workplace and identified potential workplace interventions. An advisory board, including employer, consumer and professional partners, in addition to national and international organizations working on workplace mental health provided guidance.

► **Results:** A strategic plan provided recommendations along with metrics that can be used to measure the impact of employer



Mental health issues heavily impact the workplace: one in five people will experience a mental illness directly.

mental health interventions and an evaluation design that could be used in a pilot program. Results are also available on the website of Wisconsin United for Mental Health.

Strong employer engagement, including considerable interest in an implementation project, suggests that employers recognize the value of these interventions. A pilot program is currently being tested and supported by a \$150,000 implementation grant in 2012. This bodes well for future efforts and the potential to make the workplace more responsive and helpful to employees who may be experiencing mental disorders.

IMPROVING EMPLOYER MENTAL HEALTH PRACTICES

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Award: \$49,915 over one year and six months