



LUZERNE/WYOMING COUNTIES

Message From President

Articles from Members

Upcoming Events

Dear NAMI Members:

My family joined NAMI in 2005 when our niece came to live with us and needed help. We were able to find the help that she needed but felt that there was more that we could do. Fortunately, we were introduced to NAMI and all that comes with it – the programs, dedicated volunteers, a supportive community, conferences, publications and online resources. Today, even though our family is enjoying more peaceful times, we still keep our NAMI membership and stay actively involved.

I'd like to list some of the reasons we still keep our membership and stay actively involved:

- It doesn't cost much (\$60.00 household; \$40.00 individual; or \$5.00 open-door);
- Receive NAMI Advocate Magazine and local newsletter several times a year;
- Receive emails about local meetings, support groups, educational programs and advocacy alerts;
- Fight Stigma – membership helps present an attitude of "Stigma Busting", community awareness functions, such as our Annual Recovery Walk, Candlelight Vigil, In Our Own Voice and Ending the Silence presentations as well as many other NAMI programs;
- Aid NAMI in keeping its National Helpline active along with its social media support groups, OK2TALK, You Are Not Alone and NAMI Air;
- Keep programming free, membership helps keep Family to Family, Peer to Peer, Family Support Groups and NAMI Connection stay free to anyone wanting to attend;
- Voices of NAMI members strengthen the organization's impact with local, state and national leaders;
- Local NAMI office with an extensive lending library and many informational publications;
- Your dues for membership is 100% tax deductible as NAMI is a 501(c)(3) organization and is considered a public charity 170(b)(1)(A)(VI)

Most importantly, you are helping families and individuals that have little voice and get blamed for a lot of society's problems, through no fault of their own. Please renew your membership or join today! Be part of the solution!

Sincerely,

Paul J. Radzavicz
President,
NAMI Luzerne/Wyoming Counties

Planning for the Future with Special Needs Trusts and ABLE Accounts

If you are an individual with a disability or a family member caring for someone, you may worry about what will happen if family caregivers die or can no longer provide care. Planning for the future is fraught with emotional and logistical complexities. Where will your family member live after you and your spouse are no longer alive? Who will look after their finances? When should I start future planning? Maria Smith, Director and Patty Yerina, Coordinator of ACHIEVA Family Trust's Education and Outreach presented this excellent workshop at the recent Annual NAMI Keystone PA Mental Health & Wellness Conference.

The presentation gave an overview on how Special Needs Trusts and ABLE Accounts can assist in planning, and still enable the individual with a disability to maintain essential government benefits such as Medical Assistance, Medicaid Waivers, Supplemental Security Income and Medicare. Special Needs Trusts options to protect those benefits include Third Party Trust, Pooled Trust or Payback Trust. They are used for "supplemental and extra care over and above what the government provides" and can be used for clothing, vacation, medical needs, transportation, recreation and entertainment. They cannot be used for housing, grocery food, utilities or cash access. Able Accounts allow individuals with a disability to save for qualified disability related expenses and is administered by the PA Treasury Department. One must apply online at PAAble.gov.

To learn more about Special Needs Trusts, Able Accounts, last will and testaments and to access the Personal Planning Guide (achieva.info/future-planning-project) and wealth of information ACHIEVA provides go to ACHIEVAFamilyTrust.org.

Submitted by Audrey Gozdiskowski

Schizophrenia and the Incidence of Violence

*I recently attended the NAMI State conference in Harrisburg and was lucky to hear the Keynote Address, **Reducing Violence: A Model for Support and Prevention** by **Edward Mulvey, PhD**, Professor of Psychiatry, Director of the Law and Psychiatry Program University of Pittsburg School of Medicine and **Jack Cahalane, PhD**, MPH Chief of Adult Services and Clinical Assistant Prof of Psychiatry of Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic University of Pittsburg Medical Center.*

The truth about violence in the Schizophrenic population is that the incidence is less than 5% of all violence reported. Indicators of this violence are those who are not managed properly on medication and those that have an inadequate amount of treatment. These individuals are often recent victims of violence. The violence is often directed at family members. One interesting note is the funding for studies in this area are completely disproportionate and underfunded.

Studies on homicides where the perpetrators received psychiatric assessments show that 17% had AXIS MI involvement and 5% had Axis 1 diagnosis, Evidence reports that individual with schizophrenia are usually not violent but are more likely victims at the rate of 2% higher than the general population. twelve percent of violence perpetrated by mental unwell individuals are linked to retaliation from incidents,

Those that have MI and substance abuse are 4x more likely to be violent. The rate of violence in this population goes up to 17%. The use of marijuana is suggested to increase violence due to the disinhibition of the brain.

Violence in the MI population tends to occur in clusters after a precipitating event followed by non-violent periods. This pattern will often re-occur with each precipitating factor.

Submitted by Joyce Hazeltine

Fighting Stigma and Stereotypes in the System and Society

I had a wonderful and eventful time at this year's NAMI State Conference. My learning experience began on Sunday evening when I attended the affiliate meeting and got to hear the accomplishments, direction, and goals of our newly formed NAMI Keystone PA State office. The next morning began with Teresa Miller, Secretary to PA Department of Human Services presenting the crowd with where PA is heading. One of the highlights that stood out to me was that Medicaid has approximately a 75% positive view of Medicaid and the Medicaid expansion while only 12% have an unfavorable view of Medicaid.

The second session busted the stigma on mental illness and violence. Edward Mulvey, PHD shared some recent studies and provided honest information about violence and mental illness. I enjoy honest discussion without feeling that an agenda is attached. There was discussion on statistics and information about the prison population and what is related to mental illness versus what is breaking the law that has nothing to do with an individual's diagnosis.

Next was a wonderful discussion between Mark Fuller, MD and Bethany and Karen Yeiser. It was a perspective of schizophrenia, stigma and society. This discussion shown schizophrenia through the eyes of not only the individual dealing with the illness, but a family member dealing with the same illness. I purchased a copy of books that offer both perspectives for our library.

The first breakout session I chose to attend was Integrative Psychiatry: New advances for late life non-pharmacological treatment for severe mental illness. This session offered some additional information on how sleep, exercise and diet can have positive impacts on life expectancy of those of us who deal with SMI. I have a new item to advocate for after attending this group. I wonder if the local agencies will be willing to buy bulk to help provide healthy diets to their clients. Adding healthy habits may increase life expectancy and help with symptoms and, by theory, should decrease the cost to treat SMI.

My next breakout session's topic was "Developing communities that support recovery: A comprehensive model for early psychosis care" and what I took home from this session is that, although we have more to do, our communities are doing pretty good in this area. I really do not have a lot to report from this session that we are not already doing in our community. However, one number jumped out at me that I both understand and don't understand evenly. It is reported that 40% of individuals report that they were the first to realize symptoms. Personally, I am not sure how to take this information other than showing me that we need to work harder on education.

Carlos A. Larrauri, NAMI board member presented "The Crossover: How lessons learned in recovery can shape professional goals". One of the main points I picked up from Carlos is to use experience with mental illness to shape how one proceeds in goals. I need to ask myself, "how can my experiences with recovery shape how I view my personal goals?" There was also discussion about disclosure and what I took from it was I will know if I should or shouldn't based on the circumstances presented to me.

The next day started with Andrew Sperling giving us an update on what is happening in our government and what impact decisions will have on individuals and families. Although I know the numbers, this basic statistic jumped out at me. Suicide deaths exceed both breast and prostate cancer combined. Another is to look at how fast new treatments for HIV/AIDS advanced as compared to SMI. I have to ask myself, "Why? What can I do different tomorrow that I am not doing today that will bring change?"

The next breakout session I chose was "Talk Saves Lives: Suicide prevention and young adults". Being on the suicide prevention committee, this was not new information to me, but I did pick up on a few items that I will share here. Suicide IS a health issue and there are prevention strategies that work. I learned about a new campaign that is being targeted to college students and I suggest all of us take a look at the ad campaigns, "Seize the Awkward". For those of us who have computers, check out seizetheawkward.org and share with others.

The conference finished up with Chacku Mathai, CRNP talking about "Embracing the power of our differences". One item that made sense to me was story Chacku shared about the fox and the stork having dinner together and how each set the table as they always did and how the other couldn't enjoy the dinner. Another topic that Chacku shared about was the need for each of us to be able to say what is on our minds within the support groups we attend without fear. This

reminded me of what I presented at the public hearings in 2016. Overall, I learned quite a bit from the conference and I am happy I had the opportunity to attend. The conference also reignited some of the “fire in my belly” that will keep me moving forward in my mission of helping others help themselves.

Submitted by Joseph J. Fedak

UPCOMING EVENTS

SATURDAY, MAY 5TH → CAR WASH & BAKE SALE IN SUPPORT OF 17TH ANNUAL MENTAL HEALTH WALK

NEWELL'S GAS STATION, DALLAS MEMORIAL HIGHWAY FROM 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO DONATE BAKED GOODS/TIME PLEASE CONTACT THE OFFICE 570-371-3844

MONDAY, MAY 14TH → REPRESENTATIVES OF NAMI HAVE A SCHEDULED INTERVIEW WITH PA-LIVE!

WBRE AT 4:30PM

WE WILL BE PROMOTING THE ANNUAL MENTAL HEALTH WALK & FILM SCREENING AT THE F.M. KIRBY CENTER

SUNDAY, MAY 20TH → 17TH ANNUAL MENTAL HEALTH WALK & RECOVERY FAIR

GUARD INSURANCE TO KIRBY PARK 12:00PM – 3:00PM

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO ORDER T-SHIRTS, ETC. PLEASE CONTACT THE OFFICE 570-371-3844

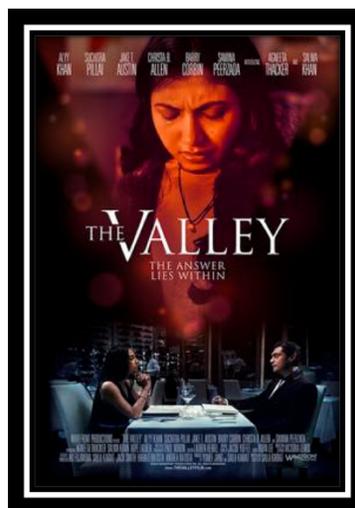
WEDNESDAY, MAY 23RD → NAMI HOSTING A FILM SCREENING OF “THE VALLEY”

(A FILM ON SUICIDE BY SAILA KARIAT)

F.M. KIRBY CENTER, PUBLIC SQUARE
INFORMATION & NETWORKING **6:30PM**

FILM STARTS AT **7:00PM** WITH AUDIENCE DISCUSSION FOLLOWING THE MOVIE

FOR MORE INFORMATION CHECK OUT THE FOLLOWING WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS:



www.thevalleyfilm.com

[Facebook](#): @thevalleymoviewavefrontprod

[Twitter](#): @thevalley2017