



# Mental Health First Aid® USA

FOR OLDER ADULTS AND THOSE  
DEALING WITH LATER-LIFE ISSUES



NATIONAL COUNCIL  
FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH



# Program Overview:

## Session 1

- What is Mental Health First Aid?
- Mental Health Problems in the United States
- Mental Health First Aid Action Plan
- Understanding Depression and Anxiety
- Mental Health First Aid Action Plan for Depression and Anxiety
  - *Suicidal Behavior*
  - *Depressive Symptoms*
  - *Nonsuicidal Self-Injury*

# Session 2

- *Panic Attacks*
- *Traumatic Events*
- *Anxiety Symptoms*
- Understanding Psychosis
- Mental Health First Aid Action Plan
  - *Acute Psychosis*
  - *Disruptive or Aggressive Behavior*
- Understanding Substance Use Disorders
- Mental Health First Aid Action Plan
  - *Overdose*
  - *Withdrawal*
  - *Substance Use Disorders*
- Using your Mental Health First Aid Training

# What Is Mental Health First Aid?

**Mental Health First Aid** is the help offered to a person developing a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis. The first aid is given until appropriate treatment and support are received or until the crisis resolves.

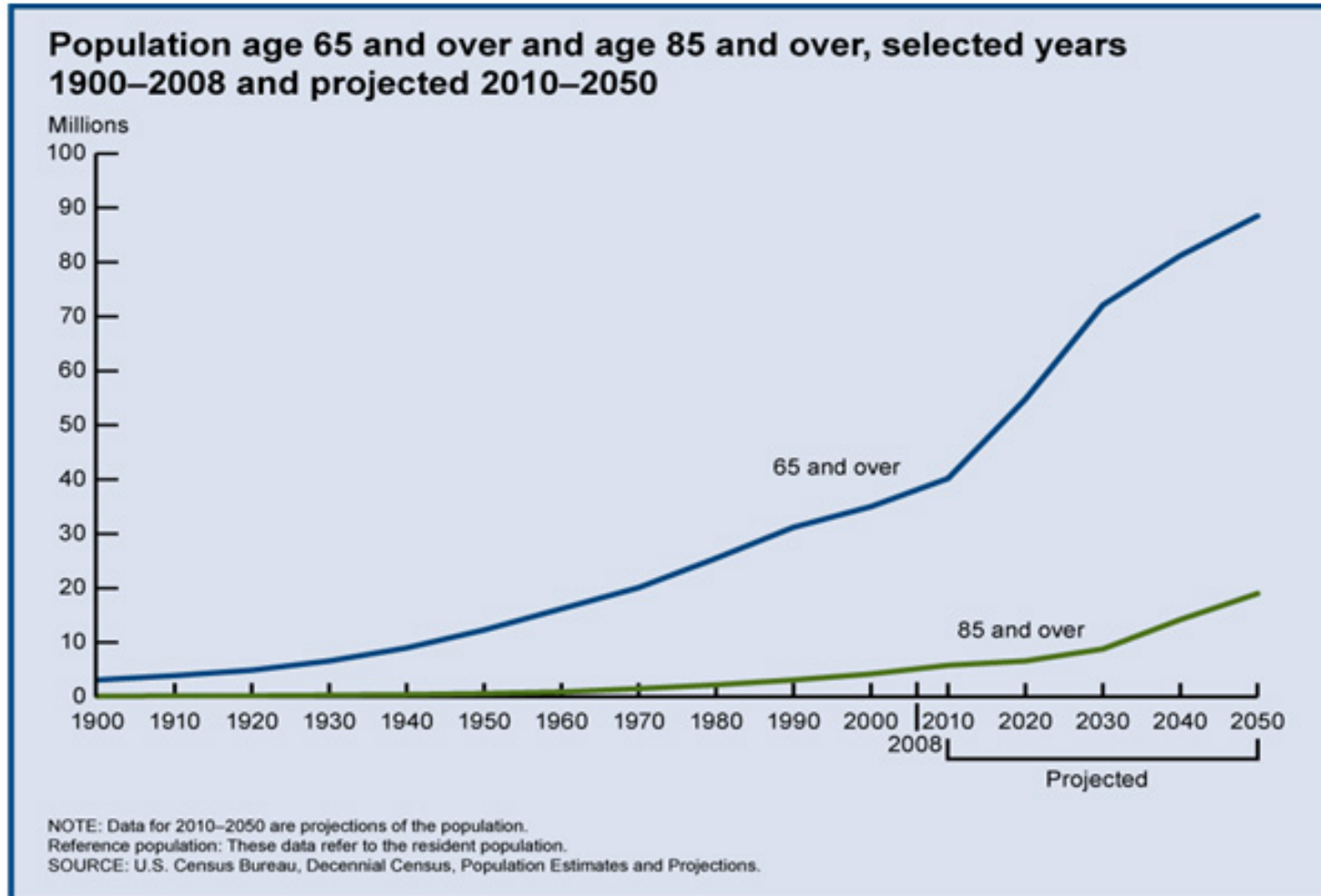


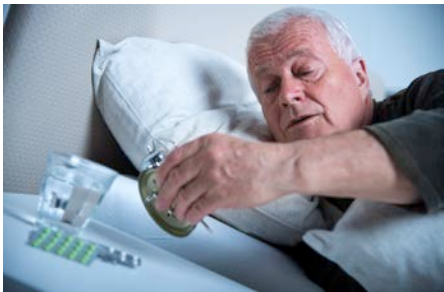
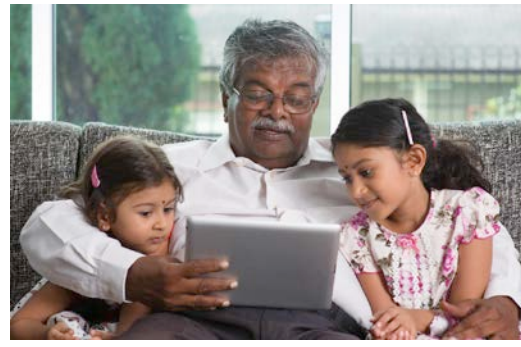
# Why Mental Health First Aid?

- Mental health problems are common
- Stigma is associated with mental health problems
- Many people are not well informed about mental health problems
- Professional help is not always on hand
- People often do not know how to respond
- People with mental health problems often do not seek help



# Why MHFA Focused on Older Adults?





# What Is a Mental Disorder?

A **mental disorder** or **mental illness** is a diagnosable illness that:

- Affects a person's thinking, emotional state, and behavior
- Disrupts the person's ability to
  - Work
  - Carry out daily activities
  - Engage in satisfying relationships



# U.S. Adults with a Mental Disorder in Any One Year

Type of Mental Disorder	% Adults
Anxiety disorder	19.1
Major depressive disorder	6.8
Substance use disorder	8.0
Bipolar disorder	2.8
Eating disorders	2.1
Schizophrenia	0.45
<b>Any mental disorder</b>	<b>19.6</b>

*Only 41% of people with a mental illness use mental health services in any given year*



# The Impact of Mental Illness

- Mental illnesses can be more disabling than many chronic physical illnesses. For example:
  - The disability from moderate depression is similar to the impact from relapsing multiple sclerosis, severe asthma, or chronic hepatitis B.
  - The disability from severe depression is comparable to the disability from quadriplegia.
- “*Disability*” refers to the amount of disruption a health problem causes to a person’s ability to:
  - Work
  - Carry out daily activities
  - Engage in satisfying relationships

# Recovery from Mental Illness

“Recovery is the process in which people are able to live, work, learn, and participate fully in their communities.”

“For some, this is the ability to live a fulfilling and productive life despite a disability.”

“For others, recovery implies the reduction or complete remission of symptoms.”

— *President’s New Freedom Commission on Mental Health*

# Mental Health First Aid

## The Action Plan

- **A**ssess for risk of suicide or harm
- **L**isten nonjudgmentally
- **G**ive reassurance and information
- **E**ncourage appropriate professional help
- **E**ncourage self-help and other support strategies