

Fight Stigma, Promote Education, Foster Wellness and Recovery

Fight Stigma

One of the fun and rewarding things about working at the New Jersey Association of Mental Health and Addiction Agencies (NJAMHAA) is sharing the great news of the terrific work that our members do, which is evident through many initiatives, in addition to provision of treatment and support services. For example, [CarePlus](#) Foundation is collaborating with other Paramus, NJ leaders and citizens to develop a Stigma-Free Zone for the borough.

Activities will include providing Mental Health First Aid training to people who work with community members; conducting educational programs to educate residents "in laymen's terms" on mental health topics; and hosting open houses and other community events. CarePlus is working with the coalition, as well as fellow NJAMHAA member [Bergen Regional Medical Center](#) and other healthcare organizations in the Paramus area, to provide their expertise in training and working with the community. In addition, a website, [ParamusStigmaFree.org](#), and a Facebook page are being developed, according to a press release issued by CarePlus.

"The whole idea is to educate the community about mental illness and to train people to be aware of the signs, and so that they know what to do if someone is in crisis. We are looking to engage the community in a way that they learn what mental illness is, eliminate the fear, and let them know what resources are available right in their own backyard," Mary Ann Uzzi, a member of CarePlus' Board of Trustees, was quoted in the press release.

For more information, please contact Caryl Felicetta, Director of Marketing, at 201-265-8200, ext. 332, or carylf@careplusnj.org.

Promote Education

Education is essential for eliminating stigma; enabling people to recognize the need for behavioral health care; demonstrating the effectiveness of services; and encouraging people to seek this invaluable help when needed. These are the goals that [NJAMHAA](#) and Attitudes in Reverse® ([AIR](#)) aim to achieve in a co-hosted event, Back to School: Take a Deep Breath - and Pack a Good Mental Health Toolkit, on National Suicide Prevention Day, September 10, 2013, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 pm. at the Department of Human Services, first floor conference room, 222 S. Warren St., Trenton. [Online registration](#) is set up and more details will be available soon.

Foster Wellness and Recovery

September is slated as National Recovery Month and September 16 to 22, 2013 will be National Wellness Week. We strongly encourage all behavioral healthcare providers to take these opportunities to promote the invaluable services you provide and the profound impact your programs have on the individuals and families you serve.

In the meantime, visit the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA's) National Recovery Month [website](#) for informational and event planning resources. SAMHSA also provides similar online resources for [National Wellness Week](#).