



Serious Mental Illness



GENERAL BACKGROUND

Mental illnesses are among the most common health conditions in the United States. 1 in 5 Americans will experience a mental illness in a given year ([CDC](#)).

Serious Mental Illness (SMI) – SMI is a smaller and more severe subset of mental illnesses; SMI is defined as one or more mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder(s) resulting in serious functional impairment, which substantially interferes with or limits one or more major life activities ([NIMH](#)). SMI includes major depression, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD), panic disorder, post traumatic stress (PTSD) and borderline personality disorder ([VA](#)).

In 2017, there were an estimated 11.2 million adults aged 18 or older (or 4.5% of all U.S. adults) in the United States with SMI ([NIMH](#)).

- 1 in 25 U.S. adults experience SMI each year ([NAMI](#)).
- 13.4% of U.S. adults with SMI had no insurance coverage in 2018 ([NAMI](#)).
- In 2017, the prevalence of SMI was higher among women (5.7%) than men (3.3%) ([NIMH](#)).
- Around 1 in 4 individuals with a SMI also have a substance use disorder ([drugabuse.gov](#)).

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RESOURCES

For Clinicians

SMIAdviser SAMSHA-funded initiative on SMI to help support the mental health community during the COVID-19 crisis, SMI Adviser provides timely and authoritative resources, education, consultation, tools and more. This page offers guidance on how to support your patients and practice.

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