

## The Adult Who Needs Help



### Makenzie

Issue: her Bipolar 1 disorder is affecting her quality of life.

Goal: uses the CMH-CEI website to help her find adult mental health services.

I have Bipolar 1 disorder. This a debilitating mental illness and its making it impossible for me to work, maintain friendships, and live a regular life.

Makenzie is twenty-five and isn't taking her medication, which helps regulate her manic and depressive episodes. She says the medication makes her feel "foggy" and "like a zombie" and she is "tired of feeling unlike [her]self".

Makenzie has been off her medication for over three months now, despite the protest of her friends and family.

During Makenzie's last depressive episode, she threatened to kill herself because she was feeling too depressed to go to her job interview. Her roommate was scared for her safety, so she begged her to find some help after Makenzie realized, in a moment of clarity, how serious her disorder had become.

Makenzie moved to Eaton township only six months ago, and she wasn't sure where, or how, to ask for help. She eventually decided to Google "mental health services Eaton county" on her phone and stumbled upon the

Community Mental Health for Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham counties' website. The homepage had all the numbers on it that she would've needed, but all the numbers were the same, which was confusing. However, the navigation to the adult mental health services was pretty easy to find, but Makenzie had to do a bit of reading to decide which treatment plan would work best for her.

**There were a lot of different phone numbers, even after Makenzie found the service page that she needed. This was frustrating because she wanted to quickly find the help she needed, and she did, but it took more effort than Makenzie would've originally guessed.**

### The Substance Abuser



#### Jake

Issue: he's addicted to crystal meth and has a drinking problem but wants to start his life over.

Goal: uses the CMH-CEI website to help him find detox services.

I have been addicted to crystal meth since I came out of the army. I get clean every few months or so, but I always relapse. It's about time that I stay clean.

Jake is twenty-eight and is ready to start his life over again. The problem is, he's addicted to crystal meth and drinks heavily. He's been struggling with his addictions for several years and finds it impossible to stay clean.

Jake went into the Army right after high school graduation. He did poorly in school, due to the trauma of losing his brother to suicide when Jake was a freshman, and he thought the Army was a good way to try and make something of himself without going to college. However, the experience in the military left him with more problems than when he joined; he was dishonorably discharged because his sergeant caught him snorting meth in the bathroom.

Jake has tried to detox and stay clean many times by himself and it's never truly stuck. Any time something bad happens and he can't cope, he turns to drugs again. However, Jake

has been wanting to apply for a job at Chrysler in Detroit, but he hasn't been clean in months and doesn't want his addiction to ruin everything again. He hops onto his laptop and quickly and Google searches "Clinton township community mental health" and discovers the website for Community Mental Health for Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham counties. He scrolled over to the services tab, clicked on the substance abuse link, and found information on their detox services.

**Jake was confused about the plethora of phone numbers provided, especially with that list of all the same numbers on the home page, but he did find the information he needed. However, the website seemed cluttered with all the dropdown menus.**

### The Mom and Autistic Daughter



### Heather and Lily

Issue: Heather's daughter, Lily, has just been recently diagnosed with autism.

Goal: uses the CMH-CEI website to help find support for children with autism.

When Lily was diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder, I felt completely lost. I wanted to help my daughter the best I could, but I didn't even know where to begin or how to help.

Being a single mother isn't easy, but Lily is Heather's entire world—she would do anything for her. When Lily was officially diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder, the doctor gave Heather some information about her disorder, but the pamphlets were mostly just filled with general information. Heather wanted to work hands on with specialized clinicians to give Lily the best support that she could.

One of the pamphlets the doctor provided had the website for the Community Mental Health for Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham counties. They live in Ingham county, so Heather thought that their website would make the most sense to look at first.

Going on the website, Heather said the homepage was a little confusing for her. There wasn't anything on the homepage that stated it was for developmental disorders, besides the

number to call for children's services—which was strange, because it was the same as the rest of the numbers. Heather decided to head up to the "services" tab where she found the tab for the developmentally disabled. However, when the menu opened she wasn't sure which service would best fit her needs, so she just started with the first one "clinical services". Thankfully this was the tab that she needed, and she proceeded to click on "autism support".

**There was nothing on the homepage that would've pointed Heather in the right direction for the autism support she was looking for. The children's services phone number was there for her to call, but she wasn't sure if that was the number she would've ultimately needed. The "services" tab displayed the "community services for the developmentally disabled" which then displayed the menu of services—this was a huge roundabout way to get to the autism support, which she never would've guessed was under the "clinical services" tab, she was just lucky that it was the first one she looked at.**

### The Person in Crisis



Larry

Issue: he is a depressed person with suicidal ideation and self-harm (meaning he is in crisis).

Goal: uses the CMH-CEI website to find the crisis hotline link.

My parents have always told me how smart I am and what a success I am going to be. How do I tell them that their constant pressure to be perfect is weighing on me?

Larry is in his early twenties and is a full-time student at Michigan State University. He lives on-campus and receives a great deal of pressure to succeed from his family. The stress has been getting to him for some time and he's not dealing with it well. He has been isolating himself, he hasn't been eating much at all, he's lost all interest in his favorite hobbies, he hasn't been sleeping, and he entertains the idea of suicide every now and then.

Larry was aware of the changes in his behavior, but he didn't seek therapy from the free services offered on his college campus. He dealt with his problems in negative ways, like staying up all night playing video games, eating poorly when he did feel hungry, burning himself with lighters, drinking, and smoking pot heavily.

Part of the reason Larry hadn't sought mental health services is because he was concerned about his parents finding out about his

problems. He doesn't want the insurance company to contact his parents and was afraid of explaining his feelings and actions.

One night when he was in a particularly dark place, Larry's thoughts returned to suicide. He realized how serious his mental health needs are and, after some internet searching, found the website for Community Mental Health for Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham counties. He is desperate to talk to someone, and after a while noticed the crisis link up at the upper right-hand corner of the screen.

**If Larry missed the mental health crisis hotline link at the top of the page and lost himself in the many tabs and sub-pages on the website, he would've risked losing out on several critical services that could help him in that dangerous time of crisis.**



### The Concerned Family Member and Her Older Brother



#### Shelly and Wesley

**Issue:** Shelly is worried her brother, who has PTSD, might have dementia and thinks he needs more 'round the clock care.

**Goal:** uses the CMH-CEI website to find resources about elderly care.

I love my brother, but he's becoming more and more forgetful lately. I think he might have dementia and I'm worried that it'll cause even more complications for him due to his PTSD. I can't afford to quit my job to help care for him, what do I do?

Shelly knew life wasn't going to be easy for her older brother, Wesley, when he came back from Vietnam. Like many other veterans, he developed PTSD. It was hard at first to avoid any topics that might be upsetting or calming him after angry outburst, but eventually their family learned how to cope and make his life more comfortable. Wesley's wife died a few years back, but he was still able to take care of himself while he lived alone. Shelly worries about him and stops by when she can, which is difficult with her full-time job and her own spouse to look after.

Shelly noticed that Wesley, who is seventy-five now, had been occasionally forgetting to pay his bills on time, which almost got his power shut off. There are some weeks when Shelly visits him at home, it's apparent that Wesley

hadn't showered in days. Not only that, but he often can't even remember what day it is. Shelly thinks that he may have a form of dementia, but she doesn't want to send him to nursing home due to the bad experience they had with the one they put their mother in all those years ago. Shelly can't take care of him since she can't afford to quit her job. There is no one else to take care of Wesley either, because both their parents have passed, they don't have any other siblings, and Wesley doesn't have any children.

Shelly isn't sure what to do. She wants accurate information about his condition and reliable resources that could help give him a comfortable life. She looked up "resources for elderly in Ingham county" and found the Community Mental Health page. There, she wasn't sure if she should browse "Community Resources" or "Services" first. After looking through the dropdowns, she eventually found "Older Adult Services Programs". She didn't see a list of programs offered, but she did call the number on the bottom of the page to inquire further.

**Shelly was confused as to where she should start when first looking at the website. She did find the page for programs for the elderly, but she didn't find the exact information she was looking for.**