



Newsletter

NATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR THE MENTALLY ILL

August/September 2007

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NAMI's New Fact sheets on the Uninsured and the Costs of Mental Illnesses

*From The National Alliance on Mental Illness's NAMI Advocate,
Summer 2007*

Mental illnesses are common, and lack of healthcare causes disability and premature death for adults and children with serious mental illnesses.

- An estimated one in four adults have a diagnosable mental disorder in a given year; 5-7 percent has a serious mental illness, such as schizophrenia, major depression or bipolar disorder, and about 5-9 percent of children have a serious mental disorder.
- Mental disorders are the leading cause of disability in the United States for ages 15-44.
- Suicide is the eleventh leading cause of death in the United States but is the third leading cause of death for people 10-24 years old. More than 90 percent of people who die by suicide have a history of mental illness.
- Adults with serious mental illness die 25 years younger than other Americans. A man with serious mental illness is likely to die by age 53, compared with the average male life expectancy of 78 years.

Untreated mental illnesses increase costs in the public and private sectors.

- Less than one-third of adults with a diagnosable mental disorder, and an even smaller proportion of children receive any mental health services in a given year. Racial and ethnic minorities have even less access to mental health services and often receive a poorer quality of care.
- People with mental illness report a delay of nearly a decade from the onset of symptoms until the first contact with the treatment system, and that delay

increases the likelihood of disability and negative social outcomes. Untreated mental illnesses also lead to greater frequency of symptoms and episodes.

- Twenty-four percent of state prison and 21 percent of local jail inmates have a recent history of a mental health disorder. An alarming 65 percent of boys and 75 percent of girls in juvenile detention have at least one mental disorder.
- The annual economic, indirect cost of mental illnesses is estimated to be \$79 billion. Most of that amount – approximately \$53 billion – reflects the loss of productivity.

Investments in effective treatments and services for mental illnesses save lives and money.

- Treatment outcomes for people with even the most serious mental illnesses are comparable to outcomes for well established general medical or surgical treatments for other chronic diseases. The treatment success rates for mental illnesses are 60-80 percent, well above the approximately 40-60 percent success rates for common surgical treatments for heart disease.

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Datos informativos proporcionados por NAMI en relación a los no asegurados y el costo de los trastornos mentales.

De la Alianza Nacional de Trastornos Mentales “NAMI”, verano del 2007

Los trastornos mentales son comunes, y la falta de atención médica causa discapacidad y muerte prematura en los adultos y niños que sufren graves trastornos mentales.

- Se estima, que anualmente uno de cuatro adultos es diagnosticado con un trastorno mental. El porcentaje de adultos que padecen trastornos mentales graves como esquizofrenia, depresión grave o trastorno bipolar es de 5 al 7 por ciento, y en los niños que sufren trastornos mentales graves este porcentaje es de 5 al 9 por ciento.
- Los trastornos mentales son la causa principal de discapacidad entre los 14 y 44 años de edad en los Estados Unidos.
- El suicidio es la undécima causa de muerte en los Estados Unidos, pero, es la tercera causa de muerte para las personas que tienen la edad de 10 a 24 años. Más del 90 por ciento de las personas que se suicidan tienen antecedentes de trastornos mentales.
- Los adultos que sufren trastornos mentales graves mueren 25 años antes que otros americanos. Un hombre que tiene una enfermedad mental grave posiblemente fallecerá a la edad de 53 años, comparando con la edad promedio de expectativa de vida para un hombre que es de 78 años.

Los trastornos mentales que no son tratados aumentan el costo en los sectores públicos y privados.

- Menos de un tercio de adultos diagnosticados con un trastorno mental reciben servicios de salud mental y este porcentaje es aún menor en los niños, que frecuentemente reciben un cuidado inferior.
- Las personas que sufren trastornos mentales tienden a esperar diez años desde el comienzo de los síntomas hasta que tienen contacto con el sistema de tratamiento. Y, este retraso aumenta la posibilidad de discapacidades como también resultados sociales negativos. La enfermedad mental que no recibe tratamiento tiene que ver con la frecuencia de los síntomas y episodios.
- El 24 por ciento de las prisiones estatales y el 21 por ciento de los prisioneros en las cárceles locales tienen antecedentes recientes de trastornos mentales. Es alarmante, pero en los centros de detención para menores, el 65 por ciento de jóvenes y el 75 por ciento de chicas sufren por lo menos un trastorno mental.
- El costo indirecto de enfermedades mentales en la economía anual es de aproximadamente \$79 mil millones. La mayor parte de esa cantidad – aproximadamente \$53 mil millones – refleja la pérdida de productividad.

Inversiones en tratamientos efectivos y servicios para los trastornos mentales que salvan vidas y ahorran dinero.

Los resultados que el tratamiento demuestra para las personas que sufren trastornos mentales, aún siendo estos graves, se comparan con los resultados bien establecidos de tratamientos médicos o

quirúrgicos en otras enfermedades crónicas. El éxito obtenido en los tratamientos para trastornos mentales es de 60 a 80 por ciento, muy superiores a 40 o 60 por ciento de éxito que aproximadamente existen en los tratamientos quirúrgicos de las enfermedades del corazón.

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Grants

NAMI El Paso was pleased to receive a \$422 grant from the Edith Zanker Fund. The El Paso Community Foundation sponsors the Edith Zanker Fund to help non-profit organizations with educational pursuits.

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NAMI Support Groups

At the July English-speaking group, Eric Willard, public defender, discussed the problems plaguing the jail system and incarcerating people with brain disorders. He said he was searching for ways the system can be improved and asked if NAMI would be able to help. Does anyone have workable ideas to ease the problems?

▪ **The English-speaking group meets from 7 – 9 pm, the second Thursday of the month at 1067 N. Clark St.** Facilitator Andy Vazquez is an MHMR social worker. His phone number is 329-3656.

▪ **The Spanish-speaking group meets 7 – 9, the third Thursday of the month in the same room.** Celia Padilla facilitates this support group and her number is 772-8821. Celia has taught many courses in Family-to-Family.

The St. Pius Church offers us this space, the Mother Theresa Room, at no cost. It is located on the NW corner of Geronimo and Clark St. -- across Clark Street from the church. From I-10 take the Geronimo exit and go south for one block and turn right.

For further information call Ruth Hill in the afternoon at the NAMI Office, 534-5478.

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Education

- Teacher training for Spanish-speaking Visions for Tomorrow course has been completed.
- Two Family to Family Courses began this week in Juarez. Victor Ortiz, NAMI El Paso president, teaches each course – one on Saturday, another on Sunday.
- The El Paso course schedule will be posted soon.

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Other News

▪**Robin Peyson, NAMI Texas executive director**, visited El Paso for the August 2nd board meeting. Appointed director in February, Robin presented an overview of NAMI Texas and brought us up to date on the latest happenings. Likewise, our board did the same, updating her with our issues. We were pleased that she took the time and effort to meet with us.

▪**October 7 – 13 is Mental Illness Awareness Week.** NAMI El Paso usually presents a proclamation regarding the special week at the City Council Meeting, and the president talks briefly on the state of mental illness. Traditionally we hold a Candlelight Vigil on the first Thursday. More on this later.

▪**SSRI Antidepressants Linked to Bone Density Loss** John Leighty June '07 (HealthDay News)

A popular class of medications used to treat depression in older men and women has been linked to bone density loss that can result in hip fractures and falls, according to two studies published in the June 25 issue of the *Archives of Internal Medicine*.

Susan Diem, M.D., of the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, and colleagues sampled the bone mineral density of 2,722 women with an average age of 78.5 of which 198 used selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors

(SSRI) for depression. The investigators found an average bone mineral density decrease of 0.82 percent in hip bones of women taking SSRIs, nearly double the 0.47 percent bone loss for those taking tricyclic antidepressants or no medication.

In similar research by Elizabeth Haney, M.D., of Oregon Health & Science University in Portland, Ore., bone density was measured in 5,995 men aged 65 and older, including 160 who used SSRIs, 99 who took tricyclic and 52 who used trazodone antidepressants. The researchers found hip and lumbar spine bone mineral density to be 3.9 percent and 5.9 percent lower, respectively, for SSRI users than for the rest of the cohort group.

▪**Heart Disease, Diabetes, Depression – a Deadly Mix** by Steven Reinberg (HealthDay News) Heart disease, diabetes and depression can be a lethal triple-play -- boosting a patient's death risk by 20 percent to 30 percent, new research shows.

"We do not know what this increased risk is due to, but it could either be that depression influences crucial aspects of self-care behaviors needed to manage diabetes or that a more severe disease process is reflected in more depressive symptoms," said lead researcher Anastasia Georgiades, a research associate in the department of psychiatry and behavioral science at Duke University in Durham, N.C.

In their study, the Duke team followed 933 heart patients for more than four years. During that time, there were 135 deaths among patients with type 2 diabetes and/or depression, the researchers found.

These data suggest that diabetes and depression exacerbate each other, but the reasons for this relationship aren't clear." The results from the present study will need to be replicated, since they are far from conclusive,"

▪**Plan to attend the 2007 NAMI Texas Conference.** *The following is from the NAMI Texas website – www.namitexas.org. Only 50 rooms have been reserved at the Hyatt Regency. If you plan to attend, reserve a room immediately. Registering for the conference on line will expedite the process.*

2007 NAMI Texas Conference

October 6 - 7

Austin, Texas

The Conference will take place at the Hyatt Regency on Town Lake on 208 Barton Springs, 512-477-1234.

The most important reason that you should book your room RIGHT NOW is because this weekend in October is a very popular weekend in Austin. Many hotels are already booked for the month of October.

The best resource that I have found is to go to the following website: <http://hotel-guides.us/texas/austin-tx-hotels.html> and click on: [Find Hotels near a Street Address](#) and enter the address: 208 Barton Springs to find a hotel close to the conference site. Then enter the dates. When you get to the page that lists the hotels, click on: sort by price.

The 2007 NAMI Texas Conference keynote speaker will be

Dr. Jill Bolte Taylor, "The Singing Scientist" She is brilliant, full of humor, fun, compassionate, dedicated to NAMI and an inspiration for everyone. Her new book is called, *My Stroke of Insight* and it is as inspiring as her talks. Her recovery from a stroke is well detailed in the book and will offer you not only the inspiration to recover from mental illness but help you understand your brain better and that YOU are capable of recovery and growth. Please go to her website to read more about Dr. Jill: <http://drjilltaylor.com/>

The Singers by Nancy Natalicio

The following fictional, short story is written from the point of view of a young man afflicted with a brain disorder. The writer is a former social worker who worked with people with mental illness and has deep compassion for their plight. Nancy works now as a writer and editor.

Sometimes I hear voices.

You're probably thinking *Uh, oh. Uh-oh* is right.

They come at all hours of the day and night. I call them the Singers because that's less scary.

Sometimes they sing the words I'm thinking – over and over and over, off-key. After a while I don't know what I think.

Sometimes the voices are men, deep voices singing loud that I'm no good. Sometimes the voices are women, soft voices singing like an old warped tape. They sing that I'm stupid and weak and no one will ever love me. When I get mad and yell at the women, they hide behind the men for protection. I see them. They're not really scared. They're just pretending.

The Singers used to be in the TV. They were in the radio, too. They were even in the phone, if I picked it up. I had everything taken out of my apartment, but the Singers are still there.

My caseworker told me once to kick them when they start singing. She said if they stop singing and say "Ouch!" they're real. I don't know if that works, but it's funny.

My doctor says they're not real. He says they're part of me, that they're just singing my song. But he doesn't know them. I've known them a lot longer than he has.

Don't get me wrong. My doctor's nice. He wants to understand. And the pills he gives me help. But he'd have to hear them himself to know what I'm talking about.

A guy I know, Rick, hears them, too, but his are different. He only hears one. His talks about dirty things, or about God and the devil. But Rick never makes fun of me, because he knows. And he gives me cigarettes when he has enough. My mom doesn't like it but my doctor says it's OK because cigarettes help me.

Rick doesn't like the word "crazy." When he hears someone normal say something like, "My mom is driving me *crazy!*" he gets mad and says, "NO. Not crazy." I like that about Rick.

I've always known I was different. In school I couldn't get along with other kids and I didn't make good grades. At first my teachers said, "Needs to try harder." I did try sometimes, but I knew something was wrong. After a while I quit going. My mom would lock the door and tell me to get on the bus. But I'd just go spend the day in the park.

It wasn't till I was older that I found out it was the voices. By that time it was too late for school or a job. It wasn't too late for sex, though. I'm still having problems with that.

My caseworker tells me to keep taking my pills, but she's OK. She's young and pretty. She says when the Singers start, I can play the harmonica or sing loud to drown them out. She says I can take long slow breaths. She says I can start at the top of my head and make every part of my body tight, then loose, then tight again, all the way to my feet. That helps me relax.

She does really nice things like help me shop with coupons and take me for cheap haircuts. She plays cards with me at the park, and waits for me at the doctor's office. Sometimes we get a hamburger with fries and a strawberry shake, even though she says that stuff is nothing but fat. She's a little juicy, so she likes it too. Juicy – that's her word for chubby.

Sometimes she takes me to a movie – not the scary ones, just the happy ones. But you know what I like best of all? I like it best when we just joke around. She thinks I'm funny, in a nice way. I feel almost normal. And the Singers stop for a while. ###

Condolences

Last but not least, NAMI El Paso offers our heartfelt condolences to the family of **Joni Eastman**. Joni was a young, enthusiastic volunteer whose ideas and hard work was an inspiration to us all. She generously gave her time and talents that others might have a better life. We miss her.

We send our deepest sympathy to the family of **Ernesto Nava (Ernie)** who passed away earlier this summer. We in NAMI especially know the extreme heartbreak at losing a son, daughter or any family member. We thank them for their generous contribution to NAMI El Paso in memory of their son.

NAMI EL PASO

4615 Alameda Ave., Rm. 1157, El Paso, TX 79005-2702

Phone: 915-534-5478 / Fax: 915-532-5726 / To receive announcements by email, send your email address to: elpaso.nami@dshs.state.tx.us. Check in at our website: www.nami.org/sites/NAMIElPaso

MISSION: To provide emotional and educational support to all people affected by mental illness; to actively advocate for the right of the mentally ill to achieve recovery in a high-quality healthcare & support system; and to promote full integration into our community.

What Can You Do for NAMI?

- Teach Courses
- Observe Probate Court, T & F
- Executive Director
- Attend the support groups
- Write grants
- Volunteer at health fairs, etc.
- Consider becoming a board member or officer in December
- Help with general meetings, providing refreshments, etc.
- Write for the newsletter

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION OR RENEWAL

Your membership dues to NAMI El Paso will buy you a membership in NAMI Texas and NAMI National. They also support the family education work that is at the heart of NAMI El Paso's mission Dues and donations are tax deductible.

Name _____
 Address _____
 City, State, Zip Code _____
 Phone (home) _____ (work) _____
 Email _____

Check one below.

Single, Family, or Professional Member? \$35 _____

Consumer, single or Open Door Affiliate? \$5 _____

Married couple, both consumers or ODA? \$6 _____

Return to: NAMI El Paso, 4615 Alameda Ave., Rm. 1157,
El Paso, TX 79905-2702.

THANK YOU!

NAMI EL PASO
4615 Alameda Ave., Rm. 1157
El Paso, TX 79905-2702

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