

# **“Make It Ok”**

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### **Project Goals**

To reduce the stigma around mental illness. It's important to reduce stigma because one in five adults in the U.S. experiences a mental illness in any given year. Stigma is a barrier to getting timely treatment and can lead to isolation for people experiencing mental illness.

### **Project Description**

Sponsored by HealthPartners and Regions Hospital Foundation, Make It OK was created as a community campaign to reduce stigma of mental illness by increasing understanding and caring conversations, promoting caring conversations, and inspiring community change to make mental illness OK.

MakeItOK.org was created and is managed by HealthPartners to provide information and resources for communities to take action. More than 80,000 people have visited the website which includes videos with personal stories of people living with a mental illness, information and tips on how to talk about mental illnesses. In 2018, MakeItOK.org provided the opportunity for visitors to share their own personal experiences with mental health stigmas on the website.

HealthPartners continues to fund a 0.5 FTE staff person to help community organizations implement their own local “Make It OK” campaigns. More than 1000 Make It OK Ambassadors have been

trained and use campaign resources within their own communities. HealthPartners has expanded outreach into diverse communities with BIPOC Behavioral Health Professionals from HealthPartners advising communities on program content and adapting resources to be meaningful and culturally relevant to many communities. Finally, HealthPartners has supported a significant growth of rural communities launching Make It OK campaigns. The campaign has come to life through strong partnerships in Anoka, Goodhue Crow Wing, Dakota, Meeker, McLeod and Sibley counties, the Duluth area, the St. Croix Valley and the entire state of Iowa.

### **Entities Involved**

NAMI and a steering committee of community members, community-based organizations and public health. Washington Co., Dakota Co., Goodhue Co., Arrowhead Health Alliance, Northland Healthy Minds, Anderson Corporation, Red Wing Shoes, Crow Wing Energized/Brainerd Lakes Region, Polk County (WI), Hutchinson and McLeod County Public Health.

### **How Health Plans Support the Project**

HealthPartners sponsors the program and in October 2018 the HealthPartners Institute completed a two-year IMPACT Survey study of over 6,500 participants. Results show that between 2017 and 2019 there has been progress and a significant decrease in stigma among survey respondents who reported feeling comfortable talking with someone about mental illness, willingness to tell friends if they have a mental illness and less reluctance in seeking help.

## **Additional Information**

[www.makeitok.org](http://www.makeitok.org)

## **Questions?**

Marna Canterbury

[Marna.M.Canterbury@healthpartners.com](mailto:Marna.M.Canterbury@healthpartners.com)