



**ELDER MENTAL HEALTH OUTREACH TEAM (EMHOT)**

**CRITERIA FOR REFERRAL- (contact 413-538-9020 or [wmeldercare.org](http://wmeldercare.org) to refer)**

Presenting Concern	BEHAVIORS
<p align="center"><b>Anxiety</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worry/Fear difficult to control, irrational worry/fear</li> <li>• Racing heart, shallow breathing, nausea, sweating, dizziness               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insomnia, restlessness</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Avoiding routine activities and/or social situations               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of self-care</li> <li>• Checking and rechecking for safety</li> <li>• Tension in neck, back and/or abdomen</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Focus on somatic complaints, “bowel habits, fatigue...)</li> </ul>
<p align="center"><b>Depression</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of interest in ordinary activities</li> <li>• Sadness, “empty feeling”, “blue”, “down”, “weepiness”               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feeling guilty, “helpless”, “hopeless”</li> <li>• Thoughts of death and/or suicide</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Insomnia, hypersomnia, or early AM waking               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficulty concentrating</li> <li>• Lack of self-care/hygiene</li> <li>• Lack of energy, “always tired”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Increased or decreased appetite (Weight gain/Weight loss)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Irritability, critical of others</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p align="center"><b>Dementia</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Undiagnosed-</b> (evidence of memory loss, unsafe driving, changes in personality, withdrawal from social activities, new problems with speaking/writing, decreased judgment, confusion with time/place, difficulty with familiar tasks, challenges with problem solving/planning</li> <li>• <b>Dementia Diagnosis</b> with:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aggression, Agitation, Apathy, Delusions/Hallucination, Paranoia, Sundowning, Insomnia, Medication/Food/Care refusals, Mood swings</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Substance Abuse</b> (Alcohol most common substance in elders)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frequent injuries/falls and ED admissions</li> <li>• Increased tolerance to the substance/medications               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Withdrawal symptoms/blackouts</li> <li>• Cognitive/personality changes</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Changes in social network, habits and/or priorities</li> <li>• Changes in appetite, sleep patterns and/or physical appearance</li> </ul>
<p align="center"><b>Hoarding</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excessively acquiring items that are not needed &amp; no space for</li> <li>• Feeling a need to save items, distress by thoughts of discarding them               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feeling overwhelmed or embarrassed by possessions</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## STARTING THE CONVERSATION

Use the prompts below to help you refer an elder to the EMHOT

Protect privacy during conversations. Be sure to actively listen and remind elder that, *"you are not alone, one in five older adults struggle with things like depression and anxiety, and they can be successfully treated."*

For the past (day/week/month/year.....) it seems like you have been feeling, (unlike yourself/sad/angry/anxious/moody/agitated/lonely/hopeless/fearful/overwhelmed/distracted/confused/stressed/restless/unable to function/unable to leave home/ etc... These feelings are common, and there are specially trained individuals that can help.....

You seem to be struggling with your (divorce/passing of a loved one/medical diagnosis or illness/housing issues/death of a pet/ relationship issues/providing care for a loved one/financial concerns/.....)

I've noticed your (changes in appetite/changes in weight/loss of interest in things you used to enjoy/lack of energy/inability to concentrate/skipping meals/guilt/paranoia/lack of sleep/sleeping too much/overwhelming sadness/isolation/alcohol or drug use/anger/rage/talking of death.....) I'd like to help you by making a referral to individuals that can assist you.....

Talking to you about this makes me feel (nervous/anxious/hopeful/empowered/pro-active/helpful/embarrassed.....), but I'm telling you this because, (I'm worried about you/it is impacting your safety/it is impacting your relationships or quality of life/I don't know what else to do/I'm not sure if anyone else has spoken to you about this/.....) There are people that can help you.....

I would like to help you by privately referring you to a program that can provide you with the assistance you need. I know exactly who can help you with this, it is confidential, and it involves specialists who work with older adults...

Note: Urgent crisis situations (imminent harm to self or others) should be referred to the designated trauma agency in your area BHN/CHD 413-733-6661/413-733-6624 and/or # 988 Suicide hotline and/or Adult Protective Services 1-800-922-2275