

# Training Behavioral Health Providers: Tobacco Use and Recovery Among Individuals with Mental Illness or Addiction

## Anoka County SHIP Success Story

On March 3, the American Lung Association hosted a “Tobacco Use and Recovery Among Individuals with Mental Illness or Addiction” training. The training was led by Dr. Jill Williams of Robert Wood Johnson Medical School – Division of Addiction Psychiatry. It focused on the disproportionate use of tobacco in people living with mental health and substance use disorders, assessment tools, psycho-social treatments, and pharmacologic treatment options.

Feedback from the event described it as “eye opening” and highlighted the need to “quit thinking smoking is the least of their (patient) problems.” One attendee stated: “I can better serve my clients now.”

Anoka County SHIP engaged local mental health and substance use disorder treatment providers by inviting them to this event. Ten attendees representing four different organizations in Anoka County attended based upon the invitation, in addition to several other providers whom Anoka County SHIP has engaged in the past on tobacco treatment work. Anoka County SHIP continues to provide ongoing support to providers through funding of additional training opportunities, tobacco-free grounds policy work, tools in the implementation of tobacco treatment, and connections to community resources.

### Why is tobacco cessation important for individuals with mental illness or addiction?



Adults with serious mental illness & a tobacco-related diagnosis had a median age at **death 25 years earlier** than adults without SMI and without a tobacco-related diagnosis.

**44% of the US tobacco market** is consumed by people with mental illness and substance use disorders.



**75% want to quit**, compared to 60% of the general population.

Only **1 in 4** mental health treatment facilities offer tobacco dependence treatment services.

