FAST FACTS FOR MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELORS

- Mental illness ranks first in terms of causing disability in the United States.
- 20 percent of the population experiences a mental disorder in a given year.
- Persons with serious mental illness, on average die 25 years earlier than the general population.
- About 5 percent of the population suffers from a persistent mental illness such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, or major depression.
- Treatment outcomes for people with serious mental illness such as bipolar disorder have higher success rates (60-80 percent) than well-established general medical or surgical treatments for heart disease such as angioplasty.
- By 2020, as a major cause of disability, behavioral health disorders will surpass all physical diseases world-wide.
- Approximately 54 million Americans have a mental disorder.
- The latest epidemiologic data available indicate that from 15 percent to 19 percent of the nation’s approximately 63 million children and youth suffer from emotional or other problems that warrant mental health treatment.
- The total yearly cost for mental illness in both private and public sector in the United States is over $200 billion.
  - $105 billion is due to lost worker productivity.
  - $8 billion resulting from crime and welfare costs.
  - Less than $92 billion comes from treatment costs.
  - The cost of untreated and mistreated mental illness to American businesses, the government and families has grown to $113 billion annually.

Military Mental Health

- Approximately 18.5 percent of the service members returning from Iraq and Afghanistan have PTSD or depression.
- 9.3 percent of veterans experience at least one major depressive episode.
- Rates of suicide for active duty service members for the first time surpass the civilian suicide rate.
- Suicide among veterans may account for 1 of every 5 suicides in the United States.
- Over ½ of soldiers with major depressive episode reported severe impairment with home, management, work, close relationships with others and social life.
- On any given day veterans account for nine of every one hundred individuals in United States jails and prisons.
Need for Mental Health Reform

- People with mental health problems report the highest rates of lack of health insurance of all disability groups.
- Hospital stays for patients with mental or substance abuse diagnosis are 36% more likely to be billed as uninsured than stays for other health related conditions.
- 111 million Americans are covered by private employer based insurance; 29 million are covered by local/state governments.
- 22 states have some form of mental health and substance use disorder “parity” requirement. Most state parity laws deal only with quantitative requirements (ie, deductibles, co-payments, annual, or lifetime limits); few mandate mental health or substance abuse benefits.
- Until 2014, when the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act allows for it, mental illness and or substance abuse disorders may be considered pre-existing conditions that can impact the availability of insurance coverage.

How Health Reform Addresses Mental Health

- Requires that by 2014 new insurance plans include a mental health and substance use disorder benefit that is administered at parity with medical/surgical benefits.
- Prohibition against use of pre-existing conditions as a basis to deny insurance coverage becomes effective for children in 2010 and effective for adults in 2013.
- Creates a special high risk pool beginning in 2010, thus providing insurance access to adults who have pre-existing conditions and consequently, have previously been unable to purchase insurance.
- Includes essential mental health and substance use disorder benefits and prevention services as health benefits for new insurance policies after 2013.
- Provides changes to the Medicaid program to expand types of home and community-based services supported for individuals with mental health and substance use disorders.
- Expands Medicaid eligibility to adults who earn under 133 percent of the Federal Poverty Level, which is a group disproportionately suffering from untreated mental health and substance abuse disorders.
- Creates a grant program to be implemented in 2010 for school-based health clinics to provide mental health and substance abuse counseling, treatment and referral to a continuum of services including emergency psychiatric care, community support programs, and inpatient and outpatient mental health programs.