



Promoting Mental Health Awareness

**Cumberland Perry Community Support Program**

Promoting Mental Health Recovery

**Cumberland/Perry Community Support Program**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **CANDLELIGHT VIGIL FOR MENTAL ILLNESS AWARENESS TO BE HELD IN DOWNTOWN CARLISLE**

**CARLISLE, PA September 5, 2014.** Come one, come all and join us in our celebration of Mental Illness Awareness Week. October 5<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> is National Mental Illness Awareness Week and to kick it off on **Sunday, October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2014**, the Cumberland/Perry County Community Support Program will be hosting a Candlelight Vigil for Mental Health Awareness, starting at **6:30pm**, on the steps of the **Cumberland County Courthouse**.

Schedule of Events:

- 6:00 – Participants begin assembling at the steps of the Cumberland County Courthouse.
- 6:30 – Candlelight vigil begins.

“Mental disorders are common in the United States and internationally. An estimated 26.2 percent of Americans ages 18 and older — about one in four adults — suffer from a diagnosable mental disorder in a given year.” (NIMH, 2005) One study found that 60% of those who had the diagnosis of schizophrenia, prematurely died from largely preventable medical conditions such as cardiovascular, pulmonary, and infectious diseases, and some medications for mental health issues have been more associated with weight gain, diabetes, higher cholesterol & lipid levels, insulin resistance and metabolic syndrome. (National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors)

The recent death of Robin Williams highlighted suicide and mental health. In 2011, out of every 100,000 Pennsylvanians, 13.7 died by suicide, resulting in 1,747 deaths. Suicide is the 10<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death. Statistics show that 90% of those who die by suicide have a diagnosable mental health challenge at the time of their death. Every day, 80 Americans take their own lives, and 1,500 attempt to do so, and each suicide or attempt intimately impacts at least 6 other people. (American Association on Suicidality)

There is help and hope available to those who are struggling with life’s challenges. There are many services which are available to those who are living in Cumberland and Perry Counties to help them through crisis. And with access to physical and mental health care, these statistics can be changed.

Our local community is not immune from these statistics. Mental illness is a disease just like diabetes that can affect anyone, at anytime for any reason. Just like diabetes or other diseases it can be managed and treated. Historically, people with diseases of the brain have remained silent, enshrouded in a culture of fear due to stigmas and ignorance.

Today, we are a community, and more importantly, a nation who is beginning to receive this message. We want to turn our energies towards promoting recovery of mental illness and stop the stigma associated with it. We believe that this event will provide the Communities of Cumberland and Perry Counties, businesses, and organizations with the opportunity to become aware that all citizens should feel that they are a part of a whole community.

Contact Cumberland/Perry Community Support Program at (717) 254-6060

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