



The Positive Aging Resource Center launches www.positiveaging.org on July 1, 2004

The Positive Aging Resource Center (PARC) is an initiative of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to improve the quality of mental health care for older adults by encouraging the spread of evidence-based practice in mental health care for the elderly.

The mission of PARC is to promote emotional wellness as the key to positive aging by providing information and resources to older adults and caregivers, and health and social service professionals. PARC is based in Boston at Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard Medical School, and collaborates with major national provider and consumer organizations serving the elderly.

PARC consumer education aims to inform older adults about mental health, while encouraging a general feeling of positive aging and emotional wellness. PARC recognizes that older adults face a unique set of challenges as they age, and that their emotional health is predictive of how they will cope with changes associated with aging.

PARC is launching a unique consumer education website, www.positiveaging.org, on July 1, 2004. This website emphasizes that good mental health is a vital aspect of positive aging, along with maintaining a healthy lifestyle, and staying connected to one's community. The website addresses the complex needs of older adults by dealing with difficult issues such as grief, social isolation, and life changes that can contribute to anxiety, depression, alcoholism and gambling. The PARC website includes interactive features as well personal stories of older adults who have overcome the challenges of mental illness and aging.

PARC is also dedicated to improving the quality of geriatric mental health services through provider education. PARC is launching a companion provider education website in the fall of 2004.

For more information, please contact:

Betsy McDonel Herr, PhD., Federal Project Officer: bmcdonel@samhsa.gov

Sue Levkoff, Sc.D, S.M., M.S.W, Director: sue_levkoff@hms.harvard.edu

Noelle Downing, M.A., Director of Consumer Education: ndowning@partners.org

