

SILVER LININGS



CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)
PACIFIC SOUTHWEST REGION

PSWR OLDER ADULT
MINISTRY COMMITTEE
JANUARY, 2018
VOLUME 8, No. 1

RECOGNIZING AND TREATING DEPRESSION IN RETIREMENT

In response to a question from a woman who was concerned that her husband, who had been retired for a couple of years, was becoming increasingly irritable and apathetic, and was most likely depressed, Jim Miller, Editor of Savvy Living, replied with this column in the December 22, 2017 edition of his newsletter.

“Unfortunately, depression is a widespread problem that affects approximately 15% of the 65-and-older population. Here is what you need to know about identifying depression, treating depression and Medicare coverage.

Identifying Depression

Everyone feels sad or gets the blues now and then, but when these feelings linger more than a few weeks it may be depression. Depression is a real illness that affects moods, feelings, behavior and physical health. Contrary to what many people believe, it is not a normal part of aging, or a personal weakness. It is very treatable.

It is also important to know that depression is not just sadness. For many individuals, it can manifest as apathy or irritability. Individuals may also experience problems with memory or concentration.

To help assess the seriousness of your husband’s problem, he may want to start by taking an online depression screening test. Mental Health America, a national nonprofit organization, offers a variety of free online mental health screening tools at this site: MentalHealthAmerica.net. He can also visit this additional online site: HelpYourselfHelpOthers.org, which is offered by Screening for Mental Health, Inc. Both of these websites’ tests are anonymous and confidential. The tests take less than 10 minutes to complete and can help you determine the severity of your husband’s problem.

Get Help

If you find he is suffering from symptoms of depression, he should visit his doctor for a medical evaluation to rule out possible medical causes. Some medications, for example, can produce side effects that mimic symptoms of depression. It is also important to distinguish between depression and dementia, which can share some of the same symptoms.

If he is diagnosed with depression, there are a variety of treatment options, including talk therapy, antidepressant medications or a combination of both.
(This article continues on the next page.)

WRITE TO:
SILVER LININGS
C/O PSWR OFFICE
2401 N. LAKE AVENUE
ALTADENA, CA 91001

EDITOR: ED LINBERG

EDITOR’S PHONE NUMBER:
909-392-6688

EDITOR’S E-MAIL ADDRESS:
EMLINBERG@EARTHLINK.NET

WE’RE ON THE WEB!

VISIT US AT:

DISCIPLESPSWR.ORG/OAM

Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) is a particularly effective type of talk therapy. CBT helps patients recognize and change destructive thinking patterns that can lead to negative feelings.

For help finding a therapist who is trained in CBT, ask your doctor for a referral, check your local yellow pages under 'counseling' or 'psychologist' or use an online search engine to locate a CBT therapist in your area. You can also check with the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies (FindCBT.org) or the Academy of Cognitive Therapy (AcademyofCT.org).

To search for therapists that accept Medicare, use Medicare's Physician Compare tool. Go to [Medicare.gov/physiciancompare](https://www.medicare.gov/physiciancompare) and type in your zip code or city and state, then type in the type of profession you want to locate, like 'psychiatry' or 'clinical psychologist' in the 'What are you searching for?' box.

Medicare Coverage

You will be happy to know that Medicare currently covers 100% of the costs for annual depression screenings that are done in a doctor's office or other primary care clinic. It also pays 80% of its approved amount for outpatient mental health services like counseling and therapy services, and will cover almost all medications used to treat depression under the Part D prescription drug benefit.

If you and your husband get your Medicare benefits through a private Medicare Advantage plan, then the same services must be covered as original Medicare. But your husband will likely be required to see an In-network provider. You will need to contact your plan administrator directly for the details."

ARE YOU LOOKING FOR PROGRAM IDEAS FOR YOUR SENIORS?

Are you the Program Chair for your congregation's Senior Adults? If so, here are some sources for getting a good program for meetings.

- 1) Local Mental Health organizations have many speakers who can address a variety of topics.
- 2) Local nonprofit organizations are always anxious to let people in their community know about their services and to interact with potential future volunteers.
- 3) The Legal Aid Society has a speakers' bureau.
- 4) Members of your congregation who have interesting hobbies, or who have traveled extensively, are potential source of programs.
- 5) Local musicians always like the opportunity to perform for groups.
- 6) Watch and discuss a movie dealing with aging issues.

FEATURED HYMN

IT'S A NEW YEAR AND WE'RE IN THE SEASON KNOWN AS EPIPHANY. HAVE YOU CONSIDERED THIS HYMN: "WHAT WAS YOUR VOW AND VISION?"

"WHAT WAS YOUR VOW AND VISION, REVEALED AND RE-COGNIZED, CHRIST, WHEN YOU CAME TO JORDAN TO BE BAPTIZED? WAS THERE A SUDDEN SPLendor OF PROPHETS, PRIESTS AND KINGS, A WIND THAT STIRRED THE WATERS, A BLUR OF MIGHTY WINGS?

WAS THIS GOD'S CALL, THE CROWNING OF ALL YOU HAD BECOME 'GO, SHOW AND TELL MY COMING, MY OWN, MY CHOSEN ONE?' DID SCRIPTURE JOIN WITH SCRIPTURE, REVEALING IN SURPRISE THE TRIUMPH OF A SERVANT REJECTED AND DESPISED?

WE MEET YOU AT THE WATER AND PONDER WHY AND HOW, IN HOPE THAT WE MAY FOLLOW WHERE GOD IS GOING NOW, ANOINTED BY YOUR SPIRIT, REBORN, AND ENERGIZED, THROUGH DEED AND WORD PROCLAIMING: 'IN CHRIST WE ARE BAPTIZED'."

THIS HYMN IS #177 IN THE CHALICE HYMNAL, IF YOU CARE TO CHECK IT OUT.