

## A closer look at the men and women who serve

More often than not, if one asks a veteran if they are a veteran they'll say, "No."

That, says Mike Bargiband, of Maryland's Commitment to Veterans, is why people hoping to link veterans to limited resources are advised to pose the question this way: "Have you served in any branch of the military?" The distinction is important to many, particularly the 48,000 living on the Eastern Shore, many of whom are unaware of services available.

And Bargiband says a good percentage of those who have served aren't linked to services that could benefit them, their families and the community at large.

"Most of the time, it's the veteran's family that comes to us for help," Bargiband said.

MCV rules will fund assistance for the veteran and his or her family only when the veteran is linked to service. That's one reason Bargiband continues his efforts to reach out to veterans throughout the Eastern Shore. Military culture, while valuable in battle and back-up, is a barrier for service men and women who need help with behavioral health issues.

An unwritten rule in the military keeps members from seeking help for mental health and substance use issues. Interactions with therapists remain on members' records and can hinder promotions. The "just do it" attitude also is a hindrance because these soldiers are trained to suck-it-up and get things done. Bargiband says he gets around those barriers by sometimes linking veterans—as well as active duty members—to services that aren't associated with the military.

Persuasion to seek help, however, takes time.

"You have to build trust," he said, "and that takes a lot of time, a lot of conversations."

Bargiband is not a veteran, but has been involved with the veteran community since he was 12 and playing taps at military funerals through local American Legions. He was among the founders of Forbes Hall. Founded in 2010, it is the only veteran shelter on the Eastern Shore.

He is a board member of the National Addictions Therapy Research Association, now known as Veterans Service Centers of America, which is the 501(c)3 that runs the shelter. His experience, personal involvement and 25-year history on the Eastern Shore has crystallized relationships with veterans as well as providers. So he urges addictions and mental health providers to obtain training to work with veterans in order to learn their language and issues, which only enhances treatment.

He says anger is something that simmers among military members when they return home from war zones. They've lived and fought in difficult conditions and experienced cultures where people live with very little. So when they return home to this consumer-oriented culture, it often evokes anger about excess.

This Veterans Day—Monday, November 11—make a point to attend a related event to celebrate and honor military members past and present for their patriotism and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good.

"The way we show that support is when you see a veteran to silently place a hand on your heart," Bargiband said. "This means, 'I feel you, I appreciate you.'"



*Listen to Michael Bargiband 12-1 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 7, 2013 on WCEM AM or online at [www.mtslive.com](http://www.mtslive.com).*

*Reach him at 410-725-9996 or [mbargiband.mcv@gmail.com](mailto:mbargiband.mcv@gmail.com).*

## 'Caring Connections'

Tune in to WCEM 1240 AM for Caring Connections, a talk radio show hosted by Carol Masden, director of Eastern Shore Mobile Crisis, and Kathy Stevens, of Mid-Shore Mental Health Systems, Inc.'s Defeating Stigma Coalition. The show airs 12 to 1 p.m. every Thursday. This month, Mike Bargiband of Maryland's Commitment to Veterans discusses issues pertaining to area military service men and women; Leni Preston outlines the Affordable Care Act; Jeanine Beasley of Mid-Shore Mental Health Systems, Inc. reviews programs for homeless individuals; Dick Goldstein of For All Seasons discusses new services related to human trafficking; and Del. Addie Eckardt highlights behavioral health integration. Listen online at <http://www.mtslive.com/stations/wcem/>.

Please email [kstevens@msmhs.org](mailto:kstevens@msmhs.org) to learn more or to participate.

### Our Mission

To continually improve the provision of mental health services for residents of Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's and Talbot Counties through effective coordination of services in collaboration with consumers, family members, providers and community leaders. We believe that the mental health system should assure quality, cost-effective services that meet the needs of our consumers. Consumers are the focus of MSMHS, and it is our goal through partnership with other agencies to develop a full array of easily accessible services for the consumer. We strongly believe in the empowerment of individuals, consumers, and family members to help develop their fullest potential.

### Our Vision

To develop a model rural mental health delivery system with a continuum of mental health services that are culturally diverse. These services assure consumer empowerment, have a community focus, are cost-effective for the system and are integrated to serve the community as a whole, private and public sector, regardless of cultural or ethnic background.

## Changes ...

**Eastern Shore Area Health Education Center** welcomes Jennifer Berkman as the new Continuing Education Coordinator. She looks forward to creating collaborative efforts to develop and support the healthcare community through quality continuing education for the betterment of all Eastern Shore communities. Reach her at 410-221-2600 or via email at [jberkman@esahec.org](mailto:jberkman@esahec.org).

**Mid-Shore Mental Health Systems, Inc.** urges participation in the annual Legislative Forum 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Monday, December 2, 2013 at St. Mark's United Methodist Church in Easton. Discussion at the soup and salad dinner will center on the Community Mental Health Plan as a means to formulate strategies to enhance the public mental health system in the mid-shore region. Additional information will be forthcoming.

**National Alliance on Mental Illness** released its State Legislation Report that reviews legislative changes that affect mental health provisions nationwide. The report highlights what NAMI deems "red flag" changes as well as "gold star" improvements. Find the report online at [http://www.nami.org/Template.cfm?Section=Top\\_Story&template=/contentmanagement/contentdisplay.cfm&ContentID=162062](http://www.nami.org/Template.cfm?Section=Top_Story&template=/contentmanagement/contentdisplay.cfm&ContentID=162062)

*You can  
conquer  
almost any  
fear if you  
will only  
make up your  
mind to do so.  
For remember,  
fear doesn't  
exist any-  
where except in  
the mind."*

*—Dale Carnegie*

**MID-SHORE MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEMS IS LOCATED AT 28578 MARYS COURT, EASTON, MD 21601.**

**YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN US IN OUR WORK TO IMPROVE SERVICES ON THE EASTERN SHORE BY JOINING THE BHSN WORKGROUPS. FOR INFORMATION ABOUT BHSN, EMAIL KATHY STEVENS AT [kstevens@msmhs.org](mailto:kstevens@msmhs.org) OR CALL 410-770-4801.**



## Treatment benefits: opposite ends of the spectrum

One challenge Jan Willis, LCSW-C, faces as she works toward becoming a clinical acupuncturist is this: treatment begins with the client's weakness, i.e. pain, versus the social work approach that builds on strengths. She had to learn to separate—as much as possible—the two clinical approaches if she were to meet standards of each.

Willis, of Federalsburg, has worked in social services for more than two decades, doing everything from case management to forensic social work in area jails. Only in recent years did she turn her passion for people to acupuncture in hope of one day “marrying” the two practices that could provide optimal benefits for the clients she serves.

Happenstance, and stress, was key in redirecting her energy.

“I had a lot of stress at work and I was carrying all of that in my neck and shoulders,” said Willis, who formerly headed the Forensic Mental Health Program at Mid-Shore Mental Health Systems, Inc. “I did the usual things, you know, taking Ibuprofen and just trying to relax.”

But when she and her daughter fell victim to a crime, Willis knew she had to muster for her child. Acute pain would not aide in doing so. Life demanded she find a solution and that included acupuncture. The pain diminished after the first treatment of five-element acupuncture.

Still, she remained skeptical, wondering whether the relief stemmed from a sort of placebo effect rather than the miniscule needles that had pierced her skin.

Another circumstance would provide additional confirmation of acupuncture's validity. Willis's husband, a retired natural resource officer, had already had a joint replaced in his hand due to pain, but the pain only worsened after the surgery.

The doctor told him the only solution was to replace the replacement. Willis suggested he receive acupuncture prior to the second surgery because the ancient treatment is scientifically proven to boost the immune system, which could only improve the surgical outcome.

Acupuncture worked. The pain was eliminated and he did not reschedule the surgery. It also worked for Willis's aging dog, Floss, who'd lost control of his bowel movements.

“Floss didn't know what was going on, but it worked for him,” Willis said and explained that all personal experience, punctuated by that of Floss, affirmed her belief in the healing power of acupuncture. She began the three-year journey to become a clinical acupuncturist at the Maryland University of Integrated Health in Laurel, Md. What she learned is acupuncture speeds spiritual, physical and mental healing by tapping in to a deeper energetic level.

“I worked in numerous settings and I saw a lot of similarities, a lot of pain,” Willis said of her years in social work. “But 75 percent of people I saw, the source was some traumatic event.”

The missing link was finding a way to heal the emotional pain, the numbing, gnawing depression many suffered with, she said. Five-element acupuncture requires a full assessment of clients, that includes a long discussion about pain, where it hurts, when it began and linkage to its source.

“It may be a spiritual or mental source, something the client isn't even aware of,” Willis said. She says acupuncture combined with talk therapy would greatly benefit those struggling with behavioral health issues. Currently, she works with inmates struggling with addiction, using a tested acupuncture treatment that relieves cravings and withdrawal.

The treatment also improves the spirit and promotes calm. It's something Willis hopes to continue when she completes her internship and begins practice on the Eastern Shore.

She's just a few months, and a few dozen treatments, shy of reaching that goal. She urges those in human services to investigate acupuncture as a means to compliment behavioral health treatment.

*Those interested in learning more may contact Jan Willis at 410-310-5584 or [janwillis@wildblue.net](mailto:janwillis@wildblue.net).*

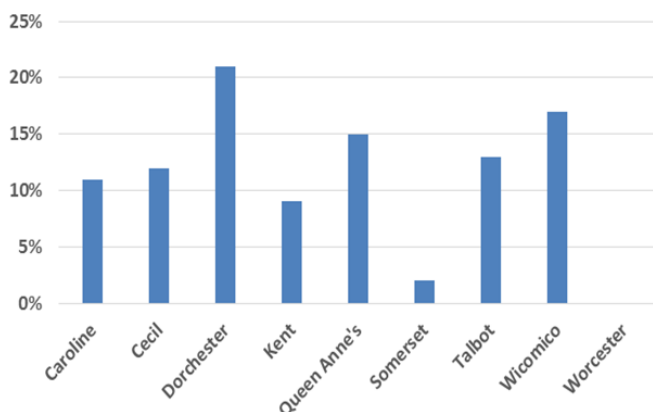
*Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time.*

*—Thomas A. Edison*



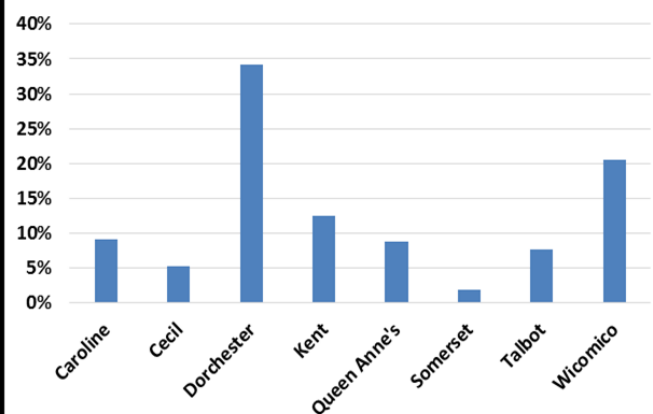
## EASTERN SHORE OPERATIONS CENTER

### Calls by County



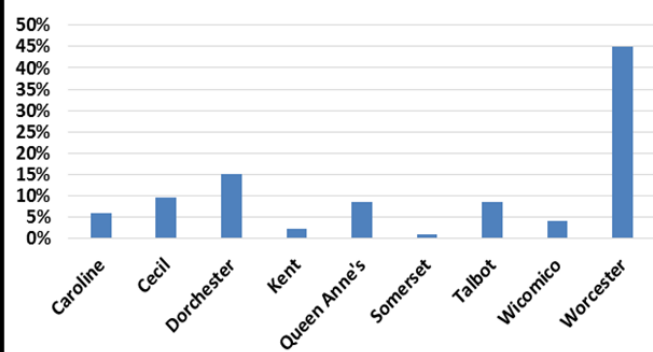
## MOBILE CRISIS SERVICES

### MCT Utilization by County



## URGENT CARE CLINICS

### Urgent Care Appointments by County



## Crisis response data

The **Eastern Shore Operations Center** (ESOC) assisted 439 new callers in the first quarter of fiscal year 2014, up 30 percent from fiscal year 2013 when ESOC served 338 new callers in the first quarter. An additional 501 calls were received from consumers who already have an open case. ESOC received calls from each of the nine counties served on the Eastern Shore. This increase in call volume occurred despite ESOC no longer receiving calls from hospital emergency departments and behavioral health units to schedule urgent care appointments, which hospitals can now do themselves through SharePoint, a web-based program. In fiscal year 2013, 110 calls were from hospitals for urgent care appointments.

The number of **Mobile Crisis Teams** (MCT) doubled in this quarter with the start-up of a new team in July serving Dorchester and Caroline counties through the Health Enterprise Zone award and an additional new team in Cecil County starting up in late August. MCT responded to 418 total dispatches in the first quarter of FY14. This is an increase of 159 dispatches over the same quarter in FY13. MCT responded to 256 initial dispatches and 162 follow-up dispatches. Dispatches were made to all of the counties of the service area with the highest volume of calls coming from Dorchester County with 143 dispatches, Wicomico County with 86, and Kent County with 52.

**Urgent Care Services** are provided in all nine counties of the Eastern Shore and with the exception of Dorchester County, remain constant in the demand for the service. Dorchester County utilization of urgent care has increased as was anticipated with the creation of the new Mobile Crisis Team serving Dorchester and Caroline counties. Two hundred and twenty (220) urgent care appointments were scheduled during the first quarter of FY14. Data collection indicates a no show rate of 31 percent which is lower than the 47 percent rate in FY13. The Behavioral Health Services Network Crisis Response Workgroup is credited with developing strategies in part to reduce this rate. Fifty-six percent of consumers seen for an urgent care appointment were referred for evaluation with a psychiatrist. This percentage has remained fairly constant since the inception of these services in March of 2010.





## BHSN Calendar & Events—November 2013

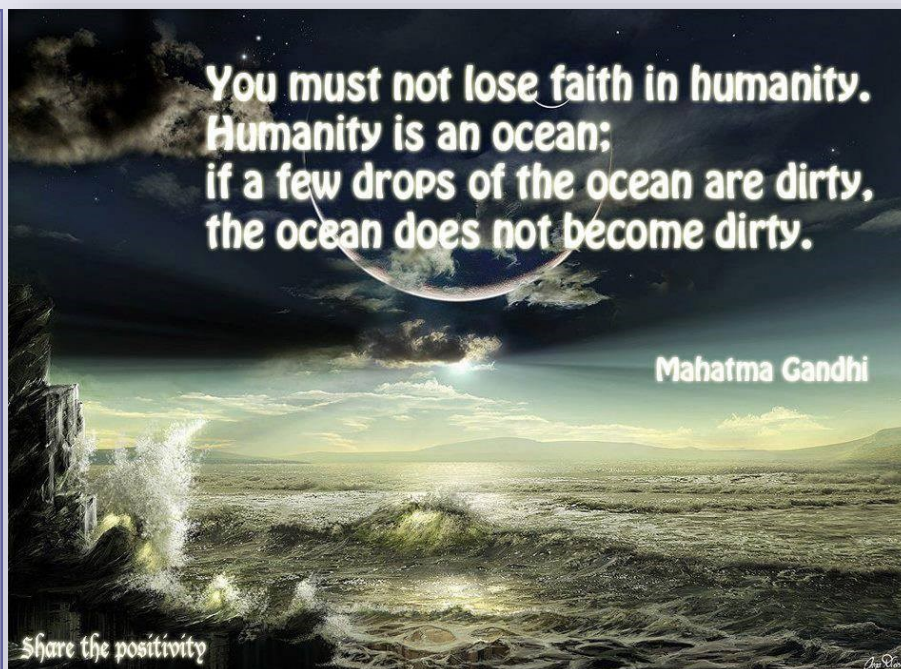
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7 Caring Connections 12-1 p.m. www.mtslive.com	8	9
10	11 Veterans Day MSMHS Closed	12 Housing RT 1:30-3 Consumer Council 3-4	13	14 BHSN Integration 10:30-12 BHSN C & A 3-4	15	16
17	18	19 BHSN Long Term 11-12 BHSN Crisis 2:30-3:30	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28 Thanksgiving Day	29 American Indian Heritage Day	30

### Check it out

—**November 7:** Home Instead Senior Care is offering two free workshops from 1 to 4:30 p.m. at Oxford Community Center, 200 Oxford Road, Oxford. “Alzheimer’s Disease or Other Dementias” highlights symptoms of these diseases and information about diagnosis. The “Capturing Life’s Journey” workshop offers techniques to improve caregiving. Call 410-822-1230 to register.

—**November 14:** Home Instead Senior Care is offering two free workshops from 1 to 4:30 p.m. at Oxford Community Center, 200 Oxford Road, Oxford. Techniques to Handle Challenging Behaviors provides insight helpful in redirection. “Activities to Encourage Engagement” offers three types of activities to encourage people with dementia or Alzheimer’s disease to engage in activity. Call 410-822-1230 to register.

**FYI:** Dri-Dock Wellness and Recovery Center has relocated to Sojourner Douglass College at 824 Fairmount Ave. in Cambridge. The center is open 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturdays. Check out the website at [www.dri-dock.org](http://www.dri-dock.org)



### Agencies converge for one day in Cambridge to offer “Help, Hope and Housing”

Community organizations have partnered again to hold the 3rd Annual Help, Hope and Housing Community Resource Day at the Career and Technology Center in Cambridge South Dorchester High School, 2475 Cambridge Beltway in Cambridge. The event is 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday, December 9, 2013. Partners include the Dorchester County Health Department; Pro Bono Services; Delmarva Community Action Center; Salvation Army; Chesapeake College; Maryland Vehicle Administration; Choptank Community Health; Delmarva Community Transit; and many more. This year, participants will have the opportunity to see an ophthalmologist, dentist and chiropractor; flu shots and blood pressure checks also will be provided. Those wanting a fresh look may count on students from Delmarva Beauty Academy. Additionally, participants in need of state identification may be transported to the MVA in Easton. Organizers seek items such as new socks, gloves and hygiene items for goodie bags. Those who’d like to participate, volunteer, or donate may contact Kathleen Rineholt at 410-901-4281 or email [krinholt@dhr.state.md.us](mailto:krinholt@dhr.state.md.us).