



Proclamation

Mental health is essential to everyone's physical and emotional well-being, as it enables individuals to better manage the daily tasks of life. Conversely, mental illnesses can cause a greater burden of disability than other life-threatening diseases in lost years of healthy life.

Currently, more than 23,000 Hawai'i residents suffer from severe and persistent mental illness, including schizophrenia and bipolar disorder. Two thirds of youth and adults with diagnosable mental disorders do not obtain the care they need, and in any given year, 42,000 adults report an episode of major depression.

People suffering from mental illness often do not seek help because of shame, discrimination and a fear they will not be understood or accepted. Fortunately, there are many community organizations and treatment centers who, in partnership with the State Department of Health's Adult Mental Health and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Divisions, seek to reduce the stigma and prevent problems associated with mental illness in our community. These groups also help to improve treatment and increase the participation of children, adults and seniors affected by mental illness.

For more than 50 years, communities across the nation have observed *Mental Health Awareness Month* each May in order to raise public awareness and promote mental wellness among our citizens. On May 3, the Mental Health Association in Hawai'i will honor local leaders who work tirelessly to provide and improve services to those with mental illnesses at the second annual Mental Health Mahalo Awards Luncheon, held in the Japanese Cultural Center's Mānoa Grand Ballroom.

THEREFORE, I, LINDA LINGLE, Governor, and **I, JAMES R. "DUKE" AIONA, JR.**, Lieutenant Governor of the State of Hawai'i, do hereby proclaim **May 2007** as

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

in Hawai'i, and encourage our citizens, government agencies, public and private institutions, businesses and schools to provide and support effective, accessible services for all those suffering from mental illness.

DONE at the State Capitol, in the Executive Chambers, Honolulu, State of Hawai'i, this first day of May 2007.

Linda Lingle
Governor, State of Hawai'i

James R. "Duke" Aiona, Jr.
Lieutenant Governor, State of Hawai'i