



## Optum Maryland Behavioral Health

Welcome to the spring 2021 edition of the Optum Maryland Behavioral Health Participant Newsletter – The Participant Corner. The Participant Corner is a quarterly newsletter aimed to keep participants informed and connected.

In this edition, we cover ways to reduce stress and highlight upcoming events held by the Maryland Department of Health and NAMI Maryland.

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### Stay up-to-date on the latest COVID-19 information

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic state of emergency, it's important for participants to stay up-to-date on COVID-19 information. Visit the [Behavioral Health Administration's website](#) to view the latests updates, FAQs and resources.

## Get Connected



### Contact Optum Maryland

Toll-Free: 1-800-888-1965, TTY: 7-1-1  
Hours of Operation: 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.  
Monday-Friday  
Clinical staff are available for crisis calls 24 hours a day, seven days a week.



### Find a Provider

Dial Maryland 2-1-1, and press option 1



### Crisis Services

To access crisis services in Maryland contact the Maryland Crisis Hotline 2-1-1  
If you or someone you know is in crisis, call 2-1-1 and press 1, or text your ZIP code to 898-211 (TXT-211).

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline  
Telephone crisis counseling and referral to local resources.  
Call toll-free: 1-800-273-8255  
Hours: 24 hours a day, seven days a week.



### Participant Handbook

Get more information by viewing our Participant Handbook. [Click here](#) to access.



### BHA

Visit the Maryland Department of Health Behavioral Health Administration page. [Click here](#) to access.

### Become a Certified Peer Recovery Specialist

[Click here](#) to view more information.

## Prioritizing Self-Care During COVID-19

Prioritizing your self-care, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, is essential for your mental health and reducing stress. Self-care may look different for each person and can vary from everyday activities such as going for a walk or taking a nap. The below tips from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) can help you take care of your mental health and reduce stress levels during COVID-19.

1. Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including those on social media.
2. Take deep breaths, stretch, or meditate.
3. Exercise regularly.
4. Make time to unwind. Try to do some other activities you enjoy.
5. Connect with others. Talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling.



Click [here](#) to view more CDC tips on how to take care of your mental health and reduce stress levels.

## CovidCONNECT Webinar Series

The [Maryland Department of Health](#), [NAMI Maryland](#) and other stakeholders have partnered together to develop CovidCONNECT – a webinar series that covers topics on mental health, wellness and recovery. These webinars are curated specifically for Marylanders who have been impacted by COVID-19.



CovidCONNECT webinars take place on select Thursdays at 5 p.m. Registration is required.

To learn more about the series and to register for a webinar, click [here](#).

## Monthly Awareness Dates

### April

- National Minority Health Month
- Alcohol Awareness Month
- National Autism Awareness Month

### May

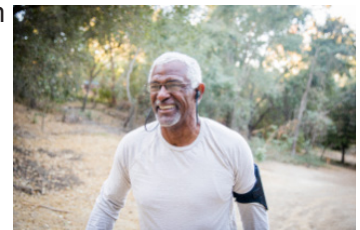
- Mental Health Awareness Month

### June

- Men's Health Month
- PTSD Awareness Month

## Mental Health Awareness Month

May is Mental Health Awareness Month. This awareness month has been observed since 1949 and was started by the Mental Health America organization. The purpose of Mental Health Awareness Month is to raise awareness and educate the public about mental illnesses.



During May, NAMI Maryland joins the national movement to raise awareness about mental health. On Saturday, May 22, 2021, NAMI Maryland will be hosting a virtual mental health awareness event – NAMIWalks. Learn more about how you can participate in NAMIWalks, [here](#).