

ASK *the* EXPERTS

[MENTAL HEALTH]

MILLIONS OF AMERICANS EXPERIENCE MENTAL HEALTH SYMPTOMS EACH YEAR, BUT IT CAN BE DIFFICULT FOR INDIVIDUALS TO ASK FOR AND FIND HELP. IN RECOGNITION OF MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH, SOME OF THE REGION'S TOP LEADERS IN MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE SHARE THEIR INSIGHTS ON THIS IMPORTANT TOPIC.



KATHARINE DOBBINS, LCSW

CEO
WELLSPRING
502.637.4361
KATHARINE.DOBBS@WELLSPRINGKY.ORG



ABBY DRANE

PRESIDENT & CEO
SEVEN COUNTIES SERVICES /
BELLEWOOD AND BROOKLAWN
502.589.8600
ADRANE@SEVENCOUNTIES.ORG



PRISCILLA McINTOSH

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
THE MORTON CENTER
502.451.1221
PMcINTOSH@THEMORTONCENTER.ORG



STEWART BRIDGMAN JR.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
BRIDGEHAVEN MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES
502.585.9444
SBRIDGMAN@BRIDGEHAVEN.ORG



We often talk about homelessness as a public health crisis, but is it also a behavioral health crisis?

Absolutely. Approximately a third of the houseless population has a serious mental illness (SMI) which locally translates to **3,546** persons. This is a human tragedy. Between 2018 and 2021 the number of homeless in Jefferson County increased 41% from 7,572 to 10,640. Wellspring provides housing and supportive services to adults with mental illness and nowhere is the need greater than within our homeless population.

Because untreated symptoms may be disruptive in congregate shelters, there is likely a disproportionate number of people with mental illness living on our streets and under our viaducts. Sadly, they often have a variety of other untreated health conditions. Serious mental illnesses are biological disorders affecting the brain – not a moral failing.

Central State once housed more than 2,000 patients while their 2021 average daily census was but 59. Hospitals are not meant to be homes. Most with serious mental illness live on \$841/month SSI while the fair market rent in Louisville is \$800. Not only are most unable to afford market rate housing, they often need supportive services to succeed.

The availability of affordable, supportive housing has decreased as homelessness has increased resulting in incredible human suffering. Wellspring has provided supportive housing for 40 years but the need outpaces the community's investment. Wellspring is well positioned to provide the housing and supports needed to make a real impact on both individual and community quality of life. Wellspring stands ready to work collaboratively with businesses, the City, the KY Department for Behavioral Health and others to engage those most in need and to help move them into housing and toward lives of recovery.

Contact Us:
502.637.4361 or www.WellspringKY.org

How would you describe the present state of mental health in our community?

As we return to a new normal, the pandemic's emotional, physical, and spiritual impact is evident throughout our community. In both youth and adults, we see high rates of anxiety, depression, and substance use. Other key factors driving this increase include elevated food prices, fuel prices, and the war in Ukraine. This trying time has been especially difficult for those in alcohol and substance use recovery or recently out of recovery. We have observed increasing numbers of individuals who previously recovered but have returned to a state of addiction. Our crisis lines that provide 24/7 access to assistance continue to experience high call volume. Substantial requests for telehealth and in-person services remain. Perhaps the most impacted individuals are our youth as their family and friends struggle with mental illness and addiction.

While many challenges face our community today, we remain on mission and are dedicated to working towards a brighter tomorrow. Together, Seven Counties Services / Bellewood & Brooklawn provide a comprehensive continuum of care that helps vulnerable individuals find hope, make positive changes in their lives, and realize their potential. We serve more than 31,000 Kentuckians annually through mental, behavioral, and developmental health programs, substance abuse treatment, crisis intervention, therapeutic residential treatment programs for youth, and therapeutic foster care.

Make A Referral
<https://sevencounties.org/referral/>

Request First Appointment
502.589.1100
<https://sevencounties.org/request-first-appointment/>

If an individual does experience a relapse, a family member senses a problem, or an individual is concerned about their habits, what should they do?

It's important that families and individuals know the warning signs and seek help immediately if they suspect a problem. The earlier an abuse problem is recognized the more effectively and successfully the problem can be treated.

Here are a few things to look for if you are concerned for a family member:

- Negative changes in behavior
- Repeat DUI offenses or arrests due to behavior
- Aggressively denying a problem with alcohol or drug usage
- Isolation or withdrawal from activities and people
- Sadness

Or an individual suspecting they have a problem:

- Drinking alone
- Unable to control amount of drinking or drinking more frequently
- An increasing craving or dependence on a substance to relax or cope
- The desire to "drink less" or "stop drinking" but the inability to succeed
- Preoccupation about alcohol or other substances

If any of these warning signs are present, we suggest you call us as soon as possible. Call 451.1221 or visit www.themortoncenter.org for additional information.

What is Person Centered Treatment?

Person Centered Programming is programming that is designed for each person's unique needs and recovery goals. Bridgehaven has over 60 years of experience in tailoring programs and therapies around each person. We have found what works for one person's recovery will not necessarily work for another person. Recovery goals are personal. Therapy modalities/methods are based on a person's recovery goals. Bridgehaven offers small group therapy and one-on-one therapy as well. In addition to licensed professionals, Bridgehaven employs Peer Support Specialists – these are individuals with lived experience who assist and walk beside persons seeking services. Having someone who has experienced mental illness and who is working their own recovery plan can be invaluable to an individual just starting on the path to recovery. Our goal is to help each person understand their illness and how to manage it. Bridgehaven strives to meet this goal by offering over 50 different groups/programs including Surviving to Thriving; Developing Empowerment; Cognitive Enhancement Therapy; Pet Therapy; Art Therapy; and Integrative Health groups. Person centered treatment also means we meet the person where they are in their recovery journey – if they have just started to realize there may be mental health concerns or if they have known for quite some time they struggle with mental illness. Understanding that physical health impacts mental health means that we work to help individuals meet their physical health goals as well. When seeking treating consider your own needs or the person your assisting. Every human is unique and deserves the highest quality services. Programming should always fit the person ... people should not have to adapt to meet the requirements of a specific program.

Make A Referral
Call 502.585.9444. All other information please go to Bridgehaven.org