



House Approves 2010 Funding for Mental Illness Research & Services

On July 24, by a vote of 264-153, the House cleared legislation that includes funding for mental illness research and services for FY 2010. The bill, known as the FY 2010 Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations bill (HR 3293) includes a \$52 million increase for mental illness research at NIMH, as well as an \$8.4 million increase for the PATH program (outreach services for homeless individuals with serious mental illness) and a \$17 million for the Childrens Mental Health program. The Senate takes up the FY 2010 Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations bill in Committee.

Ask Your Senators to Support Parity Regulations!

After years of hard work by consumers, families and advocates, Congress passed the Paul Wellstone and Pete Domenici Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008 on October 3, 2008. The bill requires the Departments of Labor (DOL), Health and Human Services (HHS) and Treasury to issue regulations before the effective date for the Act, which is October 3, 2009. It is essential the regulations are issued to avoid misinterpretation of the law and to ensure access to critical mental health and addiction services.

Senators Al Franken (D-MN) and Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI) are currently circulating a "Dear Colleague" letter in the Senate which will be sent to the Secretaries of the three departments responsible for issuing the regulations insisting they act quickly and consider comments filed by NAMI and other advocacy groups in response to the recent request for information (RFI).

Act Now!

Don't let years of hard work and advocacy go to waste! Make sure regulations addressing the concerns of the field are issued by October 3, 2009. Send a letter today asking your senators to sign onto Sen. Franken's and Sen. Whitehouse's Dear Colleague Letter by 5:00 pm on August 6th. Ask them to ensure parity and equality are achieved for mental health and addiction services.

For more information, please visit NAMI's website at <http://www.nami.org>.

Upcoming Events

Mon., August 24

- 7:00 p.m. – Reception/ 7:30 p.m. Hear from Lisa Huber, M.D., a psychiatrist in private practice in Atlanta, who specializes in Children, Adolescent and Adult psychiatry. Room 258*.

Tues., September 1

- NAMI Support Group, 7:30 pm in Room 355**.

Sun., September 13

- NAMI Support Group, 4:00-5:30 pm Room 4311***.

Tues., September 15

- NAMI Support Group, 7:30 pm in Room 254*.

Mon., September 28

- 7:00 p.m. – Reception/ 7:30 p.m. Topic to be determined.

* Dunwoody United Methodist Church, Activities Bldg, 1548 Mt. Vernon Road, Dunwoody

** Alpharetta First United Methodist Church, 69 North Main Street, Alpharetta.

*** Peachtree Presbyterian Church, 3434 Roswell Road, Atlanta

NAMI Walks 2009



NAMI Walks for the Minds of America will be held October 3, 2009 at 2125 Tribble Park in Lawrenceville, Gwinnett County.

This walk is the primary fund raising event for NAMI and NAMI Northside Atlanta. Come walk with us, help with fund raising or contribute to one of our walkers. Your Walk co-chairs are Donna Wilson and Bill Roberts. Both Donna and Marilyn Roberts have registered and established a team. You can join their team, start your own, or contribute to their fund raising efforts through their websites at www.nami.org/walk and entering their names. Donating and raising money through the internet is very easy and allows people to donate online with a credit card or by sending a check to the walker.

You also can help by distributing fund raising letters by mail. We will be mailing a sample fund raising letter to all NAMI Northside members to send through the mail.

The most important thing is to get involved in any way you can and to encourage those that can to participate in the walk.

Ric's Reality

While it may not seem intuitive, getting a psychiatric diagnosis can be a positive experience. Learning that one is not "crazy", but instead has a chemical imbalance, has provided immeasurable relief to so many who have experienced the hopelessness of an undiagnosed psychiatric condition. It's normal to initially deny the diagnosis, but once one can accept it and is willing to move forward, hope returns and the road to recovery begins.

Luckily, today there are medical treatments that can help with most psychiatric diagnoses. But it is just as important to work with peers, friends and family to develop a positive support system to help you get back on your feet. Facing your fears and overcoming your problems, you will find, will be a very important step for you. Managing your condition is ultimately your responsibility, but concerned others can help. Being a part of a support group is an example of that kind of helpful assistance.

Keeping up your self-esteem, though challenging at times, is essential for recovery. Knowing that recovery is a non-linear experience will help keep your expectations in proper perspective. You will find that working with others within a support group will also help your self-esteem tremendously. Knowing that you are doing everything possible to learn your environmental triggers (e.g., getting enough rest, medication adherence, nutrition, etc.) that set you off are also critical to your maturity and growth. With perseverance, your self-esteem will continue to grow over time and you will become a happier and better adjusted person.

NAMI is the largest grassroots organization in our country for mental health, and is a tremendous source for support groups, classes, and other resources that you will find helpful. We are always looking for assistance from people at all levels of the recovery process. Consumers, friends, and family members can all get involved to make a difference for themselves and others who need a voice or helping hand. There are opportunities to lead groups and teach classes with minimal preparation, and we encourage you to pursue other service opportunities outside of NAMI, such as staying in touch with your elected officials and local media.

No one should have to be alone during a mentally challenging time. We invite you to stand with us and help us make great strides by sharing your hopes, visions, questions, and strengths.

Please call the Georgia State Office of NAMI at (770) 234-0855 or Ric Hershman at (954) 817-4853 for further information and details of how you can get involved.

Peer-to-Peer and Family-to-Family Training

September 11 -13, 2009

Peer-to-Peer

Education is the key to long term recovery and an improved quality of life. NAMI Peer to Peer Mentors are NAMI members living with mental illnesses and are at a point in their recovery where they want to "give back" to others. They attend an intense training designed to help them develop the skills they need to teach a NAMI Peer to Peer Class.

NAMI Peer to Peer Mentors:

- Apply to be selected to attend trainings and include a reference in their application
- Receive skill training in the NAMI Peer-to-Peer Instruction Method
- Are volunteers
- Co-Mentor a 9 week class - working in pairs
- Commit to a minimum of 2 classes within two years
- Commit to fidelity to the NAMI Peer-to-Peer Instruction Method

Location:

**Mercer University
School of Nursing
3200 Flowers Rd.
Atlanta, Ga. 30341**

Family-to-Family

Education is the key to long-term recovery and an improved quality of life. NAMI Family-to-Family Teachers are family members of individuals living with mental illnesses and are at a point in their family's recovery where they want to "give back" to others. They attend an intense training designed to help them develop the skills they need to teach a NAMI Family-to-Family Class.

NAMI Family-to-Family Teachers:

- Apply to be selected to attend trainings and include a reference in their application
- Receive skill training in the NAMI Family to Family Instruction Method
- Are volunteers
- Co-Teach a 12 week class - working in pairs
- Commit to a minimum of 2 classes within two years
- Commit to fidelity to the NAMI Family to Family Instruction Method

Location:

**Mercer University
School of Nursing
3200 Flowers Rd.
Atlanta, Ga. 30341**

Information and application can be found on the www.namiga.org website.

NAMI Northside Atlanta

NAMI Northside Atlanta is an affiliate of NAMI Georgia and NAMI National. The National Alliance on Mental Illness is a non-profit, grassroots support, education and advocacy organization for families and friends of the mentally ill.

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Georgia Crisis & Access Line 24/7

1-800-715-4225
www.mygcal.com

Welcome New Members

- Jack Simrell
- Susan Yancey

NAMI Northside Atlanta Board

President: Jerry Bishop

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Susie Kyle

Bill McClung

Together we make a difference. The Board represents your interests and encourages your active membership and participation. If you have ideas, a special talent or a couple hours a month to volunteer, we want to hear from you. Board meetings are open and are held prior to the Education Meeting at 6 p.m. on the 4th Monday of the month. Contact Jerry Bishop, bishopjerryo@bellsouth.net.