



NEWS RELEASE

(For immediate release)

Minnesota Health Action Group to host free public dialogue to accelerate improvements in mental health care and outcomes

Providers, employers and legislators will convene to share experiences, identify problems, and discuss solutions that will fast-track improvements

BLOOMINGTON, MN. (October 8, 2018) – Approximately 1-in-5 adults in the United States has a [mental illness](#), and many of them are between the ages of 26 and 49 – at the prime of their careers. Unfortunately, factors like social stigma, limited access to care, and cost deter people from getting the help they need. The [Minnesota Health Action Group](#) will host a free Community Dialogue on Tuesday, October 30 from 8:30 to 10:30 a.m. at the [Science Museum of Minnesota](#) to convene legislators, employers, and health care providers to identify how to accelerate improvements in integrated care for mental health services.

“There has been outstanding work in Minnesota in recent years through the DIAMOND project, COMPASS and Minnesota Bridges to Excellence, but the job of assuring that people have access to the care they need is still far from over,” said Carolyn Pare, president and CEO of the Minnesota Health Action Group. “The good news is, employers are becoming advocates for mental health and well-being for their employees, and they are driving changes in how care is delivered, paid for, and measured across our state, which will help level the playing field and improve the experience and outcomes for all Minnesotans.”

Employers have good cause to be invested in the quality of mental health services. [Recent data](#) show that poor mental health can reduce productivity and increase absenteeism, not to mention having an impact on employee morale. The Action Group Community Dialogue coincides with the 10-year anniversary of the Paul Wellstone and Pete Domenici Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008 and is an extension of the Action Group’s Mental Health Learning Network.

Community Dialogue attendees will receive complimentary admission to the Science Museum of Minnesota, including the special exhibit “Mental Health: Mind Matters.” The event will feature mental health experts, employers, providers, and perspectives from:

- Jan Malcolm, Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Health
- Dr. Claire Neely, Institute for Clinical Systems Improvement
- Dr. Karen Lloyd, HealthPartners
- Sue Abderholden, National Alliance on Mental Illness
- Employers from the Mental Health Learning Network
- Dr. Tim Hernandez, Entira Family Clinics

“Connecting people to the resources they need to get help is too big a job for any single stakeholder. By working together, employers, employees, and others can play a meaningful role in moving toward lasting solutions,” said Sue Abderholden, executive director of NAMI Minnesota.

To view the full event agenda and register to attend, visit <http://mnhealthactiongroup.org/events/mental-health-community-dialogue/>.

Follow on social: @ActionGroupMN, #mentalhealth, and #AGCommunityDialogue.

###

About the Minnesota Health Action Group

The Minnesota Health Action Group is a coalition of public and private purchasers whose sole purpose is to represent the collective voice of those who write the checks for health care in Minnesota. Action Group members collaborate with community stakeholders to drive innovations that support high-quality health care, create engaged consumers, and ensure the economic vitality of all Minnesota communities. Based in Bloomington, MN, the Minnesota Health Action Group was formed in 1988 as the Buyers Health Care Action Group. To learn more, visit www.mnhealthactiongroup.org. Follow on [YouTube](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#).

For more information:

Barbara Tabor, APR / (651) 230-9192 / barbara@taborpr.com