ABOUT WPA

The Wisconsin Psychiatric Association (WPA), a district branch of the American Psychiatric Association, is a statewide medical specialty organization whose 450+ physician members specialize in the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of mental illnesses, including substance use disorders.

WPA works to protect the psychiatric profession and mental health patients in Wisconsin through advocacy, physician engagement, education and career development.

WPA is working to increase access to care through the use of telemedicine, as well as working with primary care physicians in the Collaborative Care Model, which has been shown by over 90 studies to safely increase access to mental health care to patients in primary care settings.

WHAT IS A PSYCHIATRIST?

» A psychiatrist is a medical doctor who specializes in mental health, including substance use disorders.

» Psychiatrists have up to 12 years of medical training in biology, anatomy, microbiology, pharmacology, chemistry and the other biomedical coursework, including clinical rotations and training, medical internship and four years of residency learning to diagnose mental and physical disease and prescribe medications to treat illnesses.

» Psychiatrists are qualified to assess both the mental and physical aspects of psychological problems. They are trained to review medical records, examine patients, order/analyze appropriate lab reports and determine the source of an illness.

» Psychiatric practice standards are based upon scientific methodologies and research involving the complex science of brain chemistry and neurologic function. Some mental health disorders may be revealed through interview and observation, while others are diagnosed only after extensive testing, such as blood chemistry tests or highly advanced brain scans.

CARING FOR MENTAL HEALTH

» Mental illnesses are health conditions involving changes in thinking, emotion or behavior (or a combination of these). They are often associated with distress and/or problems functioning in social, work or family activities.

» Mental illness is a medical condition, just like heart disease or diabetes.

» Mental illness is common. One in five adults in the U.S. experience mental illness each year. Each year one in 25 Americans experience a serious mental illness such as depression, schizophrenia or bipolar disorder that causes marked suffering and substantially interferes with one or more major life activities.

» Mental illness does not discriminate; it can affect anyone at any age. Three-fourths of all mental illness begins by age 24.

» Mental health conditions are treatable. Psychiatrists are continually expanding their understanding of how the human brain works, and treatments are available to help people successfully manage mental health conditions.

» Treatment may involve psychotherapy (talking sessions), medications designed to address a patient’s mood, perception and behaviors, or a combination of modalities that may involve complex prescribing processes.

CONTACT WPA

Wisconsin Psychiatric Association | 563 Carter Ct Ste B | Kimberly WI 54136
TheWPA.org | WPA@badgerbay.co | 920-560-5643