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Looking Ahead in 2017

The old year is gone and thanks to our supporters, this year is already busy and full of promise. The 85th Texas Legislative Session has begun and we are working together with many organizations to advocate for new or improved policies on behalf of all Texan's impacted by mental health and substance use disorder issues. Some of these issues are related to boarding homes, prevention, home visitation for families with young children, suicide prevention, increasing availability of treatment for substance use disorders and addressing mental health care workforce shortages.

Our Texas Suicide Prevention program launched an online certification training "ASK About Suicide To Save A Life" late last year. Now we are working to spread the word so that more people know how to identify if someone is at risk for suicide and how to respond. You can find information at texasuicideprevention.org/training.

This year we celebrate 30 years of Parents as Teachers in Texas. In the past year alone, 6,773 families were served through home visitations. These services increase positive parenting, decrease child abuse and neglect, provide early detection of potential health concerns and/or developmental delays, and increase school readiness. We look forward to celebrating this milestone.

And on May 5th, we will honor Representative Four Price (R- Amarillo) for his achievements in, and dedication to, mental health in Texas at the 54th Annual Honoring Dinner: *An Evening of Hope*. We hope you will join us. And please visit our website at mhatexas.org for information on our programs and upcoming events. Thank you again for your support of Mental Health America of Texas!

Save the Date: 54th Annual Honoring Dinner

Save the date to join us for the 54th Annual Honoring Dinner: *An Evening of Hope* on Friday, May 5th at the Hyatt Regency Austin. This year, we are pleased and proud to honor Representative Four Price with the Mary Elizabeth Holdsworth Butt Award for Mental Health for his significant contributions to advancing the mental health and well being of Texans.

For more than 80 years we have worked hand in hand with others to make mental health the cornerstone of public health. The Honoring Dinner is an opportunity to recognize important work being done by individuals in the mental health field and to celebrate the hope of eliminating stigma and achieving victory over mental illness and substance use disorder.

Sponsorship opportunities are available and begin at \$1,000. Find details on our website at mhatexas.org/hd2017. Contact Julie Burch with questions at julie@mhatexas.org or call 512.454.3706 ext. 218.



Representative
Four Price

Texas Parents as Teachers Celebrates 30 Years

This year, the Parents as Teachers program will celebrate 30 years in Texas. Mental Health America of Texas, under the leadership of the late Betty Jo Hay, truly innovated in 1987 by recognizing the importance of early intervention, prevention, and the social/emotional development of children and bringing this program our state. Texas was one of the first states to implement the Parents as Teachers program outside of Missouri. MHA Texas has assisted local communities to implement the Parents as Teachers program model to serve families with young children across the state from the beginning, and continues to serve as the State Office for the now 48 Parents as Teachers programs across the state



Last year, the program served 6,773 families and 8,212 children. Enrolled families received:

- 74,916 personal visits,
- 6,141 screenings in which 1,604 potential delays or concerns were identified,
- 5,790 families were connected to at least one community resource, and

As a result of the Parents as Teachers program, important outcomes included:

- Increases in positive parenting attitudes and behaviors
- Decreases in child abuse and neglect
- Early detection of potential health concerns and/or developmental delays
- Increases in school readiness and parental engagement

We will celebrate this milestone year at the Parents as Teachers annual Leadership Summit in April where we will recognize Fort Worth ISD, an original pilot site in Texas. To learn more about this program, visit our website at mhatexas.org/parents-as-teachers.



Get Certified in the “ASK About Suicide To Save A Life” Training

“ASK About Suicide To Save A Life” is a best practice informed gatekeeper training based on the recognized ASK workshop training. Now it is available as an online training for certification or informal use, the ASK certification training is intended to meet suicide prevention training requirements that may be needed for your organization. This 75 minute video training and 10 question quiz provides a straightforward, free of charge way to meet suicide prevention training needs.

Through this training, participants learn to recognize warning signs—behaviors and characteristics that might indicate elevated risks for suicidal behavior, how to intervene to seek additional information, and know when and how to refer a person at risk for crisis intervention or additional support.



For more information on all available trainings and to register for the online certification training visit the Texas Suicide Prevention website at texassuicideprevention.org/training.

Mental Health in the 85th Legislature

Late in 2015, Speaker Joe Straus (R-San Antonio) appointed the House Select Committee on Mental Health, led by Representative Four Price (R-Amarillo), instructing them to study and make recommendations on virtually every aspect of mental health in Texas. Shortly before the 85th Legislature convened on January 10th, Speaker Strauss released the Committee's interim report. It is encouraging to see that the committee recognizes the need to address and improve several important issues.



Some that Mental Health America of Texas believes are particularly important are:

- The Committee acknowledged that Texas' outdated state hospital system does not provide enough state funded inpatient care in rural and high needs areas.
- The Committee recognized the need to increase accessibility and availability of treatment for substance use disorders. Especially important is the need for people to get treatment for substance use and mental health disorders at the same time.
- The Committee also considered the issue of mental health care on higher education campuses. Mental Health America of Texas has worked in the past to improve mental health resources and information on college campuses.

In addition to these, the House Committee's interim report significantly addresses three issues that the Texas Coalition for Healthy Minds, facilitated by MHA Texas Policy Director Gyl Switzer, has identified as Coalition priorities:

- Expanding the behavioral healthcare workforce to reduce shortages
- Promoting prevention, treatment and recovery across the continuum of care
- Increasing access and assuring that insurance plans cover mental health and substance use disorder issues with other healthcare issues, as the law requires.

Many of our concerns align with the preliminary recommendations but perhaps most importantly, we are hopeful that the focus on mental health and substance use disorders can lead to much needed additional resources



As with any medical condition, it should be okay to say you or a loved one has a mental illness. Your stories or support can inspire others to speak out and learn more about mental health. We encourage you to join the movement, add your voice and talk openly about mental illness. Visit okaytosay.org to learn more.

MHA Texas is a community partner in Okay to Say, a Texas-based movement initiated by the Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute to increase public awareness about mental health issues and services in Texas, and eliminate discrimination.



February 8, 2017
10:00 am - 4:00pm

The Mental Health Capitol Day Rally and Advocacy Training is an opportunity to advocate for mental health reform at the Texas State Capitol. Please join us for a day of advocacy training, rally on the Capitol steps and meetings with your Legislators.

The rally begins at 12:30 p.m. on the Capital steps. Get details and register on our website at mhatexas.org/capitol-day-2017.

Hosted by NAMI Texas, Mental Health America of Texas, Federation of Texas Psychiatry and DBSA Texas G.O.

Home Visiting & Child Protection Day

February 7, 2017

Please join us for **Home Visiting and Child Protection Day** at the Capitol on February 7th.

A rally, organized by TexProtects, will begin at 2:00 p.m. on the Capitol steps. For more details and to register, go to texprotects.org/childprotectionday2017



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Research for Treatment Resistant Depression

The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) is funding research into treatments for depression that is resistant to traditional methods. Typically, the most effective treatment for depression is a combination of antidepressant medications and psychotherapy. But up to a third of people diagnosed with depression don't respond to these traditional methods.

There are two promising treatments on the horizon. One is Targeted Stimulation, a type of Neuro-modulation (electrical stimulation to the brain) that has favorable results for treatment resistant depression. Clinically effective and FDA approved, researchers have found that there is a quicker and positive response to this treatment and a longer rate of remission for the depression in study participants.*

Next Generation Antidepressants promise to be faster acting and more effective in treating depression and bipolar disorder that has not responded to other treatments. One drug that has received publicity recently is Ketamine. Currently being used in research, Ketamine treats the symptoms of depression or bipolar disorder and reduces the incidence of suicide ideation in research participants. However, one of the negative side effects is symptoms of dissociative disorders that involve disruptions or breakdowns of memory, awareness, identity, or perception. Researchers are working to formulate Ketamine that has the same benefits of symptom relief without the negative side effect.**

These are exciting developments for the millions of people who suffer from depression and MHA Texas will share new developments as they emerge.

* Adapted from a presentation by Dr. Lisanby: Advances in Device Based Therapies, July 2016.

** Adapted from presentation by Dr. Park: Advances for Rapid Acting Treatment for Depression, July 2016.

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