

September 2009

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Social Security Disability and the Impact of Work on Benefits to be the topic of September 8 Education Meeting

Diane Hare, Medical Relations Coordinator for the Social Security Administration (SSA), and Sheila Arnold, Director of Public Affairs/Community Liaison for Columbia Area Mental Health, will be the speakers for the September Education meeting.

Ms. Hare will give a brief overview of the Social Security disability program, including the SSA definition of disability, and will explain the process that Disability Determination Services (DDS) uses to make a disability determination. She will also include information on the application process and how to provide help to those completing the application. She will outline the critical information that is needed when evaluating mental conditions and how family members or others can serve as advocates.

Ms. Arnold is certified as a Work Incentives Coordinator by the Social Security Administration. She will discuss the impact of work on Social Security Disability benefits (SSDI and SSI), Medicare and Medicaid.

Both speakers will take questions from audience members following the presentations.

Please plan to attend this informative session on Tuesday, September 8 at 6 pm at Trenholm Road United Methodist Church, 3401 Trenholm Road.

President's Letter

By Buddy Wier

The following came in an e-mail following the August Education Meeting: "The program last night was just wonderful. Every Education Meeting I have attended here has done so much to help me advance my understanding of the whole sphere of mental illness and the support available on so many levels, yet the remaining huge need for more research and general empathy and understanding worldwide."

This sums up NAMI. We are working hard to make a difference but still have lots of mountains to climb.

Registrations for the fall *Family-to-Family* class are coming in. If you have a family member with mental illness, taking *Family-to-Family* will change your life. Please don't miss this opportunity to help yourself and your family member. If someone you love has a mental illness, register now for this 12-week class, which begins September 14. Call 776-4000, ext. 4116.

Of course, it is the volunteers who make the good things NAMI does happen. I'm excited about the two volunteers who will chair the next NAMIWalk, to be held on April 24, 2010. Bob Toomey and Jack Balling have agreed to co-chair the committee. How fortunate we are! Jack is NAMI Mid-Carolina's current Treasurer and former NAMI SC State President. Bob has wide experience with top management experience at Health and Human Services, the SC Department of Mental Health, and the Budget and Control office. Thank you both for stepping up to make 2010 a great year.

You, too, can help make good things happen. Take the opportunity to become trained to be a Support Group facilitator, *Family-to-Family* teacher, or NAMI Basic's teacher. As mentioned in last month's BrainStorm, the training will take place at the White Oak Conference Center near Winnsboro on November 6-8. Call 803-776-9548 so that an interview can be scheduled.

I'm off to attempt a 400-mile walk. This is short when compared to the mountains NAMI members face each day. I hope you will each ask yourself, "How can I help make a difference in the lives of those with mental illness and their families?"

Mental Health Professionals: Do You Need Contact Hours?

NAMI Mid-Carolina and Columbia Area Mental Health are teaming up again to present Provider Education, a 10-week course that presents a penetrating, subjective view of family and individual experiences with serious mental illness to providers who work directly with people with these illnesses. Over 200 Columbia Area Mental Health staff have already participated, and the doors are now open, as space permits, to providers at other agencies and/or individual mental health professionals. The class will be on Wednesdays, September 16 through November 18, and will meet 1:30 - 4:30 pm.

As a mental health provider, you will:

- learn how to make your job easier and less stressed.
- feel good about what you do and see the positive results in the families and clients you serve.
- get the latest information in treatment and research.
- take a break from your busy day and gain some new tools for your work.
- receive 30 CEU's / 30 contact hours

And, it's free!

Here is some of the feedback to the question about what participants liked most about the class:

"The honesty and sharing, the most current information, and the fact that it will forever impact how I practice."

"The way it was presented and the information shared by the presenters and the handouts."

"The actual life stories given by consumers and members of their family. Also, the information on the research into the biological bases of mental illness. I am very impressed with all the information given."

The registration deadline is Friday, September 11, and the class is limited to 25 participants.

For more information and to register, contact Pat Hicks at pwh35@scdmh.org or 786-1183 or Cheryl Krumholtz at 898-4805.

New and Renewing Members

Kathrene Berger	Avra Brannon
JJ Casey	Roni Caw
William Crowley	Michael & Penny D'Andrea
Carolyn Duff	Judith Eaddy
Mr. & Mrs. Edwin Evans	Mr. & Mrs. David Fary
Dr. Richard Frierson	Shirley Garrick
Katharine Hartley	Vesta Haselden
Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Heckart	Rosemary Hedden
Gerald Hendrix	Willie Jackson
Jerry Jewler	Marilynn Knight
Cynthia Lake Koethe	Dr. & Mrs. Bill Lewis
Emma Lilley	Sharon Lloyd
LaWanda McLain	Travis Medlock
Marion Moore	Shirley Nichols
Mr. & Mrs. George Poepping	Bernoni Reynolds
Kathy Riley	Sharon Ritter
Molly Roan	Nancy D. Rose
Dr. & Mrs. Anthony Stakis	Mr. & Mrs. Charles Stevens
Sue Summer	Burnese Walker
Frank & Heidi White	Mr. & Mrs. Robert Williams
Mr. & Mrs. Dwight Williamson	

Donations and Memorials

Michael & Penny D'Andrea
Mr. & Mrs. David Fary
Dr. Richard Frierson
Mrs. Annie Laurie George
Marilynn Knight (Walk)
Travis Medlock
Nancy D. Rose
Mr. & Mrs. Dwight Williamson

Family-to-Family Course begins Monday, September 14

The next *Family-to-Family* course will begin on Monday, September 14, at the Dorn VA Medical Center. This is a free 12-week course for family members of a person with a mental illness. For more information about the sessions, visit www.nami.org/familytofamily. Please register by calling 803-776-4000, extension 4116.





Make Plans Now to attend the NAMI Annual Conference in Charleston

The 2009 NAMI South Carolina Annual Conference will be held at the Charleston Embassy Suites, November 13-14, 2009.

Tentative Schedule

Friday, November 13, 5:30 pm

- Social hour with heavy hors d'ouvres
- Awards Ceremony
- DJ Music with Sugar Ray Allen

Saturday, November 14, 9 am – 4 pm

Opening Session

NAMI National's Director of Legislative Affairs, Andrew Sperling. Mr. Sperling is the "go-to" man on mental health issues on Capitol Hill.

Morning Breakout Sessions

- Mobile Crisis & Urgent Care: Esther Hennessee & Debbie Blalock
- Ask the Lawyer: Dennis Christiansen
- Breaking the Silence: Garianne Gunter, MD
- Recovery Model: Jamie McDonagh, PhD.

Luncheon Speaker

Mindy Harmon, telling her personal story and screening her film "To Ride A Dark Horse."

Afternoon Sessions

Council Meetings and the following breakout sessions:

- Ask the Doctor: Stephen McLeod-Bryant, MD
- Why Adolescents are at Risk for Substance Abuse: Sue King & Peter Kalivas
- Dual Diagnosis: Joshua Smith, Ph.D.
- Recovery: Phil Emory, Director of Gateway House, Greenville, SC

Closing Speaker

Mark S. George, MD, Distinguished Professor of Psychiatry, Radiology and Neurosciences and Director of the MUSC Center for Advanced Imaging Research (CAIR) and the Brain Stimulation Laboratory (BSL) will speak on "Horizons for Treatments."

The cost is \$60 for current NAMI members and \$25 for current client/consumer members. A limited number of scholarships are available from NAMI Mid-Carolina. For an application, please call 803-296-5621 and leave a message or e-mail Eileen.Schell@PalmettoHealth.org.

For reservations contact Embassy Suites, 5055 International Blvd., North Charleston, SC 29418, (843) 747-1882. Please reference "National Alliance on Mental Illness." All accommodations are two-bed suites with a pull-out sofa. Room rates are \$139 for Nov. 13 or 14, 2009.

For more information or to register, contact NAMI South Carolina at (800) 788-5131.

Highlights from August Education Meeting

We were fortunate to have two staff from the SC Department of Mental Health (SCDMH) speak at the August Education meeting. Katherine Roberts, Director of the Office of Client Affairs, and Bobbie Lesesne, Client-to-Client Evaluation and Training (CCET) Coordinator, shared information about what is involved with the Office of Client Affairs and Certified Peer Support Specialists.

Certified Peer Support Specialists do not replace clinical mental health staff, but offer additional options to help clients in their efforts to recover, by emphasizing acquisition, development, and expansion of the rehabilitation skills needed to move forward in recovery. According to 'best practices' research into self-help and client initiatives, findings consistently show that peer involvement with clients is associated with:

- Reduced hospitalization and use of other services
- Increased knowledge, information and coping skills
- Increased self-esteem, confidence, sense of well-being and of being in control
- Stronger social networks and supports
- Improved efficiency of intensive case management staff
- Reduced the number of crisis events
- Improved relations with family
- Improved clients' quality of life
- Improved employment outcomes

Return Service Requested

You can also view the Brain Storm
at www.namimidcarolina.org

Tuesdays 9/1, 9/15, 9/22, 9/29
6 pm NAMI Connections and Family
Support Group, Trenholm Road
United Methodist Church (TRUMC),
3401 Trenholm Rd.

Wednesdays 9/2, 9/9, 9/16, 9/23, 9/30
3 pm NAMI Connection
Dorn VA Bldg 106, Room A-237

Thursdays 9/3, 9/10, 9/17, 9/24
6 pm NAMI Connection and Family
Support Group, TRUMC

Tuesday, 9/8
6 pm, Education Meeting, TRUMC
(see story page 1)

Mondays 9/14, 9/21, 9/28
6 pm NAMI Connection, Bridges
Clubhouse, 2015 Commerce, Cayce

Monday, 9/14
Family-to-Family Course begins.
(see story page 2)

Sunday, 10/11, 2 pm
Out of the Darkness Walk for Suicide
Awareness and Prevention

11/13 & 11/14, NAMI State
Conference, Charleston
(see story page 3)



National Suicide Prevention Week, Sept. 6-12

September 6 through September 12 is National Suicide Prevention Week. This year's theme is "A Global Agenda on the Science of Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery".

Sadly, 523 people died by suicide in South Carolina in 2007.

Compare that to 371 homicides in the state that year. In the United States, one person completes suicide every 16 minutes. More than 5 million people in the United States have been directly affected by a suicide.

Experts believe that most suicidal individuals do not want to die. They just want to end the pain they are experiencing. Experts also know that suicidal crises tend to be brief. When suicidal behaviors are detected early, lives can be saved.

There are several organizations and agencies who are doing work every day to increase awareness about suicide and to educate about suicide prevention. There are services available in our community for the assessment and treatment of suicidal behaviors and their underlying causes. Together, we can reduce the number of lives shaken by a needless and tragic death.

Some helpful websites:

- SomeoneYouKnowSC.org
- Suicidepreventionlifeline.org
- AFSP.org
- Suicidology.org
- jasonfoundation.com