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CALENDAR

April
NAMI Connection Facilitator Training Apr. 11-12
NAMI Spring Gala Apr. 25
May - Mental Health Month
Julio’s Break the Stigma Run May 4-9
Get to Know NAMI May 5
Children’s MH Awareness Day May 7
NAMIWalks Info Meeting May 14
Beyond the Baby Blues Conf. May 28
June
Get to Know NAMI June 11
July - Minority MH Month
Tom’s Big Ride Begins July 6
NAMI National Convention July 6-9
Looking Ahead
NAMIWalks Kick-Off Breakfast Aug. 6
NAMIWalks Minnesota Sept. 26

Mental Health Leaders, Legislators Speak Out

NAMI Minnesota, key legislators from both sides of the aisle, health care and other mental health advocacy organizations came together at a press conference on March 10 to express support for building on the foundation of Minnesota’s mental health system to ensure access to effective mental health care across the state.

Sue Abderholden, executive director of NAMI Minnesota, remarked, “Many say that we have a broken system of mental health care. Frankly, our mental health system was never built. We have spent the past ten years building the foundation for home and community-based services and supports, crisis services, and intensive services. We now know what works. We need to complete what we started and finish building our mental health system.”

Rep. Matt Dean (R) stated, “I want to say thanks to the advocates for really push-

See “Leaders Speak Out” p.2

Advocates Optimistic as Session Unfolds

It’s been an incredibly busy legislative session. The Governor’s proposed budget contains over $32 million in new funding for the mental health system. The Mental Health Legislative Network (MHLN), which NAMI chairs, worked closely with the administration and is very pleased with what was included in the budget.

Over 30 bills have been introduced to build on what works in our mental health system and to address issues and concerns such as workforce shortages. NAMI staff and members have testified over 40 times on a number of issues including crisis services, supportive housing, prior authorization for medications, employment, education, workforce needs and more.

As we move into the last few weeks of the session, there are many issues that are up in the air. NAMI members need to continue to make their voices heard by calling and emailing their legislators.

In employment, there is funding in the Governor’s budget to maintain the new Individual Placement and Support (IPS) projects started the previous year. A NAMI bill would also expand the program to new areas.

In housing, the Governor’s budget includes new money for the Bridges housing program and for supportive housing for people with mental illnesses. There is a NAMI bill and a Homes for All bill that would also increase funding for the supportive housing program.

The Governor’s budget includes funding to increase Positive Behavioral and Intervention Services (PBIS) in the schools.

See “Advocates Optimistic,” p.4
Leaders Speak Out...continued from p.1

Through education, support, and advocacy, we strive

ing mental health as a priority for 2015 this session, I also want to say thanks to the Governor’s office and the Governor for really prioritizing mental health. The area of mental health is one of those areas that we can come together around and agree that we want to work on. We’re excited about the bills ahead.”

Sen. Tony Lourey (D) commented, “For mental health we really do know what works. We’ve done a lot pilots and projects. We know what works. We haven’t invested in making sure that what works is available around the state and that’s what this package that we’re bringing forward is going to focus on, is building a network, an infrastructure to make that available statewide.”

“The initiatives this year that we are working on and supporting really fit into the category of filling in gaps in services with investments that we know work and will create better outcomes,” said Sen. Kathy Sheran (D).

Addressing the mental health workforce shortage, MayKao Y. Hang, President and CEO of the Wilder Foundation remarked, “We need to build a highly competent, culturally representative workforce that understands low-income populations, populations of color, immigrant populations and kids.”

Mental illnesses affect one in four people. Yet many children and adults with mental illnesses and their families cannot access the services and supports that are needed to get better. When treatment is not obtained, devastating outcomes can result, including dropping out of school, drug abuse, homelessness, unemployment, isolation, repeated hospitalization, long-term serious mental illness, contact with the criminal justice system or suicide.

Rep. Bob Barrett (R), author of a bill on suicide prevention this session, said, “This year I want the legislature to take action to decrease the numbers of suicides. This includes expanding our suicide prevention programs to teach teachers, firefighters, peace officers, primary care providers, coaches and others about the warning signs of suicide and actions they can take to recognize mental illness when it happens.”

Lawrence Massa, president and CEO of the Minnesota Hospital Association which represents 143 health systems & hospitals throughout the state, remarked, “I think the good news today is that the stigma long associated with discussing mental health is slowly and surely going away. And we applaud Gov. Dayton, NAMI and the Mental Health Legislative Network for making it ok to talk about, and acknowledge and treat mental health.”

Also speaking at the press conference were DHS Commissioner Lucinda Jesson, Rep. Dave Baker (R), Sen. Chris Eaton (D), Kim Lutes from the Mental Health Association of Minnesota, and Wendy Waddell, Director of Inpatient Mental Health Care at Regions Hospital.

Suicide Prevention Efforts

Suicide rates in Minnesota have been increasing in Minnesota over the last decade. In 2001 there were 440 deaths by suicide and in 2013 there were 678. To respond to this issue NAMI Minnesota has become more active in promoting suicide prevention and currently offers three classes around the state.

QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) and safeTALK classes help people identify warning signs and respond appropriately. Means Restriction classes help professionals talk with parents about how to keep their child safe, including providing them with a lock box.

NAMI also recently partnered with NAMI New Hampshire, and the MN Departments of Health and Human Services to train people in postvention – how to help a community grieve after a suicide and to follow best practices. NAMI also held a Suicide Voices training where survivors learned best practices in sharing their stories.

May is Mental Health Month - Support is Available

During May is Mental Health Month, the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) of Minnesota and dozens of other organizations are involved in community education about mental illnesses, including creating awareness that effective treatments are available and that people can and do recover.

During May, NAMI Minnesota will provide many free presentations and classes on mental illnesses. In addition, NAMI offers over 300 free educational classes and more than a hundred presentations statewide each year, along with help in navigating the mental health system. NAMI also offers more than 60 free support groups for families, parents and youth and adults living with a mental illness. To reach NAMI Minnesota, call 651-645-2948 or 1-888-NAMI-Helps.
Over 500 hundred people came together in St. Paul for Mental Health Day at the Capitol. They came to urge legislators to support policies that will improve Minnesota’s mental health system. People living with mental illnesses, their families and friends, high school and college students, mental health professionals and providers all turned out to push for increased funding for mental health treatment and services.

People traveled from all corners of the state to attend including Winona, Rochester, Kerkoven, Willmar, Litchfield, Cokato, Fergus Falls, Moorhead, Detroit Lakes, Duluth, Cloquet, North Branch, Pine City, Wyoming, Baxter, Little Falls, St. Cloud and the metro area.

Sue Abderholden, executive director of NAMI Minnesota, kicked it off by highlighting the strong tradition of Mental Health Legislative Network advocacy and noting its history of “thirty years of bringing people together to raise their voices; thirty years of working to improve the mental health system.”

The theme of the day was, “We know what works; Let’s build on it!” Attendees were given scarves with that saying and every legislator received a mini-construction hat with that same message on it. Abderholden explained that the construction hats are a symbol representing the need to build the mental health system. She said, “Our mental health system isn’t broken, it’s never been built.” She added, “We want to focus on what works today.” She encouraged the crowd to ask their legislators to expand effective services and ensure access.

Shannah Mulvihill, the executive director of the Mental Health Association of Minnesota and the Mental Health Consumer/Survivor Network welcomed the crowd and thanked them for making the extra effort to make their voices heard.

Bill Conley, with Fraser, provided information on how the budget is set and how important it is to make sure that health and human services gets a big enough piece of the “pie.”

Claire Wilson, executive director of the Minnesota Association for Community Mental Health Programs addressed the crowd saying “everybody should have access to the right level of care.” She talked about the need for greater provider reimbursement rates, increased access to services and insurance coverage for crisis teams. Ben Ashley-Wurttman, Policy and Outreach Associate with the Mental Health Association provided information on adult mental health services, including adding clubhouses to Medical Assistance.

Mary Regan, executive director of the Minnesota Council of Child Caring Agencies shared information on the many bills affecting children and their families including those for psychiatric residential treatment facilities, respite care and homeless youth.

NAMI provided information on funding proposals for housing and employment. Patricia Siebert provided information on efforts to decrease spend-downs and MA-EPD premiums. Sue Abderholden provided some information about the suicide prevention bills.

Jode Freyholtz-London, Executive Director of Wellness in the Woods, spoke in strong support for 24/7 mental health crisis services. She told the crowd, “We don’t get to choose when our crises happen; we need mobile crisis teams across Minnesota.” She explained how crisis teams are an appropriate response for people experiencing a mental health crisis.

Representative Tina Liebling told the crowd, “We cannot afford to leave anyone behind.” She continued, “We need services that are accessible, are appropriate, and as close to home as possible.” She added, “What happens to any of us, really does happen to all of us.”

Kim Lutes with the Mental Health Association spoke to the importance of employment and bringing down MA-EPD premiums. Matt Burdick, Legislative and Stakeholder Relations for Chemical and Mental Health Services at the Department of Human Services, provided a brief overview of what is in the Governor’s budget.

Larry Jones spoke about the importance of clubhouses and Melissa Balitz spoke to the need to be able to access services when someone needs them.

Abderholden ended the rally urging the crowd to “finish the job” of building the mental health system. She concluded with, “We know what works, let’s build on it.”

Thanks to everyone who came out and made the day a great success. Your efforts and your advocacy make a huge difference!
Advocates Optimistic...cont. from p. 1.

There is also a bill that, as amended would not allow children in grades K-3 to be suspended and would have schools look at the underlying issues. A NAMI bill would provide funding to schools to reduce the use of seclusion and restraints.

Funding for first episode programs is included in the Governor’s budget and in a MHLN bill. Vail Place is pushing for language in a MHLN bill that would add clubhouse services to the Medical Assistance benefit set.

There are several bills that would address the workforce shortages in the mental health area by expanding loan forgiveness programs to mental health professionals who work in rural areas or by expanding residency programs for psychiatrists and clinical training programs for other mental health professionals.

The Governor’s budget increases the rates for crisis services and adds money for expanding them across the state and developing one phone number. A NAMI bill would clarify that private insurance should cover crisis teams and would provide grant funding to expand crisis residential programs.

A new children’s residential program, called Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities would be developed under the Governor’s budget and a bill moving in the House. This type of program would serve children with complex mental health needs.

Suicide prevention bills are also moving through the legislature. Grant funds would be expanded to provide suicide postvention support to communities and to provide suicide prevention awareness training to a wide variety of professionals. There are also bills to expand the text for life program.

The Governor’s budget also increases funding for those programs that work such as ACT teams, respite care, and early childhood consultation. There are funds provided to support intensive programs (such as IRTS, ACT, etc.) until a study is completed to determine how best to fund them. Lastly, there is funding so that Minnesota is poised to participate in the new Excellence in Mental Health national program.

What is hopeful about this year is that both parties and the Governor agree that more must be done in the mental health area. We know what works; let’s build on it!

Moving Forward on Mental Health Parity.

The Paul Wellstone and Pete Domenici Mental Health Parity and Addiction Act was passed in 2008 and applied to employer sponsored health plans with more than 50 employees, including self-insured and fully-insured plans. The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010, or ACA, extended parity requirements to individual and small group plans and required these plans to cover mental health and substance use treatment.

The final regulations were issued in 2013 and applied to plans issued after July 1, 2014. This means that we are really just now beginning to figure out the impact of mental health parity and there are many questions.

A new report issued on April 1, 2015 from the national NAMI office titled A Long Road Ahead: Achieving True Parity in Mental Health and Substance Use Care found a number of roadblocks:

People had great difficulty finding mental health providers taking new patients in the insurance plan networks; people experienced high rates of denials of authorization for treatment, and there were limited medications in the plans. There were higher out of pocket costs for medications and higher copays and deductibles. People also found it very difficult to obtain the information needed to make informed decisions about choosing their health plans.

Several policy recommendations were contained in the report. They included better enforcement, greater transparency (clinical criteria and accurate lists of providers) and more clear information on which to make decisions about plans. A copy of the report is available on NAMI Minnesota’s website, www.namihelps.org and on NAMI national’s website, www.nami.org.

NAMI Minnesota organized a meeting with Mike Rothman, the Commissioner of Commerce, last fall to talk about how to implement parity in Minnesota. NAMI believes that we need to look at the services that are available here – such as mobile mental health crisis teams and Intensive Residential Treatment Services – and determine if under parity they should be covered by plans.

Collecting Stories

In the meantime, we would like to start collecting stories about parity. If your plan has a limited provider network, hasn’t covered crisis services, has a limited formulary for psychiatric medications, or if you’ve experienced other problems, please let the NAMI Minnesota office know.
to eliminate the pervasive stigma of mental illnesses.

**Beyond the Baby Blues Conference**

Beyond the Baby Blues is a full-day conference designed to educate professionals and families about mood disorders and anxiety before, during and after pregnancy. The conference will be held May 28 at the U of MN’s Continuing Education Center, 1890 Bufford Ave., in St. Paul.

Experts in the field of psychology, social work, and maternal and child health, along with women and family members whose lives have been affected by postpartum depression will offer presentations. Keynote speaker Jennifer Silliman’s film “Dark Side of the Full Moon” will also be available at the Parkway Theater in Minneapolis on May 27 at 7:00 p.m.

The conference is sponsored by NAMI Minnesota, U of MN School of Social Work, Pregnancy & PostPartum Support Minnesota, UCare, Blooma Yoga Wellness & Education, and Hennepin Co. Medical Center Mother-Baby Program. To register, call 651-645-2948.

**Educational Objectives**

- Develop an increased understanding of the causes of postpartum depression and other mood disorders and consequences of not treating them.
- Understand the symptoms and treatment for depression and anxiety before, during and after pregnancy.
- Recognize the risks for mood disorders and learn appropriate screening tools.
- Learn the importance of early attachment.
- Empathize with families and educate them on the illness.
- Understand the impact of culture on identification and treatment.

**Agenda**

8:30 a.m. Registration
9:00 a.m. Welcome: Sue Abderholden MPH; Linda Jones, Ph.D., LISW
9:15 a.m. Keynote: It Doesn’t Have to Get That Bad - Jennifer Silliman
10:45 a.m. First Breakout Sessions:  
  - Peripartum Medication Review - Samantha Huguelet, DNP, APRN, CNS
  - Maternal Wellbeing Innovation Lab - Tessa Wetjen, Anne Gomez, Krista Harju, Karla Decker Sorby, Deb Rich
  - Mother-Baby Relationship targeted interventions - Helen Kim, MD and Jesse Kuendig, LICSW
11:45 a.m. Networking Lunch
12:45 p.m. Second Breakout Sessions:  
  - Perinatal Anxiety Spectrum Disorders: Recognizing & Treating - Krista Post, MA, LP and Elizabeth LaRusso, MD
  - The Power of Sharing Our Stories - Online and In Community - Maureen Campion, Sarah Longacre, Blair Shackle, Jill Vanderziel
  - Integrative Perspectives on Perinatal Mental Health - Helen Kim, MD
2:15 p.m. Third Breakout Sessions:  
  - The Patient Whisperer - Deborah Rich, PhD, LP, CPLC
  - The Importance of Cultural Exclusivity When Caring for Transnational Families in Health - Maria Veronica Svetaz, MD MPH FSAHM FAAFP, Aqui Para Tu Here for You, Medical Director; Amelia Yaurincela, community health worker; Fartun Weli, MPH, MAPP, Executive Director, Isuroon
  - The Holistic Mental Health Treatment Plan for the Mom Pregnant Again After Loss - Lindsey M. Henke, MSW, LICSW
3:15 p.m. Closing

**Pub Trivia 5**

A big, hearty THANK YOU to everyone who came out to NAMI Minnesota’s 5th Annual Pub Trivia! We had a great time testing our smarts, as well as learning how much we don’t know.

Together, we were able to raise over $2,200 towards NAMI’s work to provide education, support and advocacy to children and adults living with mental illnesses and their families.

A special shout out to the top scoring teams! Rising Cedar SuperTriv took first place, the Minutiae Mavens were second, and Sui Generis came in third. Thanks to all our teams! NAMI Minnesota would also like to thank Hell’s Kitchen, Crave and ShowPlace Icon Theater for their inkind donations.

Once again, thank you so much for supporting our cause, and we hope to see you again next year at our Pub Trivia 6!
Community Conversations Continue

More Community Conversations on Mental Health were held this winter. In total we had 23 Community Conversations and there are a few more scheduled. We have reached over 700 people during this second round of conversations. NAMI North Central organized 6 conversations, one in each of the counties they serve. Several mental health collaboratives helped organize conversations in their communities as well including in Wayzata where over 200 people attended the conversation. The mental health needs that were identified will inform the work of affiliates and NAMI Minnesota. We are looking forward to continuing these conversations again this fall.

Children’s Mental Health Awareness Day is May 7

The 10th anniversary of National Children’s Mental Health Awareness Day is May 7, 2015. NAMI Minnesota’s children’s program team will help coordinate programs in 12 area high schools to celebrate the event this year.

Watch NAMI’s website for more details and other ways to help raise awareness during May is Mental Health Month. Also join in by wearing something Green during May to show your support!

Julio Salazar’s Break the Stigma Run

Julio Salazar plans to run across the state of Minnesota to help bring about more awareness around mental health issues and to spread the message of hope to those living with a mental illness. Julio says that he has lived with depression and anxiety for a large part of his life, and felt it was important to show people that there is hope.

Julio’s Break the Stigma Run is a 240-mile journey that will begin on May 4 on the western border of Minnesota near the town of Dawson, and cover about 40 miles per day with hopes of finishing on May 9 in Stillwater.

The goals for Julio’s Break the Stigma Run are to:
- Educate people that depression and mental illnesses are treatable;
- Encourage people to live a healthier life through education and treatment; and
- Inspire others to talk about mental health issues and create support.

Funds raised from the Break the Stigma Run will go to support NAMI Minnesota’s programs of education, support and advocacy. NAMI will help to kick off the final leg of Julio’s Break the Stigma run on Sunday, May 9 as he departs from the State Capitol in St. Paul. For more information on Julio’s run, or to make a donation, please visit www.breakthestigma-run.com., or call 651-645-2948.
to eliminate the pervasive stigma of mental illnesses.

**MNsure Special Enrollment Options Still Available**

Though open enrollment ended on Feb. 15, many people are still eligible to sign up for health insurance through MNsure. You can sign up if you are eligible for Medical Assistance or MinnesotaCare, if you have a qualifying life event, or if you are an American Indian or Alaskan Native.

To be eligible for Medical Assistance, your income must be less than $15,521 for a single individual, or it can be higher depending on how many family members are in the household. You can have other health insurance and still get Medical Assistance. Medical Assistance can pay for costs that are not covered by your regular insurance. For MinnesotaCare, a single individual can make up to $23,240, with premiums costing $50 or less per month.

You are also eligible to apply through MNsure for a Special Enrollment Period if you have a qualifying life event. A Special Enrollment Period lasts for 60 days after the qualifying life event takes place. Examples of qualifying life events include the following:

- Loss of health insurance coverage – includes loss of employer-sponsored coverage by you or your dependent, or loss of COBRA or retiree coverage
- Birth, adoption, or placement for adoption or foster care
- Gain of citizenship, national or lawfully present status
- Newly eligible or ineligible for tax credits or cost-sharing reductions
- Change in employer-sponsored coverage causing new plan to be unaffordable
- Change of address providing new health plan choices
- Marriage

One benefit of MNsure for people living with mental illnesses is that all plans offered through MNsure cover mental health and substance use disorder treatment. NAMI Minnesota and partners across the state are working to educate professionals and the public on the benefits of MNsure, as well as how to enroll.

If you would like help with MNsure enrollment, are interested in having a MNsure presentation or enrollment event for your organization, or if you would like to learn more, contact Dara Larson, the MNsure Project Coordinator, at dlarson@namimn.org, or at 651-645-2948, ext. 117.

The next regular Open Enrollment period is from Nov. 1, 2015 through Jan. 31, 2016. NAMI Minnesota is a MNsure partner.

**Film at the Parkway Theater**

A special screening of Beyond the Baby Blues keynote speaker Jennifer Silliman’s film “Dark Side of the Full Moon” will be shown May 27 at the Parkway Theater in Minneapolis at 7:00 p.m. The cost is $10 and tickets can be purchased on NAMI’s website at www.namihelps.org.

**Psychiatric Research Suspended**

NAMI’s Statement on the Suspension of U of M’s Psychiatric Research

NAMI Minnesota is very supportive of research for all medical conditions, including mental illnesses, as it provides hope for better outcomes. The recent report from the Office of the Legislative Auditor raised concerns about the University of Minnesota’s Institutional Review Board’s ability to guarantee safety of participants. The NAMI Minnesota board is meeting with members of the U of M Department of Psychiatry to learn more about their efforts to improve their process to ensure people are protected and that they have an involved family member or friend. We want to bring this research up to the same standards as those followed at other leading research centers nationwide.

**NAMI Annual Research Dinner 2015**

Over 100 people joined in NAMI’s 13th Annual Research Dinner with the University of Minnesota, held on Feb. 24 in Roseville. S. Charles Schulz, M.D., Chief of the University of Minnesota’s Department of Psychiatry, and Sue Abderholden, executive director of NAMI Minnesota provided introductions.

Presenters from the University of Minnesota’s Dept. of Psychiatry and their topics were: Kathryn R. Cullen, M.D., Assistant Professor, on “Examining the Brain in Adolescents with Self-Harm Behavior;” Kelvin O. Lim, M.D., Professor, on “Demystifying Clinical Research: A Clinical Research Primer;” and David J. Bond, M.D., Ph.D. Associate, on “Diagnosing and Treating Early Stage Bipolar Disorder: Challenges and Opportunities.”
Through education, support, and advocacy, we strive

Family Support Leaders

NAMI Minnesota trained ten new Family-to-Family teachers in January to share the 12-week course with families in their home communities.

Lunch & Learn

NAMI offers a Lunch and Learn Brown Bag workshop that provides an opportunity for employers and employees to: understand mental illnesses as they might appear in the workplace, challenge the myths and stigma surrounding them, learn about appropriate accommodations, and learn how to make workplaces more accepting of people living with a mental illness. To schedule a workshop, call NAMI at 651-645-2948.

Booths Connect Public to NAMI’s Resources

NAMI Minnesota has had educational booths at 73 various conferences, health fairs, corporations and other public events over the last nine months. The booths share information on NAMI’s resources, classes and support groups, mental illnesses, research and more. Staffed by NAMI resource representatives, the booths help reach hundreds of professionals, parents, adults and youth in a wide variety of communities.

Mental Health and African Americans

According to the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), people from diverse communities are underserved by our mental health system. NIMH data shows that only one out of three African Americans who need mental health care receives it and they are more likely to stop treatment early and are less likely to receive follow-up care.

The barriers to care are many. There are few mental health professionals from culturally diverse communities. More people are uninsured and if they are insured have high deductibles. Stigma is greater. There is greater mistrust of the health care system in general.

Research about the effectiveness of treatment and medications is also limited. There have been some studies that suggest that African Americans metabolize medications more slowly than Caucasian Americans, yet they often receive higher doses of psychiatric medications, which may result in increased side effects and decreased medication adherence. We also know that poverty, unemployment, discrimination and exposure to violence have a negative impact on people’s mental health.

NAMI Minnesota has a director of multi-cultural outreach to help reduce stigma and provide education and support. A key concept in this work is to talk about “mental wellness” and how it is connected to physical wellness. Overall strategies to address stress, diet, exercise, spirituality and connections to others are discussed.

A new book, Reclaiming Our Health, a guide for African Americans about wellness, explains that the key to mental health is by ensuring good physical health.

Coping with First Episode of Psychosis

First episodes of psychosis can be scary and confusing for people experiencing them and their families. They may not know what is happening or where to turn for treatment. In the words of one young person, “The thing about psychosis is that the experience itself can be so terrifying, like a waking nightmare. But then there’s the aftermath, with the stunning realization of what a bizarre experience the person just had. This can be the most frightening part of all.”

Helping young people and their families understand what has happened and providing hope for recovery can be critical during this stressful time. NAMI Minnesota’s new booklet, Understanding Psychosis: Resources and Recovery, is designed to take the fear and confusion out of the experience. It is a resource guide to help young people and parents understand the warning signs and the causes of psychosis, learn about evidence-based treatment practices, and know that supports are available to help get young people back to work or school. The guide was developed by NAMI Minnesota with input from people who have experienced psychosis, family members, and medical professionals working with early episode psychosis.

NAMI Minnesota also provides free classes for people who have experienced psychosis and their loved ones. They are taught by a team – a parent of a young adult and an adult living with bipolar disorder I who experienced psychosis in college. This provides a safe space to ask questions, meet other families with similar experiences, and learn how to move ahead.

NAMI Minnesota also provides peer support groups for people with mental illnesses and their families. For more information, visit www.namihelps.org or call 651-645-2948; 1-888-NAMI-Helps.
The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) has released its new strategic plan for research. The plan recognizes that 1) mental illnesses account for 21.3 percent of all years lived with disability in the United States; 2) an estimated 9.6 million adults live with a serious mental illness; and 3) over 41,000 Americans died in 2013 from suicide.

According to NIMH, “Changing these statistics depends not only on continued effort in areas in which there have been dramatic advances, but in less fully explored areas, such as the mechanisms by which environmental influences alter brain and behavior, as well as in research to improve and broaden access to health care services.”

NIMH’s new strategic plan has revised the original four high-level strategic objectives under four new objectives:

- **Define the mechanisms of complex behaviors.**
  - Describe the molecules, cells, and neural circuits associated with complex behaviors.
  - Identify the genomic and non-genomic factors associated with mental illnesses.
  - Map the connectomes for mental illnesses.

- **Chart mental illness trajectories to determine when, where, and how to intervene.**
  - Characterize the developmental trajectories of brain maturation and dimensions of behavior to understand the roots of mental illnesses across diverse populations.
  - Identify clinically useful biomarkers and behavioral indicators that predict change across the trajectory of illness.

- **Strive for prevention and cures.**
  - Develop new treatments based on discoveries in genomics, neuroscience, and behavioral science.
  - Develop ways to tailor existing and new interventions to optimize outcomes.
  - Test interventions for effectiveness in community practice settings.

- **Strengthen the public health impact of NIMH-supported research.**
  - Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of existing mental health services through research.
  - Establish research-practice partnerships to improve dissemination, implementation, and continuous improvement of evidence-based mental health services.
  - Develop innovative service delivery models to improve dramatically the outcomes of mental health services received in diverse communities and populations.
  - Develop new capacity for research that evaluates the public health impact of mental health services innovations.

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### In Our Own Voice Speakers

Fourteen new In Our Own Voice presenters were trained on Jan. 24-25.

### Accessing Smoking Cessation Services through Medicaid

Smoking is a significant health concern for those living with mental illnesses, who are about twice as likely to smoke as the general population. In addition, people living with mental illnesses have higher rates of smoking-related diseases and a lifespan 25 years shorter than average, with smoking-related diseases among the top three causes of death.

Smoking cessation services recently became more accessible when Medical Assistance and MinnesotaCare began providing free individual and group smoking cessation counseling, as well as discounted access to nicotine replacement therapy (like the patch or gum) and prescription smoking cessation medications.

The smoking cessation services must be ordered by a primary care provider and delivered by an approved provider, but there is no lifetime limit on use of services, prior authorization requirement, or limits on length of treatment.

The list of approved providers initially only included staff with clinical medical degrees, which hindered many community mental health centers from being able to provide smoking cessation services. However, recently, “tobacco cessation counselor” became an approved provider, which will allow more community mental health centers to offer smoking cessation services.
Memorials & Tributes

In Memory of

HOWARD AGEE
Sue Abderholden & Lee Keller
Annie Agel
Bernadette A. Amundsen
J Forrest & Harriet Anderson
Aapo Leinonen
Rosanna J. Ash
Sue & Michael Elle
Gail N. Anderson
Tom Whitehouse
From

Through education, support, and advocacy, we strive

Grants Keep Nami Growing

Vernacular: ($5,000-$9,999)
- Hugh J. Andersen Foundation – East Metro programs
- Foley & Mansfield Charitable Foundation – General operating
- Susan K. Pederson Foundation – General operating

Irish Circle ($10,000+)
- Haggerty Family Foundation – General operating
- Stratis Health – NAMI in the Lobby
- Pfizer – Smoking cessation

Howard Agee and Jean Brown Remembered

Former NAMI Minnesota board president, interim executive director, board chair emeritus and volunteer Howard Agee passed away on Feb. 28 at the age of 90. Howard helped advance NAMI’s mission in countious ways. Jean Brown, mental health leader in Dakota county, passed away on March 18, 2016. She was 86. Jean helped improve mental health services and establish NAMI in Dakota County. Howard and Jean were featured in NAMI Minnesota’s nationally circulated video Silent No More: Families Speak Out on Mental Illness. Both were dedicated, impactful and wonderful people who will be missed. NAMI offers its sympathies to their families and friends.

Donor & Member Recognitions

NAMI Minnesota is changing its practice of listing gifts in the Advocate newsletter. From now on only memorial gifts, tributes and Foundation grants of $1,000 will be listed. All gifts to NAMI Minnesota, however, will be listed annually in our Annual Report, both online and in print, except where donors have requested anonymity. We welcome your feedback on this change! Contact Margareta Miles at 651-645-2948 ext. 104 with questions or concerns. Please remember to designate NAMI Minnesota when making your memorial donations.

Phone: 651-645-2948 or 1-888-NAMI-HELPS Fax: 651-645-7379 www.namihelps.org
to eliminate the pervasive stigma of mental illnesses.

NAMIWalks Information Meeting Set for May 14

The NAMIWalks information meeting is set for May 14, from 5:30-7:00 p.m. at Tavern on France, 6740 France Ave. S., in Edina. Whether you are new to NAMIWalks, or a walk veteran, your first steps begin here! Learn how to plan your Walk team, how to volunteer with NAMIWalks, and how NAMI Minnesota is making a difference! Please RSVP to Raquel Grad at rgrad@namimn.org or sign up at https://takethefirststep.eventbrite.com.

Looking ahead, the NAMIWalks Kickoff Breakfast will be held Aug. 6, from 7:30 to 9:00 a.m. at Pinstripes in Edina. Join us to help build momentum for NAMIWalks and give our team captains and participants the tools they need to lead a fun and successful Walk fundraising and awareness campaign.

Parents with Mental Illnesses & the Child Protection System

NAMI Minnesota has a new fact sheet for parents with a mental illness who are involved in the child protection system. It discusses the child protection process, illness management strategies, crisis plans and psychiatric directives in case of emergency and gives parenting and legal resources. This fact sheet can be found at www.namihelps.org, and then under Education and Fact Sheets.

Supporting NAMI

Birkie for My Bro! Skiing Event Raises Awareness

Greg Reinhiller says his brother Tom was one cool dude. Yet they weren’t very close. “Maybe it was his bipolar, but we just didn’t connect the way you would hope. Tom was incredibly funny, smart, and creative. I can’t say he was my best friend, but he was a part of me and it’s a big hole to fill.” Tom took his own life in 2013.

Greg is an athlete and says that seeing people run the Twin Cities Marathon as a fundraiser for a person or cause they care about gave him the idea that he could do something similar. It would be a way to both remember Tom and help others living with mental illnesses. Last February Greg dedicated his seventh Birkebeiner, a 51 kilometer (32 mile) ski race, to Tom. He asked friends and family to donate to NAMI Minnesota.

“I’m hoping his memory will help my skis be a little slicker,” he wrote in an email to friends. Greg hoped to raise a few hundred dollars, but his email brought in more than $2,500. That’s enough for NAMI to offer several classes or support groups. Greg said he was a little nervous, not just about asking for money, but also about talking about his brother’s mental illness.

“l remember before the race I was listening to this science podcast that I like and the guests were all talking openly about their own mental health or family members’ mental health. I realized how important it is to talk about it. If we can just bring it up with each other, it makes it so much easier and it might make all the difference for someone. You know, setting up a fundraiser wasn’t hard; skiing the Birkie wasn’t hard; mental illness is hard.”

Greg says he’s already thinking about next year’s fundraiser.

If you would like to hold a fundraiser to support NAMI, please contact Margaret Miles, NAMI’s Director of Advancement at mmiles@namimn.org or 651-645-2948 ext. 104.

Donate Your Used Vehicle to NAMI Minnesota

Donate that extra car, truck or RV through NAMI’s Vehicle Donation program. Every car is accepted, and a fast, free pick-up is provided. Your donation is tax-deductible. To donate, go to www.namihelps.org at the very bottom of the homepage, or call 1-888-6264. Please remember to designate NAMI Minnesota as the recipient of your donation.
# NAMI Support Groups

## Family Support Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brooklyn Center</td>
<td>Bob: 763-229-7202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andover</td>
<td>Becca: 612-790-0938, Amy: 763-398-9200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duluth</td>
<td>NAMI Duluth: 218-409-6566</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eagan</td>
<td>Connie: 952-432-9278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Rapids</td>
<td>Joe: 651-484-8218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mankato</td>
<td>Diane: 507-931-6996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minneapolis</td>
<td>NAMI: 651-645-2948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moorhead</td>
<td>Lyn, Denise or Ruth: 218-443-5286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northfield</td>
<td>Call: 507-663-7950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oakdale</td>
<td>Dan: 651-341-8918</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owatonna</td>
<td>Judy: 507-451-0043</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plymouth</td>
<td>Elizabeth: 612-432-0471</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rochester</td>
<td>Call: 507-287-1692</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roseville</td>
<td>Anna Mae: 651-484-0599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Cloud</td>
<td>Mike: 320-492-2024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Paul (Midway)</td>
<td>Jennifer: 507-254-3524</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willmar</td>
<td>Theresa: 320-894-7336, Ann: 320-894-4464</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winona</td>
<td>Helen: 507-494-0905</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Parent Resource Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lakeville</td>
<td>NAMI: 651-645-2948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elk River</td>
<td>Sue: 763-633-0894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minneapolis</td>
<td>NAMI (Bilingual support for Spanish speakers): Susan: 612-424-1823</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minneapolis SouthWest</td>
<td>NAMI: 651-645-2948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oakdale</td>
<td>Catherine: 612-384-9040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior Lake</td>
<td>NAMI: 651-645-2948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Savage</td>
<td>NAMI: 651-645-2948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Cloud</td>
<td>NAMI: 651-645-2948</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Young Adult (Age 16-20) NAMI Connection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apple Valley</td>
<td>Andrea: 651-645-2948 x106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minneapolis</td>
<td>Andrea: 651-645-2948 x106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minneapolis SouthWest</td>
<td>Andrea: 651-645-2948 x106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Paul (starts May 7)</td>
<td>Andrea: 651-645-2948 x106</td>
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## NAMI Connection Support Groups

<table>
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<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bloomington</td>
<td>Maureen: 612-752-8374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burnsville</td>
<td>Dana: 612-888-4979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambridge</td>
<td>Bob: 651-336-7287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coon Rapids</td>
<td>Tim: 612-669-5111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crystal</td>
<td>NAMI: 651-645-2948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duluth</td>
<td>Jodi: 218-576-4608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hopkins</td>
<td>Leave message for Calynn: 952-938-9622 x0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mankato</td>
<td>Brian: 507-525-6613</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minneapolis Mt. Olivet</td>
<td>Stephanie: 952-693-8101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minneapolis North</td>
<td>Don: 651-334-1778</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minneapolis Uptown</td>
<td>Jack: 612-310-3628</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minneapolis (LGBT)</td>
<td>Kim: 763-260-1175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minneapolis (LGBT)</td>
<td>L.A.: 612-840-2056</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Partners & Spouses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minneapolis</td>
<td>NAMI: 651-645-2948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Paul</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Winona</td>
<td>Helen: 507-494-0905</td>
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## Open Door Anxiety Support Groups

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<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>East St. Paul</td>
<td>Rachel: 952-818-7343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edina</td>
<td>Judy: 612-600-2134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midway St. Paul</td>
<td>Les: 612-229-1863</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minneapolis</td>
<td>Scott: 612-998-6160</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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