

Finding Behavioral Healthcare Crucial For Farm People

BY DR. MIKE ROSMANN

“My husband has been struggling with depression for years. It seems like he gets worse around harvest each year. His primary care physician sent him to a psychiatrist but the two did not connect at all, nor did he connect with the psychologist in the office. He needs to see a counselor who understands farm life and can help him through what is bothering him.”

These comments were shared by a farm wife in an email to me.

Harvest is always a stressful time for most farm people. This year brings many agricultural producers more than usual uncertainty because of the drought. Farm people may need more medical care this harvest, not only because of stress, but also because of exposures to greater than usual dust and toxic molds.

Farmers may also need behavioral health assistance in greater numbers than usual, as indicated by recent increases in the numbers of persons who are contacting farm crisis hotlines, helplines and websites in the states where these resources exist.

During a recent telephone conference involving persons who manage farmer-friendly telephone and web-based referral services, all the administrators on the call indicated an upturn in the number of callers during this summer and early fall. In particular, calls from livestock and dairy producers were more frequent.

Unfortunately, few farm crisis hotlines, helplines and websites exist in agricultural states and regions. Currently only eight states offer farmer-friendly telephone crisis counseling and referral services. They are:

- Iowa Concern Hotline - 1-800-447-1985
- Minnesota Crisis Connection - 1-866-379-6363
- Nebraska Rural Response Hotline - 1-800-464-0258
- New York FarmNet (serves New York and upper New England) - 1-800-547-3276
- North Dakota 2-1-1 Helpline - 1-800-472-2911
- South Dakota Rural Helpline - 1-800-664-1349
- Vermont Farm First - 1-877-493-6216
- Wisconsin Farm Center Hotline - 1-800-942-2474

The term farm crisis hotline implies the availability of culturally appropriate telephone counseling at all times to callers who are engaged in agricultural occupations. The American Association of Suicidology (ASA) accredits hotlines only if they are available 24/7. Follow-up, such as referral for counseling or immediate intervention in case of an imminent suicide, is part of the service. Not all the hotlines listed here are accredited by the ASA.

The other listed services are helplines, which means they offer culturally appropriate advice about a variety of agricultural issues and referral for additional services but at specific hours set by the helpline and not necessarily available at all times. Helplines may be accredited by the Alliance for Information and Referral Systems.

The hotlines and helplines can also be accessed by email through their websites. The hotlines, helplines and websites help callers deal with a wide range of problems, including all

types of behavioral health issues, farming questions and referrals. They are best able to serve only the residents of their respective states.

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-8255) is available to anyone at any time, but the telephone responders are not necessarily familiar with agricultural issues.

Farm and ranch people and farm workers willingly seek out farm crisis hotlines, helplines and websites. Some 22,000 callers yearly contacted the seven-state consortium of farm crisis services that was managed by AgriWellness, Inc., a nonprofit program that I directed from 2001 to 2011.

Extensive evaluation of the AgriWellness program

indicated callers appreciated that services were confidential, free and the telephone responders were familiar with agricultural issues. Follow-up counseling was provided by licensed professionals who had at least some exposure to training in agricultural behavioral health. In other words, the services were culturally appropriate.

The program saved many lives. During a one-year period, 56 callers had just attempted suicide; another 77 persons reported a suicide plan and 685 persons reported suicidal ideation. One farmer commented, “I wouldn’t be alive today if I hadn’t made that call and got counseling.”

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) termed these services a “best practice model” which was included in its strategic plan, Rural Healthy People 2010: A Companion Document to Healthy People 2010. The AgriWellness portfolio of services is also included in the 2011 DHHS publication, Rural Behavioral Health Programs and Promising Practices.

Currently there are few federal funds available to operate farm crisis services. It was requested that a national Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network should be included in the current Farm Bill. Congress is mostly deadlocked and unable to provide the behavioral health supports for farm people at a time when they are needed. State appropriations, private foundations and grassroots projects such as church collections, maintain the insufficient services that are available.

Professional counselors who understand agriculture and the problems specific to farm and ranch life are too few and far between. Farm people needing behavioral healthcare because of farming-related problems should ask if the prospective counselor is familiar with the unique issues involved in farming and keep asking around until the right match is found.

Dr. Rosmann is a Harlan, Iowa psychologist and farmer. Contact him through the website: www.agbehavioralhealth.com.

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Breast Cancer Screening And Prevention

BY DARLA GULLIKSON, RN, OCN

Avera Sacred Heart Cancer Center Director

The American Cancer Society (ACS) believes the probability of a woman developing cancer in her lifetime is a little more than 1 in 3. This makes breast cancer the second most common form of cancer diagnosed in women each year (skin cancer is first) and the second-leading cause of cancer deaths among women (lung cancer is first).

While these numbers present the stark reality that women are faced with each year, October’s annual Breast Cancer Awareness Month aims to educate women and encourage them to detect problems earlier when they are still highly treatable. With advances in medicine, better education and improved technology, breast cancer death rates have declined significantly, especially among younger women, according to the ACS.

It has been proven that there is no tool more valuable for early detection of breast cancer than mammography. A mammogram is an x-ray photograph of the breasts. It is used to detect tumors, cysts and other abnormalities that may be present. It can also help differentiate between benign (non-cancerous) and malignant (cancerous) disease.

The National Cancer Institute recommends a baseline mammogram between the ages of 35 and 40, and then every one to two years for ages 40 and over. Women with a family history of breast cancer should talk to

their physician about mammogram screenings at an even younger age. Remember, family history includes not only the maternal side but also the paternal family history.

Generally, there is little to no health risk when having a mammogram performed. The level of radiation is very low.

By the age of 20, it is recommended that women have clinical breast exams performed by their physician every three years. During a clinical breast exam, your health care provider will assess for abnormalities on the breast. Although there is some recent controversy about the effectiveness of monthly self exams, it is still recommended that women conduct them by feeling and looking for abnormalities such as:

- Lump or swelling
- Nipple discharge other than breast milk
- Redness or scaliness of the nipple or breast skin
- Irritation or dimpling of the skin on the breast
- New retraction or pain of the nipple

As with most diseases, your risk of developing breast cancer increases with age and if you have a family history of the disease. Other risk factors include genetic risk factors, race (white women are slightly more likely to get breast cancer than any other race), use of birth control pills, hormone replacement therapy, not breastfeeding, alcohol use, diet and exercise. While all of these

risk factors have been shown to demonstrate a slightly increased likelihood for the development of breast cancer, age and family history (including personal history), are the two most significant risk factors.

We have two wonderful programs in South Dakota and Nebraska to help ensure that women, who may not be able to afford a mammogram or have no medical insurance, are able to partake in the screenings. In South Dakota, the program is called “All Women Count” and in Nebraska it is called “Every Woman Matters.” You can learn more about these organizations and pick up forms for assistance by visiting with your health care provider.

The best course of action is to talk openly with your health care provider about your risks and your concerns and learn more about the disease. You should also speak with your family members to learn more about your family history. Early detection is the key to surviving breast cancer, and a lump you may find on a self-exam may have easily been spotted much earlier with a clinical breast exam in combination with a mammogram.

ON THE NET:

www.avera.org
www.cancer.org
www.mayoclinic.com
www.health.yahoo.com

Reminder: Trim Your Street Trees For Safety

The City of Yankton is beginning its annual effort to remind property owners about trimming street trees in an effort to improve visibility and safety on city thoroughfares.

City ordinance requires that tree limbs hanging over city streets and alleys be trimmed to 12 feet and 10 feet over sidewalks. Property owners are responsible for trimming trees on their property or any trees growing in the boulevard next to their property according to city ordinance.

Each year the city makes free limb and trimming drop off available to citizens to help make tree trimming as painless as possible. This year tree limbs and trimmings can be dropped off at the Transfer

Station located at 1200 West 23rd Street free of charge from Oct. 15-27 from 8 a.m.-3:45 p.m. Mondays through Saturdays (excluding Wednesday evenings).

Brad Bies, code enforcement official for the City of Yankton, encourages citizens to take advantage of the free drop off times.

“We tried to time the drop off to coincide with trees going into their dormant period, but before too much snow or ice makes trimming impossible,” Bies said.

He encourages property owners to visit cityofyankton.org for more information and for branch pruning techniques with photographic examples.

City staff will be sending post

cards to property owners reminding them that low hanging branches need to be trimmed. Starting after the free drop-off period, they will inspection street trees on the principal arterials and snow routes and continue throughout the city. If trees remained untrimmed after contacting the property owners, city staff will contract to have the trees trimmed. All costs associated with the abatement of low hanging branches will be assessed against the property as allowed by Yankton Code of Ordinances.

Tree trimming not only improves visibility for all drivers, but also helps keep the roads clear for emergency and other vehicles. Tree limbs hanging into the street

can cause costly damage to larger equipment like school buses and snow plows.

Bies says tree trimming is partially about driver safety on the road and partially about preventing property damage.

“Safety is our number one priority, but vehicles like school buses, fire trucks, and snow plows are community resources,” he said. “I think we all have an interest in keeping maintenance costs down and those vehicles in good working order.”

Clear roadways mean that school buses can run routes on time, and snow plows can efficiently clear streets once the snow starts falling.

AAA Urges All Drivers To Check Vehicles Before Winter

SIoux FALLS — With more than 18 million AAA roadside assistance calls recorded January through August, 2012 for the U.S. and Canada — 28,200 — AAA reminds motorists that cars need periodic checkups to maintain safety and maximize efficiency.

“Whether you’re expecting cooler temperatures, snow, rain or simply a little less sunshine, regular maintenance and seasonal checkups can help prevent unexpected repair costs in the future,” said Marilyn Buskohl, spokeswoman for AAA South Dakota. “Properly preparing your vehicle for the next season of driving is essential for the safety of all passengers and will greatly decrease the chances of your vehicle letting you down.”

AAA recommends that motorists use a simple checklist to determine their vehicle’s fall and winter maintenance needs. Many of the items on the list can be inspected by a car owner in less than an hour, but others should be performed by a certified technician.

WINTER CAR CARE CHECKLIST

- Tire Type and Tread — In areas with heavy winter weather, installing snow tires on all four wheels will provide the best winter traction. All-season tires work well in light-to-moderate snow conditions provided they have adequate tread depth. Replace any tire that has less than 3/32-inches of tread. Uneven tire wear can indicate alignment, wheel balance or suspension problems that must be addressed to prevent further tire damage.
- Battery and Charging System — Have the battery and charging

system tested by a trained technician. A fully-charged battery in good condition is required to start an engine in cold weather.

- Battery Cables and Terminals — Make sure the battery terminals and cable ends are free from corrosion and the connections are tight.
- Drive Belts — Inspect the underside of accessory drive belts for cracks or fraying. Many newer multi-rib “serpentine” belts are made of materials that do not show obvious signs of wear; replace these belts at 60,000-mile intervals.
- Engine Hoses — Inspect cooling system hoses for leaks, cracks or loose clamps. Also, squeeze the hoses and replace any that are brittle or excessively spongy feeling.
- Tire Pressure — Check tire inflation pressure on all four tires and the spare more frequently in fall and winter. As the average temperature drops, so will tire pressures — typically by one PSI for every 10 degrees Fahrenheit. The proper tire pressure levels can be found in the owner’s manual or on a sticker typically located on the driver’s side door jamb.
- Air Filter — Check the engine air filter by holding it up to a 60-watt light bulb. If light can be seen through much of the filter, it is still clean enough to work effectively. However, if light is blocked by most of the filter, replace it.
- Coolant Levels — Check the coolant level in the overflow tank when the engine is cold. If the level is low, add a 50/50 solution of coolant and water to maintain the necessary antifreeze capability. Test the antifreeze protection level annually with an inexpensive tester available at any auto parts

store.

- Lights — Check the operation of all headlights, taillights, brake lights, turn signals, emergency flashers and back-up lights. Replace any burnt-out bulbs.
- Wiper Blades — The blades should completely clear the glass with each swipe. Replace any blade that leaves streaks or misses spots. In areas with snow, consider installing winter wiper blades that wrap the blade frame in a rubber boot to reduce ice and snow buildup that can prevent good contact between the blade and the glass.
- Washer Fluid — Fill the windshield washer fluid reservoir with a winter cleaning solution that has antifreeze components to prevent it from freezing.
- Brakes — If there is any indication of a brake problem, have the system inspected by a certified technician to ensure all components are in good working order.
- Transmission, Brake and Power Steering Fluids — Check all fluids to ensure they are at or

above the minimum safe levels.

- Emergency Road Kit — Carry an emergency kit equipped for winter weather. The kit should include:
 - Mobile phone, pre-programmed with rescue apps and important phone numbers including family and emergency services. Carry a car charger cord, too.
 - Drinking water
 - First-aid kit
 - Non-perishable snacks for both human and pet passengers
 - Bag of abrasive material (sand, salt, clay-based cat litter) or traction mats
 - Ice scraper and snow brush
 - Blankets
 - Extra warm clothing (gloves, hats, scarves)
 - Flashlight with extra batteries
 - Window washer solvent
 - Cloth or roll of paper towels
 - Jumper cables
 - Warning devices (flares or triangles)
 - Basic toolkit (screwdrivers, pliers, adjustable wrench)

The Civil Service Commission Notice of Public Hearing to Adopt Rules

A public hearing will be held in Room 412, 4th floor, State Capitol, Pierre, South Dakota, on October 25, 2012, at 9:00 a.m., to consider the repeal of Chapters §§ 55:01:01 to 55:02:26, inclusive, the amendment of rule numbered 55:06:01:02, and the adoption of rules 55:09:01 to 55:10:11:17, inclusive.

The effect of the rules will be to bring the state’s civil service system and the law enforcement civil service system into conformity with the legislature’s adoption of House Bill 1028, SDCL 3-6C, 3-6D, and 3-6F, and the effect of the rule change to §§5:06:01:02, is to allow the longevity payment to be paid within the pay period of which the employee’s annual year of service date occurs.

The reason for adopting the proposed rules is to be consistent with changes to SDCL 3-6C, 3-6D, and 3-6F, and the amendment of rule § 55:06:01:02, is to allow for the longevity payment to paid to eligible employees in tandem with State’s regular payroll.

Persons interested in presenting data, opinions, and arguments for or against the proposed rules may do so by appearing in person at the hearing or by sending them to the South Dakota Bureau of Human Resources, State Capitol, 500 East Capitol, Pierre, South Dakota 57501-1234. Material sent by mail must reach the Bureau of Human Resources by October 25, 2012, to be considered.

After the hearing, the Bureau will consider all written and oral comments it receives on the proposed rules. The Bureau may modify or amend a proposed rule at that time to include or exclude matters that are described in this notice.

Notice is further given to individuals with disabilities that this hearing is being held in a physically accessible place. Please notify the Bureau of Human Resources at least 48 hours before the public hearing if you have special needs for which special arrangements must be made. The telephone number for making special arrangements is (605) 773-4918.

Copies of the proposed rules may be obtained without charge from the

South Dakota Bureau of Human Resources
Room 110
State Capitol
500 East Capitol
Pierre, South Dakota 57501-1234

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AM 1450
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WEEKDAYS MONDAY-FRIDAY
Wednesday, October 3
7:40 a.m. Yankton Police (Mike Burgeson)
8:15 a.m. Hy-Vee Foods (Chef Staci)
Thursday, October 4
7:40 a.m. Yankton Conv/Vis Bureau (Lisa Scheve)
8:15 a.m. Yankton Chamber (Carmen Schramm)

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