



NAMI ALERT

NAMI Franklin County

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Dec./Jan. 2007

AFTER NEARLY 20 YEARS, THE OHIO LEGISLATURE PASSES MENTAL HEALTH PARITY!

On Thursday, Dec. 14, 2006, history was made in Ohio! The Ohio House of Representatives passed S.B. 116, the Mental Health Parity Bill, by a vote of 69 – 24 with one amendment unrelated to parity. Later in the evening, the Ohio Senate took final action by approving the House passed bill.

The next stop is the Governor's desk, where we are told he plans to sign the bill into law.

The bill, which prohibits discrimination in group health care policies, contracts and agreements in the coverage provided for the diagnosis, care and treatment of biologically based mental illnesses, is expected to help about 100,000 individuals in Ohio. It excludes the larger, self-insured plans covered under the federal ERISA statute and not subject to state insurance regulations. In addition, the bill also allows small businesses to opt out of the

requirement if their costs exceed 1%.

Senator Bob Spada and Representative Jon

Peterson were truly instrumental in getting this legislation passed! Please take a few moments to let them know how much we appreciate their leadership. It is not often that legislators take on an issue with the level of passion and commitment that these two gentlemen have done with mental health parity.

NAMI Franklin County would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our members who met with legislators, wrote letters, made phone calls, attended hearings, and testified on behalf of mental health parity! This is a big step in obtaining equal benefits, and a giant step in finally ending discrimination against the mentally ill!

Also, we hope you will take a moment to thank Speaker Jon Husted and President Bill Harris for their willingness to move this bill forward over the objections of some business groups. Senator Steve Stivers, Senator Eric Fingerhut and Representative Chris Redfern were also instrumental in our success and deserve a special note of thanks.

Advocacy works and justice can prevail! ♥

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ON YOUR MARK, GET SET, WALK...MAY 5!

As the holiday and new year quickly approach, NAMI Franklin County is already planning for our Spring NAMI WALKS for the Mind of America, scheduled for Saturday, May 5, 2007, and will be held once again at Genoa Park (next to COSI, in downtown Columbus).

Companies, organizations and families are encouraged to organize teams of walkers made up of employees, organization members, relatives and friends to take part in the Walk. All participating teams will be recognized with special awards based on the amount that they raise.

Last year, over 600 people walked with us and we raised over \$55,000! Our goal this year is \$100,000! With your help, we know we can make it! Below is a link to the NAMI FC Walk website. You can go ahead and register your team and/or give the link to people who might want to go ahead and donate online: <http://www.nami.org/namiwalks/OH/Franklin>

**PLEASE NOTE:
THE JAN. 8, 2007
MONTHLY
MEETING HAS
BEEN
CANCELLED.**



BIPOLAR DISORDER: HELPING A LOVED ONE WITH BIPOLAR DISORDER

Web MD Medical Reference in Collaboration with The Cleveland Clinic

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Caring for someone with bipolar disorder can be enormously difficult. The spouses, parents, children, and friends of people with bipolar disorder are often its forgotten victims. It can wreak havoc on their marriages, careers, friendships, finances, and emotions.

If you're helping someone through bipolar disorder, you face a difficult balancing act. On one hand, you have to be supportive and sympathetic; you can't blame a person for the effects of an illness. But on the other, you can't sacrifice all of your own needs to care for another person.

There's no easy solution. But here are some tips that might help you cope.

- **Learn.** The first step is to read about bipolar disorder. Go to the bookstore or the library. Get information from reputable web sites. Find out about the symptoms and treatments.
- **Listen.** Pay attention to what your loved one has to say. Don't assume that you know what he or she is going through. Don't treat your loved one's emotions and feelings as if they are all signs of an illness. Just because someone has bipolar disorder doesn't mean his or her point of view isn't valid.
- **Ask how you can help.** During bad periods, everyday things can be overwhelming to people with bipolar disorder. Reducing stress at home helps. Offering a ride to a doctor's appointment, or help with laundry or child care, can mean a lot.
- **Keep track of symptoms.** In many cases, you may notice emotional changes in your loved one

before he or she does. So think about keeping records. Catching changes in mood early—and getting treatment for them—can make a big difference. However, you walk a fine line. If you're too intrusive, your loved one might feel like you're spying.

- **Encourage your loved one to stick with treatment.** It's key that your loved one stay on his or her bipolar medication and get regular checkups. Your loved one may also need encouragement to eat well, get enough sleep, and stay away from alcohol and drugs.
- **Do things together.** People who are depressed often pull away from the world. So encourage your friend or loved one to get out and do things he or she enjoys. Ask him or her to join you for a walk or a dinner out. If he or she resists, don't force the issue. Instead, just gently ask again a few days later.
- **Make an explicit plan.** Because bipolar disorder is an unpredictable illness, you should plan for bad times. Be explicit. Agree on what to do if symptoms get worse. Have a plan for emergencies. If you both know what to do and what to expect of each other, you'll feel more confident about the future.
- **Express your own concerns.** Since your loved one's behavior can have a huge effect on you, you have the right to talk about it. However, don't blame the other person. Don't list all of his or her mistakes. Instead, focus on how your loved

continued on next page

MENTAL ILLNESS—WHAT A DIFFERENCE A FRIEND MAKES

Addressing mental illness among youth, USA Today

WASHINGTON — The federal government is launching a \$1 million public service campaign beginning today aimed at reducing the stigma surrounding mental illnesses such as depression and bipolar disorder.

Health agencies say millions of U.S. adults go untreated for mental illnesses because they are too ashamed to tell friends and family. The government's campaign will use public service radio and TV ads to encourage young adults to stand by their peers. Later phases of the campaign will address older people and rural areas.

"If you have early and consistent support from your peers and you get appropriate treatment, then you have a much better chance of managing the illness over time," says Kathryn Power, director of the Center for Mental Health Services of the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) in Rockville, Md.

"It's important as a friend in a relationship with someone recovering from

mental illness that you exhibit social acceptance."

When Cara Anthieny, 18, spent a week in the hospital dealing with depression, her school friends, bearing books, flowers and candy, traveled more than 100 miles to visit with her. She says their support speeded her recovery.

"They really understood. I wasn't embarrassed," says Anthieny, a student in Chico, Calif. "It was important to me not to feel like an outcast."

But SAMHSA and the Center for Mental Health Services say millions of other adults go untreated because they are too ashamed to tell friends and family. In 2005, nearly 25 million people 18 or older had some type of serious psychological distress — about 11.3% of the population overall and 18.6% of young adults ages 18 to 24, according to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health. Of the 13.5 million people who did not seek treatment, 26% cited as one of their primary reasons the stigma associated with mental illness. ♥

BIPOLAR DISORDER (CONTINUED)

one's actions make you feel and how they affect you. Since this can be a very difficult subject, you might find it easiest to discuss it together with a therapist.

- **Accept your limits.** Supporting your loved one can be key to his or her recovery. But you have to remember that you can't single-handedly make your loved one better. You can't take care of him or her every second of the day. So get other people involved. Ask for the help of other family members or friends. Don't bear the burden

on your own.

- **Take care of yourself.** It's easy to lose sight of your own needs when you're taking care of someone else. But you have to stay healthy emotionally and physically. If you push yourself too far, you'll just burn out -- and that's no good for anyone.

So take time off regularly. Ask other friends or family members to help out so you can get away. Do things that relax you. Consider seeing a therapist on your own or joining a support group for loved ones of people with bipolar disorder ♥



A Word from Community Health Charities of Ohio

If you are employed by any of the following organizations:

- Federal Government
- State of Ohio
- Franklin County
- City of Columbus
- The Ohio State University
- COTA

You may designate a contribution directly to us in your employee giving campaign. To find the appropriate code number to use, consult your campaign guide or look for us under the Community Health Charities of Ohio listing or find our name in the index.

By designating your gift through the workplace, you provide much needed financial support for the programs and services provided.

Contact Community Health Charities at 614-228-2566.



SUPPORT GROUPS
(for patients)

Schizophrenics Anonymous

NORTH: Every Monday 5:30–7:00 PM
Worthington United Methodist Church
600 N. High St., Room 300

NORTHEAST: Every Wed., 5:00 PM
Concorn Counseling, for more info,
call Hugh Michaels, 614-882-9338,
Ext. 207

EAST: Weekdays 2:30–3:30 PM
Pathway Clubhouse - 1203 E. Broad
St. For more information call Mike
Stalego 614-251-7820

CENTRAL: Every Friday 1:00–2:00 PM
Southeast, Inc., 16 W Long St, 2ND
Floor. For more information, call
Bonnie Baker 614-225-0990, Ext 1158

**For other patient support groups,
call NAMI FC office at 262-0114**

Family Support Groups
(Family members ONLY)

Families in Touch

Worthington: 2nd & 4th Monday
5:30 – 7:00 PM
Worthington United Methodist
Church 600 N. High St., Room 300

Westerville: 2nd & 4th Thursday
10:00 AM – 12 Noon
Concord, Inc., 774 Park Meadow
Rd, Westerville (Off Schrock Rd,
between Cooper Rd & Westerville
Rd)

Westside Hilltop Library: 4th Friday
of every month 1:20–3:00 PM
511 South Hague Ave
(corner Hague & Sullivant)

Twin Valley Behavioral Health
Family Support Group
2nd Tues. of every month 6:00–7:00
PM. 2200 W. Broad St., Rm 124
(Main Entrance)

**Survivors of Suicide Support
Network of Central Ohio**

Call for locations/times of meetings
Contact: Dean Turner
614-402-0004; edean234@aol.com
or
Susan Farnham 614-882-6271
rn32082@aol.com

SCANS CAN PREDICT SCHIZOPHRENIA

BRAIN SCANS COULD HELP PREDICT SCHIZOPHRENIA,
RESEARCH SUGGESTS - *BBC NEWS*

Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans have revealed key changes in the brain's grey matter in a small group before they developed symptoms.

The finding suggests tracking these changes over time, combined with traditional assessments, could help doctors to predict illness.

The research, published in *BMC Medicine*, was carried out by the University of Edinburgh.

For ten years, scientists followed 200 young people who were at a high risk of developing schizophrenia because two or more members of their family had already been diagnosed with the illness. They analysed MRI scans of 65 of the 200 young people, taken on average 18 months apart.

The researchers looked specifically for changes in grey matter - brain tissue made principally of neurones which transmit messages and help to store memories. Eight of the 65 went on to develop schizophrenia on average 2.3 years after their first scan.

The MRI scans of each of these eight individuals revealed that they had changes in grey matter that happened before they became unwell.

Specifically, they showed a reduction in grey matter in a part of their brain called the inferior temporal gyrus, which is linked to the processing of anxiety.

Prevention hope

People who develop schizophrenia are known often to exhibit signs of raised anxiety levels up to two years before the onset of full psychosis.

As members of a high risk group, each person in the study had approxi-

mately a 13% risk of developing schizophrenia.

However, the specific changes to the grey matter pinpointed by the researchers raised the risk to 60%.

Lead researcher Dr Dominic Job said: "Although there are no preventative treatments for the illness, an accurate predictive test could help researchers to assess possibilities for prevention in the future.

"Current methods are good for predicting who won't develop schizophrenia but not who will.

"By combining brain imaging with traditional clinical assessments it might be possible to detect people who are at highest risk of the illness early."

However, Dr Job said a larger scale study was needed to confirm the results.

More work

The Edinburgh group, who are funded by the Medical Research Council, has already used sophisticated scans to link a specific gene to psychotic symptoms.

Jo Loughran, of the schizophrenia charity Rethink, said: "Schizophrenia is notoriously difficult to diagnose; therefore Rethink welcomes any new research or progress into understanding the causes of schizophrenia.

"However, it would need to be independently replicated before it would make a difference to the thousands of people living with severe mental illness in the UK.

"In the meantime, reaching people early with the right care and treatment is the best way of recovering a meaningful and fulfilling life." ♥

MEET ONE OF OUR BOARD MEMBERS

Gene Wells has served on the board for almost a year and will be assuming responsibility of Treasurer. He has been active in NAMI for three years and teaches Family-to-Family education courses.

An Ohio State University graduate and father of two, Gene and his wife Karen have a personal interest in helping fami-

lies cope with the stigma of mental illness. Karen's brothers have been living with Schizophrenia for 12 years.

Both Gene and Karen understand first-hand the ups and downs of medication and compliance, taking medication and maintaining a schedule. Gene is involved with NAMI so that he can help others who have a loved one with a mental illness. ♥

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Volunteers make a difference by contributing their time, energy, and talents to the causes they hold dear. NAMI Franklin County sincerely appreciates the hard work and dedication of so many wonderful individuals who have given so much of themselves to make a difference in the lives of individuals who suffer with a mental illness and the family members who care for them. Enclosed is an updated Volunteer Form. We hope you will take a few moments to get involved by identifying an area where you'd like to help! Please fax back the form to the NAMI office at (614) 262-0149.

NAMI FC MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS:

The national NAMI quarterly magazine – *The Advocate* – which includes updates about national efforts.

NAMI Ohio's quarterly newsletter – *News Briefs* – which provides statewide information about advocacy and education.

NAMI Franklin County's bi-monthly newsletter – *NAMI Alert* – which provides local information about education, advocacy and news.

Free educational seminars on a broad range of topics relative to mental illness.

Fact sheets and special information about legislation, services, new research, and other information important to families, consumers, and service providers.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Membership in NAMI Franklin County brings a number of benefits. NAMI Franklin County is the only organization in Franklin County whose mission is to support families encountering severe mental illness. We advocate for optimal treatment and services to improve the quality of life for our consumers and their family members. We seek to increase community awareness of brain disorders.

Your membership helps us provide support and referral for families in crisis, inform families and consumers about brain disorders and the mental health system, to dispel common misunderstandings about brain disorders and to monitor services to improve treatment outcomes.

When you join NAMI Franklin County, you are automatically a member of NAMI Ohio and NAMI National!

Yes! I want to join/renew my membership!

Enclosed is my check in the amount of:

- \$3 Non-working Consumer Membership
- \$25 Individual Membership
- \$35 Family Membership
- \$45 Professional Membership
- \$45 Agency/ Organization Membership

Name: _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

MEMORIAL AND TRIBUTE GIFTS

Please circle one:

In Memory / In Honor

Commemorating (please circle one):

- Birthday
- Sympathy
- Holiday
- Recognition
- Graduation
- Anniversary
- Parenthood

Other _____

I have enclosed a check in the amount of \$ _____

Made payable to: NAMI FC

Please send acknowledgement to:



All Meetings Held at:

**Maple Grove
United Methodist
Church**

7 W. Henderson Rd.
(Henderson and
High Street)

Free parking in
back of church

**We hope to
see you there!**

NAMI FRANKLIN COUNTY MONTHLY EDUCATIONAL MEETINGS

**PLEASE NOTE: DUE TO THE OSU BUCKEYE PLAY-OFF GAME, THE JANUARY 8, 2007
MONTHLY MEETING HAS BEEN CANCELLED.**

Monday, Feb. 12 - 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

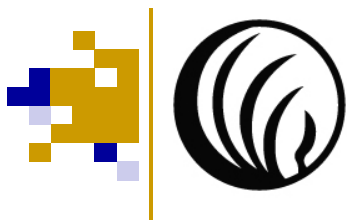
Guest Speaker: **Alan Mosser, President and CEO of NetCare**
Information About NetCare Services

Monday, March 12 - 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

Guest Speaker: **Mary Fristad, Ph.D., ABPP**
The Ohio State University. Professor of Psychiatry and Psychology
Director of Research of Psychological Services
Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

Monday, April 9 - 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

Guest Speaker: **Jim Mauro, Executive Director**
NAMI Ohio



NAMI Franklin County

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