

## Mental Health Fact Sheet for Employers

### Untreated/Under treated Mental Illness Costs Businesses

---

- Mental illness is the leading cause of disability in the United States, resulting in 217 million days of work lost annually due to productivity decline, more than many other chronic conditions such as diabetes, asthma, and arthritis. (*National Business Group on Health*)
- \$116.6 billion in substance abuse costs, \$205 billion untreated mental health costs, \$43.7 billion for depression. Cost of depression to employers: \$6000 untreated and \$3000 to treat. (*National Mental Health Association*)
- Approximately 90% of adults with a substance abuse or dependence disorder, and 72% of individuals with a mental illness, work. (*National Business Group on Health*)
- 65% of all job terminations are related to a mental health issue. (*Mines & Associates, Employee Assistance Program*)
- In a 2005, Colorado Health Institute survey to 640 community leaders in 23 communities around the state revealed that one of the top five health threats in communities was: Lack of access to mental health services, others included Lack of affordable health insurance, Low-paying jobs with no benefits, Illicit drug use, Alcohol abuse (*Colorado Health Foundation/Colorado Health Institute*)
- Employer limitation of the behavioral health service substantially increased the number of sick days taken by employees with behavioral health problems. The savings attributed to the limitation benefits were fully offset by increased use of other medical services and lost workdays. (*National Business Group on Health*)
- In Colorado the uncompensated hospital/emergency room care costs are \$714 million, which the cost of private health insurance goes up by 8.2%, the result is the average increase in annual premiums to \$355 individual and \$934 for families. (*Families USA*)
- Colorado industry total loss estimated to absenteeism due to untreated depression alone would be \$886 million a year. (*Based on 2004/2005 Colorado Department of Labor and Employment statistics run through a depression calculator*)

### Treatment is successful and saves money

---

- Treatment success rates: depression 80%, panic disorder 70-90%, schizophrenia 60%, compared to other medical conditions such as heart disease with a success rate of only 45-50%. (*National Institutes of Mental Health*)
- When workers with depression were treated with prescription medicines medical costs declined by \$882 per employee per year and absenteeism dropped by 9 days. (*Health Economics*)
- A four-year study of program effectiveness at McDonnell Douglas yielded a four-to-one return on investment after considering medical claims, absenteeism and turnover. (*Wall Street Journal*)
- When the Kennecott Copper Corporation provided mental health counseling for employees, its hospital, medical, and surgical costs decreased 48.9 percent. (*GWCMHPC, Inc., 2000*)
- The majority of Americans (79 percent) support parity legislation even if it results in an increase in their health insurance premiums. (*National Mental Health Association*)
- Cost to cover an employee for appropriate mental health coverage - priceless - \$39.06 a year. (*Based on Congressional Budget Office estimated 0.9%*)