

WHAT IS THE SPEAKERS BUREAU?

Mental Health America of Wisconsin (MHA) is dedicated to improving the mental health of all individuals and achieving victory over mental illnesses through advocacy, information, education and support. MHA Speakers Bureau supports this mission by educating the community about issues related to mental health and mental illness.

WHY SHOULD I VOLUNTEER?

Being part of the MHA Speakers Bureau offers volunteers the opportunity to:

- Meet and serve the community,
- Network and increase visibility in the community,
- Hone public speaking skills,
- Partner with an established, respected mental health organization, and
- Utilize MHA's technical support.

WHAT QUALIFICATIONS DO I NEED?

Speakers must have professional or personal expertise in the area of mental health and mental illness. Volunteers are representatives of MHA and should have a familiarity and identification with MHA's goals and objectives.

Volunteers should have public speaking ability and feel comfortable presenting to groups of 10-50 people. Examples of audiences may include student groups (middle school through college age); older adults at a senior center; organizations such as the Parent Teacher Association (PTA); or other community groups.

Speakers must be able to speak on topics including: general mental health and wellness; recognizing signs and symptoms of mental illness; depressive disorders; anxiety disorders; suicide; treatment options; coping skills and self-care; supporting others; community resources; and recovery.

WHAT SUPPORT WILL I RECEIVE?

Volunteer speakers will present from MHA-prepared presentation that can be customized based on the request and on the speaker's area of expertise. Speakers will attend a brief orientation program to receive a Speaker Packet and other supporting materials. The Speaker Packet will include everything the volunteer needs to do a presentation including presentation outlines, speaker notes, handouts and a list of brochures available from MHA.

WHAT IS THE NEXT STEP?

Speakers can be referred by MHA staff; a member of the Board of Directors; a mental health professional; consumer group; or other community partner. Potential speakers will complete an application form including their contact information, credentials, a short bio and availability.

The Community Outreach Coordinator will then meet with the volunteer to review, 1) MHA's mission, philosophy, programs and services, 2) the volunteer's role and responsibilities, and 3) MHA's role and responsibilities.

For more information, contact the Community Outreach Coordinator at 414-276-3122 or e-mail info@mhawisconsin.org.