



Completion of the four workshops listed below is required to become a certified Mental Health Friendly Community.

Mental Health 101

The training broadens the expertise of faith leaders, pastors and health ministry members as first responders to mental health crises, and inspires leaders to create welcoming communities for individuals and families living with mental health challenges. It corrects misinformation while educating faith leaders to recognize signs, symptoms and triggers of mental illness and provides culturally responsive wellness resources to those with mental health concerns.

Keepers of the Flock: “Becoming a Caring Community of Faith”

Designed for all stakeholders, workshop participants will learn through the parable of the “Lost Sheep,” the caring, compassion and commitment of a loving shepherd. This training creates a climate of understanding and acceptance of those with mental health challenges and an awareness of the path toward mental wellness. The lessons learned from this training are essential for becoming a Mental Health Friendly Community, which is the calling, responsibility and privilege of the entire community.

A Bridge Over Troubled Waters

The training provides all stakeholders with a historical perspective of the development of faith within the African-American experience. It offers an understanding of the impact of how mental health services are currently being provided and bridges the divide between a western focused clinical approach, which was designed to serve all ethnicities, and the spiritual approach needed to support African Americans on a journey toward mental wellness.

Spirituality 101

Intended for mental health providers, the training builds an understanding of the important role of faith in creating mental wellness for African-American consumers and families. It focuses on how to include spirituality as a resource for wellness, recovery and multicultural competency and facilitates the development of a provider network to partner with the faith community to address specific needs of African Americans. [Recommended for all county mental health services staff.]



MENTAL HEALTH *friendly* **COMMUNITIES**

**Building Mental Health Friendly Communities...
one congregation at a time**

Contact Information

For more information, please visit
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Funded by counties through the voter-approved
Mental Health Services Act (Prop 63).

Why Mental Health Friendly Communities?

Many of us are impacted by mental health challenges and when experiencing these challenges, African Americans often turn to their faith-based roots for information and support. Unfortunately, because of the lack of access to physical and behavioral health care, as well as dealing with the stigma associated with mental health challenges, many African Americans are wary of the mental health system and often don't seek services when they need them.

Mental Health Friendly Communities – a new program that's being introduced in four regions across California – addresses these issues by providing culturally focused trainings and resources that directly speak to the mental health issues facing the African-American community. The program's goal is to engage communities by helping them get on a path that will lead toward mental wellness.

How is that accomplished?

Mental Health Friendly Communities provides an innovative and exciting opportunity for mental health professionals, African-American faith leaders, community members, leaders from key community organizations, and consumers and family members who may be experiencing mental health challenges to come together to better understand and embrace the cultural connections between spirituality and mental wellness. Through a series of workshops, the program creates effective partnerships between faith-based organizations, mental health providers and the African-American community. These partnerships allow Mental Health Friendly Communities to take advantage of the historic and fruitful role of the faith-based community as a cultural and spiritual center of support for African-American individuals and families receiving mental health care services.

"The most important evidence based practice is demonstrated love!"

Gigi R. Crowder

BECOMING A MENTAL HEALTH FRIENDLY COMMUNITY

Mental Health Friendly Communities are formed out of a solid commitment from each participating county's Mental Health Authority working in partnership with the local African-American faith community to fully engage and support this effort. To be certified as a Mental Health Friendly Community, faith-based organizations must meet the following requirements:

1. Have Senior Pastors, faith leaders, Health Ministries and congregants commit to becoming a "Mental Health Friendly Congregation."
2. Complete the required trainings outlined on the back of this brochure.
3. Be a welcoming community that honors the voices of those with lived experience of mental illness as key partners and creates the resources needed to make culturally responsive clinical referrals.
4. Develop a Mental Health Ministry to lead the MHFC initiative on an ongoing basis, which includes serving as a resource for those in need and continuing to work in partnership with the greater community. Host regular Mental Wellness Chats for congregants and their communities. Long term sustainability is important to achieving Mental Health Friendly Communities.

Training and Technical Team

The Mental Health Friendly Communities training team has had great success developing a culturally responsive curriculum and providing training and technical assistance to congregations in Alameda County.



Team members include:

MINISTER MONIQUE TARVER

Co-Founder of Good Time Ahead Family Ministries/Chair of the CA Statewide Mental Health and Spirituality Initiative (LEFT)

PASTOR HORACIO S. JONES

Senior Pastor, Family Bible Fellowship, Newark, CA and President/CEO, Tri Cities Community Development Center, Newark, CA (MIDDLE)

GIGI R. CROWDER, L.E.

Mental Wellness and Spirituality Specialist and facilitator of Alameda County's African American Utilization Report (RIGHT)