

## **Tips for Interacting Effectively with People with Psychiatric Disabilities**

Psychiatric disabilities are diverse and include anxiety disorders, depression, bipolar disorders, schizophrenia, and other conditions.

Consider the following suggestions when interacting with individuals who have a psychiatric disability:

- Talk to the individual as you would to anyone else. Integrate the person as fully into office activities as other employees. Do not ostracize him or her due to the psychiatric condition.
- As many psychiatric medications cause extreme thirst, allow the person to have access to beverages upon request, even where food and drink are normally prohibited.
- Consider offering a flexible schedule to allow the person to attend medical appointments and therapy sessions and to deal with medication issues, insomnia, fatigue, or other conditions that often accompany psychiatric disabilities.