

Spotlight on: Older New Yorkers

OMH's Spotlight series highlights the challenges faced by different New York populations. We recognize the unique issues surrounding mental health and invite you to learn more.

Did you Know?

Almost $\frac{1}{4}$ of New Yorkers are over age 60. 



The older New Yorker population is expected to increase by 25% before 2040.



Older New Yorkers feel more comfortable reaching out to their primary care doctor instead of a mental health professional.



Mental health problems in older adults are often under-identified because of stigma.

The number of older New Yorkers with mental illness is expected to increase by more than 50% before 2030.

Most older adults struggling with their emotional wellness are also likely to have physical health symptoms.



Being connected to services improves mental and physical wellness!! Older New Yorkers linked to appropriate services had a:



70% improvement in depression, anxiety and substance abuse



60% improvement in BMI



Over 80% improvement in blood pressure

Data from NYS OMH, US Census Statistics, Geriatric Mental Health Alliance

Take Action

In Your Community:

Share your story. Most people have struggled with their mental health at some point during their lives. Speaking openly about your own story can help others feel less alone.

Make it normal to ask about mental health. Check in on the older adults you know and ask them directly how they are feeling. Thank them if they decide to share their struggles with you. Don't try to solve their problems or dismiss their concerns; instead acknowledge their feelings and let them know you hear them.

Reach out. Feeling lonely and isolated can worsen mental health struggles and feeling connected can help. Taking a few minutes to check in on an older neighbor, send a text, call, or drop a card in the mail can make all the difference.

Share emotional support and mental health resources with people who may need them. In addition to professional help, older adults may be interested in resources like hotlines and warmlines, connection to mindfulness/relaxation groups run through public resources like a senior center or library, opportunities to improve mental health through physical activity like walking or yoga, and books, audio files, or apps with self-guided therapy tips.

In the Workplace:

Foster a workplace culture that recognizes ability regardless of age and rejects age stereotypes. Older adults bring unique skills and talents to the workplace.

Connect to Help

NY Project Hope Emotional Support Helpline: 1-844-863-9314

Crisis Text Line: Text GOT5 to 741741

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

NY Connects Services: 1-800-342-9871

Trevor Lifeline: 1-866-488-7686 or Trevor Text: Text START to 678678

OMH's Customer Relations: 1-800-597-8481



Office of
Mental Health