



## **Mental Health Association in New York State, Inc.**

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### **NEW WEBSITE ESTABLISHED TO ADDRESS NEEDS OF PEOPLE WITH BOTH MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION NEEDS**

In an effort to better address the needs of individuals with both mental health and addiction needs, the Mental Health Association in New York State, Inc. (MHANYS) has established a new website ([www.co-occurringdisordersnys.org](http://www.co-occurringdisordersnys.org)) dedicated specifically to raising awareness of “co-occurring disorders” and providing resources to handle these complex needs.

Commonly known as “co-occurring” or having a “dual diagnosis”, more than 4.5 million Americans live with both a serious psychiatric disability and a substance abuse disorder. An all too common scenario is that in which a person with an undiagnosed psychiatric disorder, such as depression, may abuse drugs or alcohol to alleviate the symptoms of depression – also commonly known as “self-medicating.” If the person gets treatment for the drug addiction but not for depression, the depression still exists and the need for relief from its symptoms continues. Stressing the importance of treating both conditions simultaneously in order for an individual with “co-occurring” disorders to achieve a level of recovery, this website provides information to individuals and families, and also acts as a resource to mental health and addiction treatment providers

“We are pleased to be able to offer this comprehensive resource, especially to individuals living with ‘co-occurring’ disorders and those who they rely upon for support,” said Glenn Liebman, MHANYS’ CEO. “Behavior exhibited by someone with a psychiatric condition, who also has an addiction treatment need, can be very confusing and difficult. We hope this new website will serve as an invaluable resource that will provide information about the nature of “co-occurring” disorders and help individuals find the treatment they need to recover.”

In addition, this new website also has links to other organizations, including MHANYS’ affiliates, working to help individuals with “co-occurring” disorders, which are already proving useful to individuals seeking treatment and support in their own community.

“In an age where we understand the close relationship between mental health and addiction treatment needs, and how they can have a compound effect on an individual’s behavior, it is crucial that we identify such conditions quickly in an effort to maximize an individual’s chances toward full recovery,” said Liebman. “This is especially true with adolescents and young adults, which is often the time in life when many mental health and addiction conditions arise. Effectively dealing with these issues at that age can prevent an entire lifetime of involvement with a variety of systems, including the criminal justice system.”