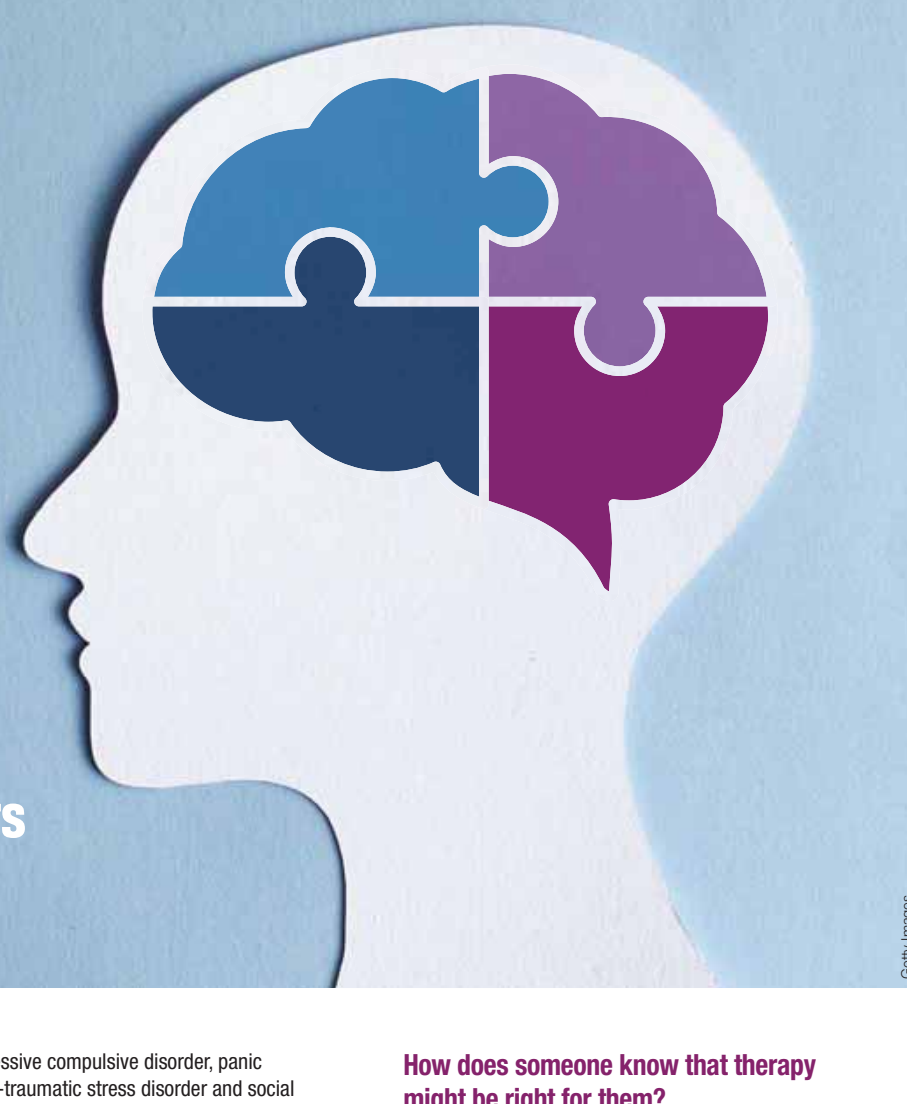


MENTAL HEALTH NOW

How LI health-care providers are responding today



How are you responding to the need for mental health care?

"The need for mental health care is at an all-time high," says Adam Gonzalez, director of Behavioral Health at Stony Brook Medicine and founding director of the Mind-Body Clinical Research Center at the Stony Brook Renaissance School of Medicine. "Across our health care system, we are screening patients for depression, one of the most common problems, and connecting individuals to the appropriate level of care. To meet these demands, we are working on increasing the number of mental health providers in our practice, and we are promoting skills groups as a frontline psychotherapy treatment. There is good evidence from research that indicates skills groups are just as effective as individual psychotherapy. Our skills groups are similar to workshops, where individuals can learn concrete skills to more effectively manage their mental health."

What are the most common mental health issues people are facing today?

"Given the uncertainty in our lives over the past few years, anxiety disorders are the most common category of mental health issues that people are facing today," says Dr. Lawrence Ferber, director of behavioral health at Catholic Health. "This can include generalized anxiety

disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder, panic disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder and social anxiety disorder. Although the COVID-19 pandemic was a driving factor for a lot of these issues, it also highlighted the importance of mental health awareness and the need for resources and support in these areas."

What are the particular mental health issues facing the workforce right now?

"The workforce has gone through vast changes, with little pre-planning for those changes," says Aynisa Leonardo, a licensed creative arts therapist and board-certified art therapist who is senior business development director at Wellbridge, an addiction treatment and research center in Calverton. "On one end of the spectrum are [people in] high-stress/high-pressure jobs who are now experiencing levels of burnout and compassion fatigue. This can include, but is not limited to, essential workers, health care workers, first responders and labor unions. On the other end of the spectrum, there are individuals who grew accustomed to being out of the workforce and are facing their own challenges, whether that be financial or emotional. There are those who are genuinely struggling to adjust. The combination of these two trends adds additional pressure on the workforce, as short staffing and employee retention are growing issues."

How does someone know that therapy might be right for them?

"Given the current social climate, everyone could probably benefit from some additional emotional support right now," says Charles Evdos, executive director of Riverhead-based Rise Life Services, which operates group homes across Long Island for people with special needs. "There really is no better time to prioritize self-improvement and stress reduction. You don't need a diagnosable disorder to see a therapist and benefit from that support. Some examples of reasons people seek assistance include but are not limited to... having trouble processing something in their life, patience has diminished or decreased, overall mood changes, they are having difficulty navigating through a challenging time, relationships have become tumultuous or simply unsatisfying, they don't feel like they're functioning as best they can or as well as they used to or are stuck, they are going through some type of major life transition, have experienced a traumatic event, they are repeating negative patterns, are feeling pressured or overwhelmed, or at the most basic level they just feel they could use an unbiased, confidential person to talk to."

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MENTAL HEALTH NOW

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How can people get the most out of their therapy?

"Patience and appreciation for the process of therapy will help individuals and families get the most out of therapeutic experience," says Joseph Smith, a psychologist and executive director of Long Island Reach, a community nonprofit based in Long Beach that provides social, psychological, educational and legal assistance. "Therapy can be a lot like cleaning out a closet — when you first begin the process, your space gets messy and a whole lot worse before it gets better. As you make connections, discoveries, changes and develop self-awareness, these will affect your perspective, your behavior and your outlook."

What is your advice for people who want to cope on their own?

"Do not self-diagnose and self-treat with remedies," says Dr. Aaron Pinkhasov, chair of psychiatry at NYU Langone Hospital — Long Island. "Healthy coping involves addressing basic mental health needs with a healthy diet, meditation, regular exercise and sleep hygiene. To avoid unhealthy coping, avoid alcohol and self-medicating substances."

Is telehealth still a good thing?

"Telehealth was a life-saving resource during the pandemic, and although it has its limitations, it continues to be useful," says Michele Lucero, a clinical psychologist and manager of the Behavioral Health Partial Hospitalization Program at Mount Sinai South Nassau. "Patients who previously may not have availed themselves of therapy and psychiatric treatment due to mobility problems, chronic medical conditions or transportation issues can now receive specialized care."

What are some of the new treatments, approaches and/or categories of medication that people should be aware of?

"Treatments available include therapy — cognitive/behavioral, supportive, trauma-focused, or dialectical therapy," says Dr. Scott Krakower, attending psychiatrist and child and adolescent psychiatrist at Zucker Hillside Hospital of Northwell Health in Glen Oaks. "Dialectical therapy has become more prevalent and offers easy-to-use coping strategies that may be beneficial. There are multiple categories of medications, including newer antidepressants that may be helpful. Older agents on the market may also prove to be quite helpful with longer-standing data. There are also other procedures such as transcranial magnetic stimulation, ECT (electroconvulsive therapy) and ketamine for treatment refractory depression."

— Compiled by Valerie Kellogg



'There really is no better time to prioritize self-improvement and stress reduction. You don't need a diagnosable disorder to see a therapist and benefit from that support.'

Charles Evdos, executive director of Riverhead-based Rise Life Services

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Expanding Access to Outpatient Care

By Catholic Health

Catholic Health is known for medical and surgical expertise across our six hospitals and also for compassion for patients and their families. That same level of expertise and empathy is visible in our network of physician practices across Long Island. This stamp of quality is now identifying physician offices in or near your community as Catholic Health Ambulatory Care.

The contemporary design inside the new Ambulatory Care facilities optimizes the patient experience. The providers of Catholic Health Physician Partners put patients at the center of everything, treating each in their totality—body, mind and spirit. The expert clinical staff patiently answer questions, offering education on medications and/or next steps for an individualized wellness strategy.

Many Ambulatory Care facilities are multiplicity medical hubs, bringing together primary care doctors, specialists and other services. Ambulatory surgery is also available at several locations, providing same-day outpatient surgery, and Catholic

Health Home Care ensures patients are guided to a full recovery.

"Many surgical procedures can safely be performed outside the hospital setting," said Catholic Health Chief Medical Officer Jason Golbin, DO, MBA, MS. "This includes orthopedic, spinal and GI surgeries. Recoveries can be managed in the home environment, which most patients much prefer."

At present, Catholic Health has nine multispecialty Ambulatory Care hubs across Long Island. Nassau locations are Greenvale/East Hills, Lake Success/New Hyde Park, Massapequa, Rockville Centre and Westbury, while Suffolk Ambulatory Care hubs are located in Commack, Patchogue, Bay Shore and West Babylon. Catholic Health will be launching additional locations in both counties, as well as Queens.

"We're expanding our footprint as well as our services," said Catholic Health President & CEO Patrick O'Shaughnessy, DO, MBA. "We're so much more than hospital care. Our Catholic Health primary care providers are in



Catholic Health breaks ground on its new Family Care Center to be built on the campus of Mercy Hospital, part of an overall expansion in the system's growing number of Ambulatory Care locations across Long Island, inclusive of Queens. President & CEO, Patrick O'Shaughnessy, DO, MBA is second from right.

the communities at easy-to-reach locations, often co-situated with our specialists and therapists. It's part of our commitment to getting the right care to the right places at the right time."

To learn more about Catholic Health Physician Partners, visit chsl.org/catholic-health-physician-partners. Or phone (866) MY-LI-DOC to find a Catholic Health physician near you.

Make your health a priority

By AgeWell New York



The importance of good health is top of mind these days. Health insurance can protect us from health and financial risks but choosing the right plan can be daunting. Knowing where to turn for health care that fits your needs can make all the difference.

Whether you're aging into Medicare or are eligible for a special election period, AgeWell New York offers **Medicare Advantage Prescription Drug Plans** for those with Medicare, **Medicare and Medicaid** and a **Medicaid Advantage Plus (MAP)** program designed for people who have both Medicare and full Medicaid and need coordinated care at home.

The **AgeWell New York Advantage Plus (D-SNP MAP)** plan includes all original Medicare benefits (part A and B), full prescription

drug coverage (part D), and Medicaid coverage along with personal care, transportation, dental, hearing and vision, over the counter card, wellness and preventive services.

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 - **One dedicated care manager** to coordinate your benefits and services.

For information on eligibility and enrollment in **AgeWell New York's Health Plans**, call 718-696-0216 or TTY/TTD 800-562-1220 to speak with a licensed insurance agent or visit agewellnewyork.com.

Presented By: **LONG ISLAND REACH**
Youth and Family Services

9&Dine Golf Fundraiser

Join Long Island Reach non-profit counseling center for its 2nd Annual 9&Dine Golf Fundraiser Event.

May is Mental Health Awareness Month
Our outing is a spirited way to come together to support people that are affected by mental illness. All proceeds benefit Long Island Reach's support services, mental health counseling and therapy programs for people in crisis.

Tuesday, May 24, 2022
Registration: 2:15 p.m.
Golf: 3:30 p.m.
Dinner to Follow

DRIVING RANGE • 9 HOLES OF GOLF & CART
• **CONTESTS & REFRESHMENTS ON THE COURSE • BBQ DINNER**

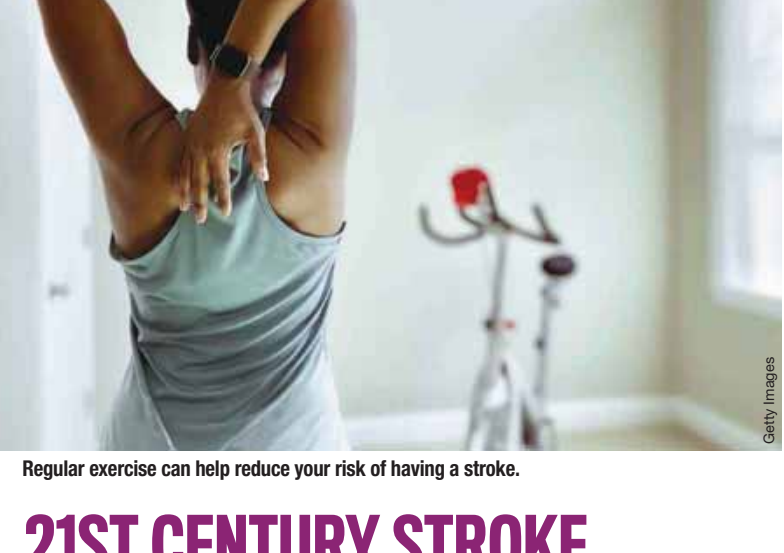
\$125 – Individual	\$450 – Foursome	\$65 – Dinner Only
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\$5,000 – Signature Sponsor	\$2,500 – Premier Sponsor
\$100 – Tee Sign Sponsors	\$250 – Beverage Sponsor
\$125 – Pin Flag Sponsors	\$500 – Giveaway Sponsor

For non-golfers, you may join Long Island Reach supporters at JJ Coopers Restaurant in Long Beach for a 5:30 p.m. social.

To Register: Call: 516-459-9386 • Email: karen@karensccs.com
Web: LongIslandReach.org/9-And-Dine



Regular exercise can help reduce your risk of having a stroke.

21ST CENTURY STROKE PREVENTION STRATEGIES

By Mayo Clinic

A stroke occurs when the blood supply to part of your brain is interrupted or significantly reduced, depriving brain tissue of oxygen and nutrients, and causing brain cells to die.

A frequent cause is narrowing of the arteries in the neck — the carotid arteries — that carry blood to the brain. This narrowing occurs due to fatty deposits in those arteries. A tear or injury in the wall of a blood vessel, certain heart conditions and blood clotting disorders also can result in strokes, particularly in younger people. If any of these conditions is identified, treatment and prevention should be targeted to that particular condition.

In some conditions, the optimal approach to stroke prevention is not certain. For example, many people have narrowing of the carotid artery, but they are asymptomatic.

For about 35% of people who have a stroke, a specific cause can't be identified. This is called a cryptogenic stroke. If this is your situation, the goal should be to work with your primary care physician or neurologist to pinpoint any stroke risk factors you have that can be modified, and reduce your risk in those areas, if possible.

Some stroke risk factors cannot be changed. For example, gender, ethnicity, age and family medical history all play a role in stroke risk. Men are more likely than women to have a stroke. Asians and African Americans are also at increased risk. After age 55, your stroke risk doubles each decade.

risk for stroke. If you have any of these conditions, talk to your health care provider about developing an effective treatment plan. If you have elevated levels of low-density lipoprotein, also called LDL or "bad" cholesterol, for example, taking a statin drug may lower not only your cholesterol, but also your stroke risk.

Lifestyle choices can help. Exercising regularly and eating a healthy diet are both important. Exercise can lower your blood pressure, increase your level of high-density lipoprotein, or HDL or "good" cholesterol, and improve the health of your blood vessels and heart. It also can help you lose weight, control diabetes and reduce stress. A good goal is to participate in at least 30 minutes of moderate aerobic activity most days.

A diet high in fruits and vegetables, and low in cholesterol and saturated fat, can reduce your stroke risk, as well as help you maintain a healthy weight. That's important, because being overweight contributes to other risk factors for stroke, such as high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease and diabetes. Other stroke prevention lifestyle changes you can make include quitting smoking and keeping alcohol intake to less than one to two drinks per day.

Depending on your medical history, preventive medications also can be appropriate. Anti-platelet drugs, such as aspirin or blood thinner (Plavix), can make your blood less likely to form clots. Anticoagulant medication, such as heparin or warfarin, can help prevent strokes if you have certain heart problems or a blood clotting disorder.

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