

**From:** Tramaine Stevenson, Director of Program Development and Operations, National Council  
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**Subject:** Revisiting the G in ALGEE

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**MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID™**  
*News and Updates*



### Mental Health First Aider eNews

In this issue, we provide some reminders about how to give reassurance and information, data on prevalence rates, and an example of a First Aider putting the ALGEE action plan to work!



#### TRAINING & EVENTS



*Stay tuned for more events and training opportunities in the next issue...*



#### FAST FACT



Treatment works! Recovery rates from mental illness are comparable to other conditions, and are as high as 90%.

However, only 1/3 of people with these conditions seek treatment.

### Revisiting the "G" in ALGEE



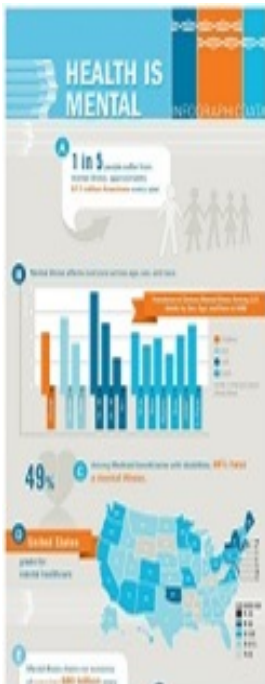
It's time to move on to the "G" our 5-step action plan: Give reassurance and information. This important step encourages you as a First Aider to provide emotional support, such as empathizing with how the person feels, and providing useful information about mental health problems and that recovery is possible.



First Aiders can establish a level of trust with the individual they are responding to by providing appropriate reassurance and information. Here are some reminders for how to appropriately do so:

1. Treat the person with respect and dignity
2. Do not blame the person for the illness
3. Have realistic expectations
4. Offer consistent emotional support and understanding
5. Give the person hope for recovery
6. Provide practical help (e.g., responding to simple requests)

Check out your manual for more details about these steps. (pg. 28 in Adult manual; pg. 48 in Youth manual).



## Infographic Displays Impact of Mental Illness in the US

“Helpful information” may include prevalence rates, common symptoms, or that people can and do recover from mental illnesses and addictions. [Check out this infographic](#) about the prevalence and impact of mental illness and some stats on recovery rates from mental illness.

Be sure to take a look at your Mental Health First Aid manuals for more information about the prevalence of specific mental illnesses (pg. 2 in the Adult manual; pg. 4 in the Youth manual).



## ALGEE Tales: Using Mental Health First Aid in 2-1-1 Call Center

Last issue, we asked you to share your stories about how you've put the 5-step action plan into practice. Here's an inspiring story from Mary\* in North Carolina.

*\*Please note – names have been changed to protect the privacy of the individuals involved.*

At North Carolina 2-1-1 we rely on ALGEE to make certain that the callers to our community resource and information line get the support they need. Though the most common referrals we provide in our call center are for financial assistance, we often learn that callers need mental health support in addition to whatever else they have requested. Our Referral Specialist, Mona\*, recently received a call from a gentleman named Mark\* who needed shelter and a job. Mark lost his job three years before and had been living in a trailer that was uninhabitable. After Mona discussed Mark's options for shelter, she asked him what kind of work he was interested in. He replied "nothing."

Mona began asking Mark questions about his mental health, and he revealed that a history of depression had led him to drug abuse, which in turn resulted in him losing his job. Mark told Mona that he was at "the end of his rope." She first assessed the situation to ensure that he was not at risk to himself or others. She then listened to Mark nonjudgmentally so that he felt comfortable discussing his needs with her. Mona then gave him information about local mental health and substance use supports and reassured him that he could call 2-1-1 24 hours a day if he needed help. Mona also encouraged Mark to speak with a specialist and she directly connected him to a live person when the call was finished.

Mona and the rest of the Referral Specialists at the North Carolina 2-1-1 call center make use of ALGEE every day to ensure that they live in a safer, more

connected community.

Share your story with [Laura Roth](#) to be featured in an upcoming First Aider eNews!

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*Mental Health First Aid USA is coordinated by the National Council for Behavioral Health, the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, and the Missouri Department of Mental Health.*

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**CONTACT** 

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