

# National Depression Screening Day

October 9, 2014

Today is National Depression Screening Day. Free screenings are taking place in workplaces, malls, colleges, libraries, senior centers, and other locations nationwide. Clinicians are volunteering their time as part of a larger program started in 1991 by Screening for Mental Health, Inc. (SMH), a non-profit organization.

The Patient Health Questionnaire-2 is one of the most common ways to screen for depression. Here are the questions:

| Over the past 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by any of the following problems? | Not at all | Several days | More than half the days | Nearly every day |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|--------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| 1. Little interest or pleasure in doing things                                            | 0          | 1            | 2                       | 3                |
| 2. Feeling down, depressed, or hopeless                                                   | 0          | 1            | 2                       | 3                |

People who have a total score of 3 or above are considered to screen positive. It's important to remember that this tool **does not establish a diagnosis of depression**; rather, it is **a first step** intended to identify people who need further evaluation.

Depression is "the most prevalent and treatable mental disorder in primary care."<sup>1</sup>

Help is available. If you'd like to attend a free screening in your area, please [find one here](#).

<sup>1</sup>[http://www.cqaimh.org/pdf/tool\\_phq2.pdf](http://www.cqaimh.org/pdf/tool_phq2.pdf)