



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

PROCLAMATION

**MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH
May 2017**

WHEREAS, the mental health of every citizen is essential to the emotional and economic prosperity of our families, communities, and businesses in the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, mental health is a key component of every individual's overall physical health and emotional well-being; and

WHEREAS, mental illness affects people of all ages, races, ethnicities, and income levels in Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS, suicide is the 11th leading cause of death overall in Pennsylvania, with one person dying by suicide every five hours; and

WHEREAS, mental health conditions are not only common, they are treatable, and early and effective intervention can save lives and change the trajectories of people living with mental illness; and

WHEREAS, only 50 percent of individuals with a serious form of mental illness seek treatment; and

WHEREAS, feelings of personal shame and fears of social stigma and discrimination prevent many living with mental illness from seeking help; and

WHEREAS, untreated mental illness leads to higher rates of emergency department visits, hospitalizations, school drop-outs, and suicides; and

WHEREAS, stigma leads to fear, mistrust, and violence against people with mental illness, who are significantly more likely to be victims than perpetrators of violent crimes; and

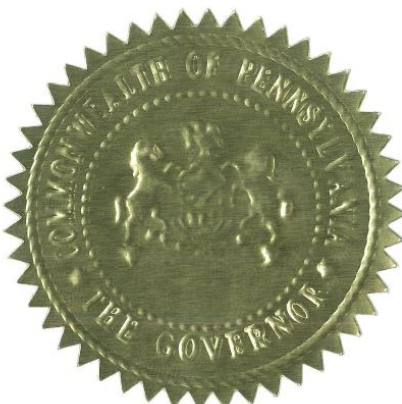
WHEREAS, stigma can be reduced by increasing the awareness of mental illness and available resources for those suffering from mental health conditions; and

WHEREAS, we strive to create communities in the Commonwealth that support mental wellness by increasing access to treatment, educating ourselves and our communities about mental wellness and mental illness, and supporting our citizens as they seek to improve their mental health; and

WHEREAS, greater public awareness about mental wellness can positively transform attitudes about, and towards people with mental illness, making it easier for our citizens to seek help;

THEREFORE, I, Tom Wolf, Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, do hereby proclaim May 2017 Mental Health Awareness Month. I call on citizens, government agencies, public and private institutions, businesses, and schools in Pennsylvania to recommit to increasing awareness and understanding of mental health and to recognize the necessity of accessible and appropriate mental health services for all Pennsylvanians.

GIVEN under my hand and the Seal of the Governor, at the City of Harrisburg, this eighteenth day of April two thousand seventeen, the year of the commonwealth the two hundred forty-first.



Tom Wolf
TOM WOLF
Governor