



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT
of HEALTH SERVICES

Mental Illness & Crisis Intervention

Jenna Suleski, LPC
Crisis Services Coordinator

Donna Reimer, RN-PMH
Nurse Consultant

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Understanding Mental Illness

- A mental disorder is a syndrome characterized by a disturbance in an individual's cognition, emotion regulation, or behavior based on a dysfunction in the psychological, biological, or developmental processes.
- Mental illness manifests differently in everyone.

Understanding Mental Illness

Primary mental health conditions:

- Major depressive disorder
- Anxiety
- Bipolar disorder
- Schizophrenia
- Schizoaffective disorder
- Posttraumatic stress disorder

Understanding Mental Illness

Secondary mental health conditions:

- Substance use disorders
- Intellectual/developmental disability
- Personality disorders

Defining Depression

- Depressive disorders are defined by the presence of sad, empty, or irritable mood, accompanied by cognitive changes that significantly affect the individual's capacity to function.
- Depressive disorders can be acute or chronic, mild or severe, co-occurring or primary.

Symptoms of Depression

- Feelings of worthlessness, hopelessness, and helplessness
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Eating too much or too little
- Difficulty concentrating or making decisions
- Inability to emotionally regulate
- Loss of interest or pleasure in nearly all activities
- Suicidal thoughts

Defining Psychosis

- Psychosis is a temporary state of mental impairment marked by loss of contact with reality that causes deterioration in functioning.
- Psychosis is caused by severe mental illness (schizophrenia, bipolar I disorder, major depressive disorder), trauma, grief, dementia, stress, etc.

Symptoms of Psychosis

- Difficulty concentrating; poor motivation
- Paranoia
- Hallucinations (auditory and/or visual)
- Preoccupation with the supernatural
- Withdrawal from friends and family
- Delusions
- Confusion and odd speech
- Disorganized thoughts
- Sleeping too much or not enough

Defining Trauma

- Trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being.
- Types of trauma: acute, complex, historical, sanctuary, vicarious, collective.

Symptoms of Trauma

- Flashbacks (reliving the event)
- Nightmares
- Being on guard
- Easily startled
- Intrusive thoughts
- Avoidance
- Feelings of detachment or numbness
- Responding to sensory stimuli
- Alterations in moods and thoughts

Discussion

What experiences have you had that give you an idea of symptoms of mental illness that can lead to a crisis?

Triggers of Crisis

- Symptoms of mental illness
- Emotional dysregulation
- Trauma triggers
- Unmet basic needs
- Feeling a lack of control
- Recent relationship stressors
- Substance use/intoxication
- Medication changes

Warning Signs of Crisis

- Body language and physical warning signs
- Increased paranoia
- Coping skills become ineffective
- Changes in eating habits, sleeping habits, hygiene habits
- Isolation and social withdrawal

Crisis Prevention vs Crisis Intervention

- Crisis prevention:
 - Understanding the individuals under your care
 - Knowing triggers and warning signs for crisis
 - Using information from crisis plans and care teams
 - Self-awareness
- Crisis intervention:
 - Using appropriate de-escalation skills
 - Ability to provide empathy to individual in crisis
 - Understanding safety for all is primary goal
 - Self-awareness

Take-Aways

- Mental illness and behavioral health is extremely complex.
- Crisis intervention cannot be a one size fits all model as mental illness is different in everyone.
- Mental illness, trauma, substance use, intellectual/developmental disabilities, and other impairments can be co-occurring.
- Not all crises can be prevented.

Thoughts? Questions?