Mental health has come to the forefront of discussion as an outcome based on the disruption to all our lives due to the COVID19 pandemic.

The University of Illinois at Chicago, the University of Illinois System, and the State of Illinois make available several assistance programs for employees to help you through any difficulties you may be experiencing.

We begin with some Myths and Facts. *

Myth	Fact
Mental health problems don't affect me	Mental health problems are actually very common. Prior to COVID19 suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the US, at approximately 41,000 annually, more than double the loss of lives to homicide
Children don't experience mental health problems	Even very young children may show signs of mental health concerns. These mental health concerns are often clinically diagnoseable and can be the product of the interaction of biological, psychological, and social factors. Half of all mental health disorders show 1st signs before a person turns 14 years old, ¾ begin before age 24.
People with mental health problems are violent and unpredictable	Most people with mental health problems are no more likely to be violent than anyone else. Most people with mental illness are non-violent and only 3-5% of violent acts can be attributed to individuals living with serious mental illness. In fact, people with serious mental illness are over ten times more likely to be victims of violent crime than the general population.
People with mental health problems can snap out of it if they try hard enough	Mental health problems have nothing to do with being lazy or weak and many people need help to get better. Many contributing factors including biological, genes, physical illness, injury, and/or brain chemistry can contribute. Life experiences, trauma, a history of abuse can also contribute, as well as a history of family mental health problems.
I can't do anything for a person with a mental health problem.	Only 44% of adults and less than 20% of children and adolescents receive needed treatment. You can help individuals connect with needed treatment options. You can reach out and show support. You can learn about and share facts about mental health. You can treat them with respect. You can refuse to define them by their diagnosis or use labels.
Prevention doesn't work	You can address known risk factors. You can promote the social emotional well-being of children, adolescents, and adults around you.

* Excerpted from - US Department of Health and Human Services: https://www.hhs.gov

* Mental Health Resources: www.mentalhealth.gov

UIC Employee Mental Health & Wellness Resources

Employee Assistance Service (EAS)

Provides free, professional, confidential assessments, short-term counseling, referrals, and follow up for UIC employees and their families.

Located on West Campus at 820 S. Wood Street Room 365

- Clarify or resolve a problem
- Address life transitions
- Explore alternative choices
- Cope with a crisis
- Grief and loss
- Marriage and family concerns
- Stress management
- Anger management
- Domestic violence
- Workplace conflict
- Substance abuse
- Mental health needs
- Assistance with linkages to managed care providers
- Specialized session for units in crisis

Want more information?

If you have any questions or would like to schedule an appointment, contact Geri Biamonte or the Employee Assistance Service at (312) 996 3588

Office of Applied Psychological Services (OAPS)

The Office of Applied Psychological Services (OAPS) is a mental health clinic in the Psychology Department at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC). They offer therapy and psychological assessment using approaches that are based on scientific theory and supported by scientific evidence, with an emphasis on cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) techniques. OAPS serves the UIC community, including faculty, staff, and students, as well as people living or working in the greater Chicago area.

https://psch.uic.edu/research-programs/clinical/office-of-applied-psychological-services/
1007 West Harrison Street,
Behavioral Sciences Building,
Room 3011A
Phone: 312 996 2540

State of Illinois Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

To support the emotional health and well-being of our employees during this stressful time, both the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and Personal Support Program (PSP) have expanded their operations. All services are free and confidential.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

https://www.guidanceresources.com/groWeb/login/login.xhtml?logout=true&redirectUrl=groNg%2F

Accessing ComPsych Guidance Resources

Call: 833.955.3400
TTY: 800.697.0353
Online: https://www.guidanceresources.com
App: GuidanceNow℠
Web ID: StateofIllinois

All health plans administered by CMS include coverage for behavioral health services. The following support resources are available free of charge, regardless of what plan you are enrolled in and are available to the general public:

- Optum's Emotional-Support Help Line is available to support anyone who may be experiencing anxiety or stress. The free service can be reached at **(866) 342-6892**, 24 hours a day, seven days a week and is open to all.
- Aetna Resources for LivingSM mental wellbeing services is a crisis support line anyone can access.
    - Aetna Medicare members, call **1-866-370-4842 (TTY: 711)**
    - Non-Aetna Medicare members, call **1-833-327-2386 (TTY: 711)**

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provides a valuable resource for support and information during difficult times. The EAP is a free, voluntary, and confidential program that provides problem identification, counseling, and referral services for employees and their covered dependents regardless of the health plan chosen. Employees will be directed to counseling services to assist them with a variety of concerns, including, but not limited to:

- Anger management
- Anxious feelings
- Conflict at work or home
- Domestic violence
- Elder-care issues
- Family/parenting issues
- Feelings of worry or the blues
- Financial concerns
- Grief/loss
- Pre- and post-natal concerns
- Problems with alcohol or drugs
- Stress

All calls and counseling sessions are confidential, except as required by law. No information will be disclosed unless written consent is given. Management consultation is available when an employee's personal problems are causing a decline in work performance. Critical Incident Stress Management is also available through the EAP. For further information regarding the EAP, refer to page 39 of the Benefits Handbook.

Eligibility

- Active employees and their eligible dependents participating in the State Employees Group Insurance Program may access this benefit.
- Active employees, full-time and part-time (50% or greater), who have elected not to participate in the health, dental, and vision coverage of the State Employees Group Insurance Program may access this benefit.

ComPsych Resources include:

- Wellness
- Relationships
- Work & Education
- Financial
- Legal
- Lifestyle
- Home & Auto
- Discounts https://www.guidanceresources.com/groWeb/s/programs.xhtml
- Digital Tools https://www.guidanceresources.com/groNg/#/s/digitalToolkits

Be Well Illinois

https://www2.illinois.gov/cms/benefits/StateEmployee/BeWell/Pages/default.aspx

Be Well Illinois, the State of Illinois' new comprehensive wellness program designed to help you be well, live well and stay well.

As a wellness program member, you have direct access to resources to support your overall health and wellbeing on your terms and at your pace. Be Well Illinois was developed to help you create and maintain an active lifestyle, provide access to mental health awareness materials and treatment, financial services, nutritional information and group and individual exercise programs. These benefits, in addition to preventive care visits, health screenings and immunizations like the flu shot, are offered at no-cost to you.

Engaging with Be Well Illinois is quick and easy. Visit the Be Well Illinois website to access wellness webinars, the latest information from health plan partners, monthly health awareness education and much more.

UIC Wellness Resources

Campus Recreation provides discounted memberships to employees.

https://recreation.uic.edu/
Get involved on campus while doing something fun!
Campus recreation provides a variety of recreational programs, services, and facilities to exercise your mind, body, and spirit

External Resources

US Department of Health and Human Services: https://www.hhs.gov

- Mental Health Resources: www.mentalhealth.gov

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC): https://cdc.gov

- Mental Health Resources: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/managing-stress-anxiety.html

Article - Psychiatry advisor https://www.psychiatryadvisor.com/home/topics/mood-disorders/depressive-disorder/the-covid-and-mental-health-pandemic-will-lead-to-increased-cases-of-depression-throughout-the-year/

Take your mental health seriously, help yourself by checking out resources like these.

Whole Being Institute: https://wholebeinginstitute.com

Mindful.org: https://www.mindful.org/meditation

Positive Psychology.com: https://postivepsychology.com/