

THE SILVER TSUNAMI AND THE CRITICAL NEED FOR GERIATRIC MENTAL HEALTH CARE

Prepared by Psychiatric Medical Care

An Aging Population

The *Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration* (SAMHSA) has published several sobering facts regarding aging in America (SAMHSA, 2019).

- **By 2040, the geriatric population aged 85 years and older will have increased by 129%.**
- **84 years is the average life expectancy of adults who reach age 65.**
- **35% is the number of older adults living with a disability, including mental illness.**

As the American population ages, we have an increased need for specialty age-specific mental health care. According to *WebMD*, geriatric patients have mental health needs unique to their life stage and require specialized care and support for their issues (WebMD, 2021).

Older Adults Require Specialty Mental Health Care

Patients over 60 seek or receive treatment 40% less than younger individuals. Unfortunately, most patients who are treated do not have access to a specialty geriatric provider (SAMHSA, 2019).

Older adults often begin experiencing many life changes like retirement, loss of family and friends, physical health challenges, and moving. These changes can have a detrimental effect on the sixty-plus population's mental health.

WebMD shares the following list of mental health issues common in older adults:

- Anxiety
- Dementia
- Depression
- Frequent Mental Distress
- Suicide

The highest suicide rates are found among people ages 75 and older compared to other age groups. Additionally, men over 60 have the highest death by suicide rate. Older adults have a higher success rate when attempting suicide as well (SAMHSA, 2019).

The Need for Community

The aging population has increased the percentage of older adults living alone. Nearly half of women over the age of 75 live alone, and 28% of adults over 65 live alone (WebMD, 2021). The negative impacts of social isolation are contributing factors to various health conditions and mental illnesses.

Older people living alone are more likely to suffer from the following conditions:

- Alzheimer's disease
- Cognitive decline
- Heart disease
- High blood pressure
- Obesity
- Weak immune system

Providing these older adults with a sense of community may have a significant impact on their improved physical and mental well-being. Psychiatric Medical Care's geriatric outpatient and inpatient solutions are designed to meet the unique needs of older adults in your community.

Your hospital can benefit from Psychiatric Medical Care's (PMC) comprehensive solutions:

- After-care programs post-discharge.
- Award-winning community education support.
- Compliance and crisis prevention training.
- Financial impact and cost report analysis.
- Forms and billing training.
- Partnerships with medical schools.
- Physician and staff recruitment.
- Policies and procedures templates.
- Program management and operational oversight.
- Telepsychiatry system and capability.

PMC's programs are designed to meet the specific needs of acute care hospitals based in rural areas. We partner with small and large, for-profit and non-profit, critical access hospitals. Together, we can address your community's needs and improve your older adults' quality of life while providing a financial benefit to your hospital.

ABOUT PMC

Psychiatric Medical Care (PMC) works to improve access to behavioral healthcare in communities like yours. Our founder and Chief Medical Officer, James A. Greene, M.D., developed PMC with the sole mission of improving the function and quality of life for patients living in underserved communities. Our clinical leadership team consists of some of the country's most knowledgeable and recognized mental health leaders. We offer extensive support to our hospitals and partners, including recruiting, training, and education for each clinical function.

If you are interested in learning more about PMC and how your hospital could benefit from our partnership, contact us today:



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