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KEARNEY COUNTY HEALTH SERVICES' SENIOR LIFE SOLUTIONS PROGRAM CELEBRATES MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

[MINDEN, NE] — May is Mental Health Awareness Month, and Kearney County Health Services' Senior Life Solutions program is raising awareness about mental health signs, symptoms, and risk factors and how to know when to seek help. Over the past couple of years, mental health has moved to the forefront for many. An increasing number of folks are beginning to see it for what it is: a vital component of your overall health and well-being, just as important as your physical health. At the same time, mental health conditions, resources, and conversations can still feel complicated and out of reach.

Many people are learning about mental health topics for the first time. Having a widespread understanding of the topic can help you be more informed if you or someone you know is experiencing a mental health condition or crisis.

Around half of the people in the U.S. will meet the criteria for a diagnosable mental health condition at some point in their life. This understanding can help us to be more empathetic to the mental health of our families, friends, and community members.

There are signs and symptoms to be aware of and specific factors that can lead to mental health conditions or crises. What resources are out there – and how do I know if they're right for me?

By becoming acquainted with the common signs of mental health issues, we can be more prepared, confident, and less afraid of where to start when addressing our mental health.

"Understanding the signs and symptoms of a mental health condition is the first step to a happier, healthier life." says Megan Wilsey, RN, Program Director. "Understanding that mental health conditions are common and treatable is the next. We must keep working to break down the stigma against mental health to ensure people receive the help they need."

There's often no single cause for a mental health condition. Instead, many possible risk factors can influence how likely a person is to experience a mental health condition or how severe the symptoms may be. Some risk factors for mental health conditions include "trauma," which can be a one-time event or ongoing. And "environment or social determinants" impact health and quality of life (i.e., financial stability and health care access); genetics; brain chemistry; and habits/lifestyle, such as a lack of sleep.

You may not need this information today, yet understanding the basics of mental health will mean you will be more prepared if you ever need it. Go to mhanational.org/may to learn more.

Senior Life Solutions is Kearney County Health Services' program is designed to meet the unique needs of individuals typically 65 and older experiencing depression or anxiety related to life changes that are often associated with aging. If you or someone you know is struggling with a recent medical diagnosis or a decline in emotional health, our program wants you to know we are here to help. Whether through our program, or another service, our team works to identify and address the emotional needs of those in our community and provide support.

We have dedicated ourselves to reducing the stigma surrounding mental health in our community. We do it through education, highlighting progress, amplifying the voices of those in need, and improving the quality of life for the patients we serve.

We are committed to providing excellent care to our community. We are available to answer questions about mental health, provide educational presentations, or provide information about our program to community members. We also educate other healthcare professionals about mental health wellness and the specific challenges of aging.

If you need more information, education, or would like to confidentially discuss support, please call 308-832-3400 Option 4 or visit www.kchs.org/senior-life-solutions

About Senior Life Solutions

Senior Life Solutions is managed in partnership by Psychiatric Medical Care (PMC), a leading behavioral healthcare management company. Focused on addressing the needs of rural and underserved communities, PMC manages inpatient behavioral health units, intensive outpatient programs, and telehealth services in more than 25 states. The company's services provide evaluation and treatment for patients suffering from depression, anxiety, mood disorders, memory problems, post-traumatic stress disorder, and other behavioral health problems. For more information, visit www.psychmc.com/seniorlifesolutions.

About Kearney County Health Services

Kearney County Health Services mission is "to provide exceptional, family-centered care while strengthening the health and well-being of our community." Kearney County Health Services (KCHS) strives to achieve this by providing a 10-bed Critical Access Hospital; 24-hour Emergency Room; outpatient specialty clinics and surgical procedures; a Rural Health Clinic; a Functional Health Center for group medical appointments; and a geriatric intensive outpatient group counseling program, Senior Life Solutions.

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