NH Listen’s Spring 2014 report, “All Walks of Life: A Statewide Conversation on Mental Health and Substance Abuse,” shows the needs of New Hampshire residents have strong overlaps with recently published reports and strategic plans by five statewide agencies.

All Walks of Life

“What needs to be done in our communities to better prevent and respond to mental illness and substance use disorders?”

A NH Listens Summary Report of:
All Walks of Life: A Statewide Conversation on Mental Health and Substance Abuse
April 23, 2014

Children
Prevention and Risk Reduction

Restoring Care

Collective Action

Veterans

Commission Report

Report by the New Hampshire Legislative Commission on Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)
February 11, 2014
A selection of voices from the “All Walks of Life” sessions highlight significant overlaps in barriers and strategies.

Relative to Children
• If I had gotten the help and support I’m getting now as a kid, it would have been a different universe.
• There needs to be education at all levels with family members and front-line people so more of us know what to do when something isn’t right.
• We aren’t looking for indicators of problems at young enough ages...early identification is key.

Relative to Veterans
• Stigma, assigned and self-inflicted, is the biggest barrier for veterans.
• Veterans are not getting what they need for support.
• Veterans do not feel understood by the providers who serve them.
• PTSD is not a life sentence, you can recover.

Relative to Prevention and Risk Reduction
• New Hampshire’s unique character of Yankee individualism may add to a culture of denial and keeping silent on mental health issues.
• The majority of people go without treatment or care. What if the majority of people got treatment? The majority would recover.
• We need to improve the infrastructure in New Hampshire to address the societal problems that contribute to or result in mental illness, homelessness, or poverty.

Relative to Restoring Care
• We need local alternatives to stabilize people closer to home.
• Crisis is more expensive than treatment. Treatment is more expensive than prevention.
• Stigma even impacts funding decisions.

Relative to Collective Action
• People in recovery remain invisible and that needs to change.
• You get diagnosed with cancer, and someone brings you a casserole. You get diagnosed with depression or addiction, and people don’t do that. We need more public education so friends are comfortable coming by to offer help.
• Success stories are not shared enough. We need significant public education at all levels to impact stigma reduction in our communities.

New Hampshire Reports on Substance Abuse and/or Mental Illness
1. Transforming Children’s Behavioral Health Care, March 2013
3. NH Mental Health Sentinel Event Review, January 2014
4. Addressing the Critical Mental Health Needs of NH’s Citizens: A strategy for restoration (the ten year plan), August 2008

For links to these reports, visit: http://nhlistens.org.