



NAMI News

National Alliance on Mental Illness Frederick County, Maryland

P.O. Box 1853, Frederick, MD 21702

Issue 31

September/October 2008

NAMI classes set for fall

The NAMI Family To Family Class will begin Monday, September 8th at 7:00 p.m. at Way Station. This free twelve-week course is open to family members, caretakers, and friends of those with a mental illness. This course teaches skills that are needed to cope more effectively with ill family members.

Please call Carol Officer at 301-371-5899 for more information and to register for the class.

The NAMI Peer To Peer Class will also begin on Monday, September 8th and continue for nine weeks at Way Station 230 West Patrick Street, Frederick, from 12:30 – 2:30 p.m. This free class about recovery and hope is for persons with mental illness and is taught by their peers. To register for this class call Shannon Petersen at 301-662-0099 ext.1283.

Mental Illness Awareness Week begins October 5th

Mental Illness Awareness Week, established in 1990 by Congress, recognizes the National Alliance on Mental Illness' efforts to raise mental illness awareness. NAMI of Frederick County is working with other mental health agencies to raise public awareness through the following special events:

Sunday, October 5th – Candlelight Vigil to send a message of hope for recovery and full lives for those struggling with mental illness. (More information to come.)

Wednesday, October 8th – Depression Screening (More information to come.)

Friday, October 10th – Movie “Canvas”, Joseph Greco’s drama about a family’s battle with schizophrenia and the story of hope. This will be held at Rosenstock Hall, Hood College, at 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, October 14th – NAMI Education meeting on “Maryland State Policy and Prescribing Recommendations for Schizophrenia” will be held at 7:00 p.m. at the Way Station, 230 W. Patrick Street.



Reflections on the NAMI National Convention

It was an honor to represent our Frederick County NAMI affiliate, at the NAMI National Convention in Florida this past June. It was an exciting four days where I learned so much from the many workshops, plenary sessions, seminars, and special sessions that I attended.

The session on schizophrenia research was especially interesting. Dr. Thomas Insel, Director of the National Institute of Mental Health in Bethesda, shared the most recent issues with schizophrenia. It is his hope that in the near future we will be able to get to where we research for recovery. Dr. Insel said, "In this kind of research we need to personalize medicine. We have done this for cancer, why can't we do it for brain disorders?"

Dr. Edward Scolnick, Director of the Psychiatry Initiative at The Broad Institute in Cambridge, Massachusetts, spoke to us about "New Techniques for Early Detection and Prevention". He said that in the next two to five years, technology will allow us to see the cause of schizophrenia and bipolar disorder. What will limit this is time, and money, and the number of patients available for research.

Dr. Scolnick is also convinced that early intervention is critical beginning with the first signs of an "episode". The hope is that we will eventually be able to intervene before the onset of psychosis and functional disability.

I also attended workshops on two new NAMI programs I hope to see in Frederick County by next year. The first is NAMI Connection Recovery Support Groups. This program provides support groups to persons with mental illness and focuses on recovery and giving hope.

NAMI Basics is a six-session course for family members or caregivers of children and adolescents living with mental illness. This can be offered once a week for six weeks or twice a week for three weeks and is taught by

volunteers who have been through similar situations.

We will need volunteers to help with these two new programs if we want to make them available in Frederick. Please contact me if you are interested in taking the training to help with either of these two new programs.

By Fran Wenner
(301-663-9414)

NAMI Maryland Conference set for October 30

The NAMI Maryland State Conference will be held October 30 at The Conference Center at Sheppard Pratt in Baltimore. The keynote speaker will be Dr. Michelle Sherman, director of the Family Mental Health Program at Oklahoma City Veteran Affairs Medical Center.

The Conference will also include a NAMI Maryland Update, a story of recovery from a family perspective, research update, and an "Ask the Doctor" session.

Mark your calendar and plan to attend this educational event.

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Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Bipolar Disorder in Youth

ADHD is a condition that becomes apparent in some children in the preschool and early school years. Children with ADHD have difficulty with controlling their behavior and/or paying attention. An estimated 3 to 5 percent of children have ADHD, or approximately 2 million children in the United States. This means that in a classroom of 25 to 30 children, it is likely that at least one will have ADHD.

Children with ADHD have impaired functioning in multiple settings, including home, school, and in relationships with peers. Symptoms may include one or more of the following:

- Impulsiveness-- a child who acts quickly without thinking first.
- Hyperactivity--a child who can't sit still, walks, runs, or climbs around when others are seated, talks when others are talking.
- Inattention--a child who daydreams, seems to be in another world, or is sidetracked by what is going on around him or her.

Bipolar disorder can occur in children and adolescents according to evidence from research findings, clinical experience, and family accounts. Bipolar disorder is difficult to recognize and diagnose in youth, however, because it does not fit precisely the symptom criteria established for adults, and because its symptoms can resemble or co-occur with those of other common childhood-onset mental disorders.

In addition, symptoms of bipolar disorder may be initially mistaken for normal emotions and behaviors of children and adolescents. But unlike normal mood changes, bipolar disorder significantly impairs functioning in school, with peers, and at home with family. Findings from an NIMH-supported study suggest that the illness may be at least as common among youth as among adults.

Existing evidence indicates that bipolar disorder beginning in childhood or early adolescence may be a different, possibly more severe form of the illness than older adolescent- and adult-onset bipolar disorder. When the illness begins before or soon after puberty, it is often characterized by a continuous, rapid-cycling, irritable, and mixed symptom state that may co-occur with disruptive behavior disorders, particularly attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) or conduct disorder (CD), or may have features of these disorders as initial symptoms. In contrast, later adolescent- or adult-onset bipolar disorder tends to begin suddenly, often with a classic manic episode, and to have a more episodic pattern with relatively stable periods between episodes. There is also less co-occurring ADHD or CD among those with later onset illness.

A child or adolescent who appears to be depressed and exhibits ADHD-like symptoms that are very severe, with excessive temper outbursts and mood changes, should be evaluated by a psychiatrist or psychologist with experience in bipolar disorder, particularly if there is a family history of the illness. This evaluation is especially important since certain medications, often prescribed for ADHD, may worsen manic symptoms. There is also limited evidence suggesting that some of the symptoms of ADHD may be a forerunner of full-blown mania.

Source: National Institutes of Mental Health website (August 2008).

By Nancy Gieser

New NAMI Support Group to begin on September 21st

NAMI Frederick will offer a new support group which will meet for the first time on Sunday, September 21st at the NAMI Office, 4 East Church Street, Frederick.

DeDe Pucino and Remo Molino recently completed the NAMI Support Group Facilitator Training through NAMI Maryland. We appreciate their willingness to give of their time so we can begin a second support group for families/friends of those with mental illness. This will provide support opportunities twice a month. You may attend either group anytime you wish.

NAMI Support Groups will be held as follows:

Thursday, September 4th (first Thursday of the month) from 7:00-8:30 p.m. at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 1415 West Seventh St. in Frederick.

Sunday, September 21st (third Sunday of the month) from 2:00-3:30 p.m. in the Community Room at 4 East Church St. in Frederick.

The Support Group for Families of Young Children and Adolescents is going to be combined our regular support groups at this time. We thank Amy Kimble for facilitating this group over the years and Georgie Van Brocklin for her additional help.

These groups will continue each first Thursday and third Sunday on a regular basis. If you have any questions, you may call DeDe Pucino at 301-831-3764. She will be the contact person for the Sunday group, while Fran Wenner (301-663-9414) is the contact person for the Thursday group.

Due to lack of interest, The NAMI Support Group for Families of Young Children and Adolescents will no longer be offered. Family members with children and adolescents are

encouraged to join one of these two support groups listed above.

We would like to thank Amy Kimble for facilitating this group over the years and also Georgie Van Brocklin for her additional help.

NAMI of Frederick has new office

We are pleased to announce that NAMI of Frederick County now has its own office space. Thanks to the generosity of Evangelical Reformed United Church of Christ we have one room on the first floor of the historic Kemp Hall at 4 East Church Street in downtown Frederick to use as our office.

We have the space and we are gradually moving things into the office but, for now, President Fran Wenner will continue to work from her home. As we grow and have more volunteers, we will be able to have the office open on a regular basis.



NAMI's September Education Meeting

Childhood ADHD and Bipolar Disorder: Why is it sometimes so hard to distinguish between the two?

Dr. Shannon Barnett, Director of the Johns Hopkins Adolescent Psychiatry Program, will discuss Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Bipolar Disorder in children and adolescents, on **Wednesday, September 17** at 7 p.m. at the Way Station. Please join us to learn about these disorders, what the symptoms are, challenges to diagnosing children, and how to get help. (Note that this program is scheduled for the **3rd Wednesday** in September.)

In addition to overseeing the Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center Community Adolescent Psychiatry Program, Dr. Barnett is an Assistant Professor with Johns Hopkins University. Prior to her appointment to Hopkins in 1998, Dr. Barnett was a General Psychiatry Resident at Duke University Medical Center. Dr. Barnett has numerous research publications covering the diagnosis and treatment of a range of mood and psychiatric disorders in youth.

The public is welcome to all NAMI Education Meetings, refreshments will be served, and admission is free. The Way Station is located at 230 West Patrick St., Frederick. For more information, please call NAMI's virtual office 240 379-6186.

NAMI's October Education Meeting

Maryland State Policy and Prescribing Recommendations for Schizophrenia

Dr. John Boronow, Medical Director for Adult Services at the Shepard Pratt Hospital, will explain the State of Maryland's current requirements for prescribing antipsychotic medications for schizophrenia. As a member of the State of Maryland Drug Utilization Review Board, Dr. Boronow has considerable experience with Maryland's prescribing policies. He will explain and clarify the evidence and reasoning behind Maryland's requirements.

Dr. Boronow will provide perspective on how Maryland's policies align with recent national recommendations on the need to balance cost with the need to preserve access to atypical antipsychotic medications. (See the Medical Directors Council of the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors available at www.nasmhpd.org.) Dr. Boronow's talk will be on **Tuesday, October 14** at 7 p.m. at the Way Station.

Dr. Boronow teaches courses in psychopharmacology and schizophrenia and is a Clinical Associate Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Maryland. Dr. Boronow is a graduate of Yale College and did his residency in New York City at Cornell – Payne Whitney Clinic. In addition, he was a Clinical Associate at the National Institute of Mental Health.

NAMI Calendar

September 2 – NAMI Board of Directors meeting

September 4 – NAMI Family Support Group at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 1415 W. 7th Street, Frederick, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

September 8 – ***Peer To Peer Education*** Course
12:30-2:30 p.m. at Way Station
Family To Family Education Course,
7:00-9:30 p.m. at Way Station

September 17 (Wednesday) – NAMI Public Education meeting at Way Station, 7:00 p.m. “ADHD and Bipolar Disorder”

September 21 – NAMI Family Support Group, Community Room, 4 East Church St, Frederick, 2:00-3:30 p.m.

September 23 – Way Station Support Group, 6:30-8:00 p.m., at Way Station, 230 W. Patrick St., Frederick

October 2 – NAMI Family Support Group, 7:00-8:30 p.m., Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 1415 W. 7th St., Frederick

October 5 – Candlelight Vigil at 7:00 p.m.
Place to be announced

October 7 – Board of Directors – 7:00 p.m.

October 8 – Depression Screening
Place to be announced

October 10 – Movie “Canvas” at Rosenstock Hall, Hood College, 7:30 p.m.

October 14 – NAMI Public Education meeting at Way Station, 230 W. Patrick St., 7:00 p.m. “Prescribing Recommendations for Schizophrenia”

October 19 – NAMI Family Support, 4 E. Church St., Frederick, 2:00-3:30 p.m.

October 28 – Way Station Support Group,
6:30-8:00 p.m., 230 W Patrick St., Frederick

NAMI Notes.....

- Welcome to New Members: Hazel Annis, Sherry McCranie, and Terri Wenner.
- Thank you to those who renewed their membership: Leslie Taylor, Remo Molino, and Renee Sercovich.
- Our gratitude to the following who made donations to NAMI of Frederick County: Evangelical Reformed United Church of Christ through the Community Foundation, and Mei-Ling Shih.
- Computer Competent Person needed – We are just about ready to launch our own website using a micro-site through NAMI National. We need someone to work with Daryl Bruner to help this become a reality. Call Daryl at 301-788-6294 or email him at daryl.bruner@namifcmd.org.
- Many thanks to Buzz and Vern Burall and their crew for organizing the NAMI Picnic. We had a good time with over 60 people in attendance.
- Please check your newsletter mailing label to see when you need to renew your membership. If there is no date on your label, you are not considered a ‘member’ according to NAMI National. We do hope you will join if you have not already done so. We appreciate your support.
- Fran Wenner would like to schedule training for volunteers interested in joining the telephone Helpline crew. Following the training, volunteers will answer the NAMI Helpline one day a week or less depending on the number of volunteers we have. Email fran.wenner@namifcmd.org or call 301-663-9414 to sign up for the training.

NAMI of Frederick County, Inc.

Annual Membership Application

___ New ___ Renewal

Name(s) _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

How did you hear about NAMI? _____

Dues:

___ Individual or Family \$35.00
___ Limited Income \$3.00
___ Institution or Business \$35.00

Optional:

Self-identified race/ethnicity: (Circle one)
Caucasian African American Hispanic/Latin
Asian/Pacific Islander Bi-Racial

Donations:

\$500 ___ \$100 ___ \$50 ___ Other ___

Please return this panel & checks to:

NAMI of Frederick County
P.O. Box 1853
Frederick MD 21702

All dues and donations support NAMI activities and are tax deductible. Thank you for your generosity!

To help us plan programs, please indicate your experience with mental illness:

___ as an individual
___ as a parent (age of child ___)
___ as a family member
___ as a friend
___ as a mental health professional

For more information call:
240-379-6186

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DATED MATERIAL

Look at your label
for your membership
renewal date!