

Crisis Management

The predictive power of staring at tea leaves or crystal balls leaves us in no doubt that the future is uncertain! None of us know what's around the corner; we cannot know whether some unfortunate mental health crisis might strike us or our loved ones. The focus of this issue is a first-aid kit for mental health emergencies. Of course, it cannot prevent them from happening, but developing such a personal kit can greatly reduce the anxiety and tension, should it happen to us. We are grateful to the Treatment Advocacy Center for their permission to use their 'wheel' rather than re-invent our own.

Practical advice for families : Build a CARE kit

In a three-ring binder, file box, or other easily-transportable storage system, create a CARE kit (Critical Advocacy Resources for Emergencies). A CARE kit is a "ready-file" of materials that you can quickly share with treatment professionals in a crisis.

Checklist: What is in your CARE kit?

- One-page psychiatric history summary
- Recent picture and description
- List of emergency numbers
- Copy of criteria for emergency evaluation
- Copy of criteria for civil commitment
- Petition form for emergency evaluation
- Petition form for civil commitment
- Medical release
- Advance directive

Psychiatric history summary It is unlikely that treating professionals will have immediate access to, or time to review, the full medical records of someone brought in for an emergency evaluation. A one-page summary of psychiatric history can be very useful. (And may also be useful as evidence in commitment hearings.) Keep at least five copies of this important document in your CARE kit, so it can be easily and quickly shared with more than one person in a short span of time. Keep it current (update it regularly) and short (one page is best) but be sure it contains the most critical information, including the following:

- Full name
- Current age
- Psychiatric diagnosis
- Age at diagnosis
- Town or city of residence
- Current symptoms
- Current concerns (suicidal, homeless, missing, vulnerable, violent, abusing substances, other)
- Psychiatrist's name and number
- Local service provider's name and provider
- Dates of previous hospitalizations and locations
- Dates of previous arrests or jailings and charge(s)
- Current medication name(s)
- Past medication(s) that have helped
- Past medication(s) that have not helped
- Past history of symptomatic behaviors (e.g., running up huge debt, getting into car accidents, threatening family members, failing to care for basic needs)
- Full name, contact numbers, and address for emergency contact person.

Recent picture and description. Keep a recent picture of your loved one, a list of vital statistics

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(such as height, age, weight, hair color), and any pertinent physical medical conditions (such as allergies or diabetes). Ideally, keep these in a format that allows them to be easily faxed or e-mailed to police and mental health agencies. Leave space to add a description of clothing last worn in case that information is needed.

List of emergency numbers. Create, and periodically update, a list of emergency numbers

CARE kit: *List of emergency numbers*

Keep a list of emergency numbers in your CARE kit, including the following. If you have made direct contact with any key people (like the CIT team coordinator), include their contact names and any cell phone or pager numbers.

- Psychiatrist
- Case manager
- ACT/PACT team
- Community mental health center
- Mobile crisis team
- Crisis intervention team (CIT)
- Police department
- Local hospital
- Local emergency room
- Court for civil commitment
- Mental health court
- Homeless shelter(s)
- Friends of your family member

HELPLINES:

- Suicide prevention hotline (1-800-SUICIDE)
- Local NAMI (NAMI Albuquerque -256-0288)

Copies of important criteria. Print out a copy of your state's criteria for emergency evaluations and for civil commitments (as mentioned in the "research" section). That way if anyone along the way contradicts or misunderstands the law, you have a copy of it in hand.

Petition forms. Get blank copies of involuntary commitment forms if your state permits this. Complete any nonincident-related information ahead of time. You may never have to use them, but at least you will have them ready.

Medical release (if applicable). If possible, have your loved one sign a release that allows you access to his or her medical information. If you have such a document, keep a copy in your CARE kit.

Advance directive (if applicable). Advance directives are legal documents that allow individuals with mental illnesses to dictate aspects of their care in case they become incapacitated by illness. These documents might include the designation of a person to make treatment decisions should the subject become incapacitated. The specific details of these legal documents vary widely from state to state. Most advance directives are immediately revocable, which is a significant limitation on the effectiveness of these instruments as that can allow individuals to nullify their previous treatment decisions even when suffering from impaired judgment. If your loved one has such a directive, keep a copy in the CARE kit.

ADVOCACY: Share information

Alert your local mental health crisis unit. These outreach workers typically conduct on site evaluations and often are empowered to initiate commitments. They are also likely to be called by law enforcement to assist in crises involving an individual with a psychiatric disorder.

Reach out to your crisis unit. Ask to speak to or meet with the supervisor or director. In that short meeting, in person or via phone, ask for information about the process involved in a commitment, and what would happen to your loved one if he/she arrived at the unit for an involuntary commitment. Get the appropriate contact information for your CARE kit and ask if you can or should provide some information about your loved one for their files. And ask for a tour of the facilities.

If you think a crisis is imminent, alert the unit that you suspect that your family member is on the verge of meeting commitment criteria. Fax over or drop off a copy of your onepage history form for their records.

Alert your local law enforcement agency. Make your local law enforcement agency aware of the person's condition in case officers are called to initiate an emergency evaluation or respond to a disturbance. Eliminating the element of surprise can help reduce the risk of a call escalating into a crisis.

Reach out to the crisis intervention team (CIT) coordinator, if your community has CIT, or to the commander for your precinct/district. Or ask for an officer who has expressed interest in or knows about mental health issues. It is also often helpful to talk to the 911 supervisor (reach them through the general office number of course, not via 911 itself).

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The message to convey is that your loved one has a severe mental illness that might make encounters difficult. Explain specifically, if you can, what happens when the person is symptomatic or delusional - for instance, that he hears voices and cannot easily follow verbal instructions so he may appear to be disregarding officer orders. Or that she has delusions that police officers are aliens and may be unreasonably afraid and unable to comply with commands. If there is a particular officer or sheriff's deputy who patrols the area regularly, invite that officer and any local CIT officer to come by to meet your family member when they are well. This can help build some rapport and trust for all involved.

Finally, as with the mental health facility, do not wait for a full-blown crisis before calling law enforcement. If you anticipate an imminent crisis, alert them so they are not caught off guard.

This information is re-printed with thanks from Catalyst, a quarterly newsletter published as a public service by the Treatment Advocacy Center.

Read more about the Treatment Advocacy Center at www.psychlaws.org

October 4, 2005 Educational Meeting At the NAMI Office 7:00 PM, 6001 Marble NE, Suite# 7

The Department of Psychiatry Research at the Albuquerque VA Healthcare System

Dr. Jose M. Canive and his clinical research team are committed to improving the lives of people with mental illnesses. For the past 13 years, Dr. Canive and his colleagues have conducted research projects that have contributed to our understanding of various mental illnesses, as well as how to treat them. Dr. Canive's team is currently investigating an impairment in filtering that leads to being overwhelmed by sensory overload in patients with schizophrenia. Aside from Schizophrenia, we are also conducting investigations in Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and Bipolar Affective Disorder. These studies are designed to assess medication efficacy and effects on quality of life.

Dr. Canive and his team have been recognized as one of the top teams for psychiatric research in the country. His staff includes psychiatrists, psychologists, nurses, and master degree illness, as well as people without a history of

clinicians with many years of experience in clinical research. We want to recruit people with mental psychiatric illness for current and future projects. *You do not need to be a veteran to participate in the majority of our current studies.*

There will be plenty of time for questions and answers with Dr Canive.

For any immediate questions, please contact: Justine Hunter, BS, LPN at (505) 265-1711 ext 2377 or Robin Douglas, MA, CCRC at (505) 265-1711 ext 5528.

November 1, 2005 Educational Meeting At NAMI Office 7:00 PM, 6001 Marble NE, Suite # 7

Gary Jackson, Director of Transitional Living Services in Albuquerque, and Kelly Gamlin Shingler, Clinical Director at TLS will present an overview of the services they offer including:

Supportive and Independent Housing
Case Management (assessment & treatment planning)
Psycho-Social Rehabilitation program
Therapeutic Counseling

The aim of Transitional Living Services is to provide services to individual adults with Severely Disabling Mental Illness who reside in NM to assist them in learning the skills necessary for a higher level of independent living and a less restrictive environment.

There will be plenty of time for questions with Gary and Kelly after their presentation. Refreshments will be served.

A Note From The Editor

This newsletter is produced by volunteers. Our Art Director, Pat Catlett, has been called away by urgent family matters, so this issue has been put together by John Matsko who graciously offered to fill in. Thank you John, and very warm wishes to Pat and her family.

24/7 Information

Check our NAMI Albuquerque website for support, news and event Information.

NAMI Albuquerque's website:
<http://www.nami.org/sites/albuquerque>



Help with Work

Do you need help with finding work? Then Larry Maestas might be able to help you

Larry is especially interested in helping people with mental health disabilities in working out employment. Governor Richardson's goal is to have 4% of the jobs in NM covered by those with disabilities.

Larry Maestas
Disability Program Navigator

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
Workforce Connection of Central New Mexico

501 Mountain Rd, NE
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87102

PHONE: (505) 823-6601 ext. 106
FAX: (505) 823-1445
E-MAIL: lmaestas2@state.nm.us

NAMI Walks

The 2005 NAMI Walk was a huge success. We had some wonderful sponsors who contributed \$71,850. Details are on the NAMI Albuquerque website at: www.nami.org/sites/albuquerque. Click on NAMI Walks. Our goal this year was \$70,000 and the total raised was \$83,200.

Blue skies and little wind greeted all of us as we lined up to "Walk the Walk" and enjoy the camaraderie with smiling faces. Mayor Martin Chavez gave us a send-off and Judge Kevin Fitzwater counted down for the start of the Walk. There were many colorful shirts on enthusiastic team members. The Santa Fe "Dream Weavers" and Transitional Living "Care A lot" teams had the most members and were awarded certificates. All the teams worked very hard to make this years Walk the success it was; I am grateful for your enthusiasm and support. It was heartening to see all the children involved.

I am happy and proud to report that we cleared \$73,643 after expenses. This money will be used for our programs and to support our mission of education, advocacy and support for the mentally ill. A thousand thanks to you all.

Still and Forever Walking for NAMI,
Elaine Miller

Mark Your Calendar for the Holidays!

December 6th at 6pm we will be whooping it up at our annual Holiday Party. It will be a potluck so bring a dish plus a WRAPPED WHITE ELEPHANT. This is also the time when we collect toiletries and necessities for the Albuquerque Drop In Center. The WHITE ELEPHANT AUCTION is always a lot of fun so start searching your attics, yard sales for that special treasure that is fun, useful or just plain goofy. See you all there!



Entertainment Book 2006 Is In!



Attention! Entertainment Book 2006 has arrived. It is still \$35. Remember to call La Dean at 293-1869 and order yours early, as you can start using your book as soon as you purchase it. It will be greatly appreciated if you will take orders from your friends, as well. Do not forget to order extra books for gifts! NAMI-Albuquerque benefits from your purchases. We thank you in advance for your support.

NAMI's Special Needs Estate Planning Guidance System

Many NAMI families face the challenge of planning for a loved one disabled with a severe mental illness. Families need to have a comprehensive financial and legal plan. It takes commitment to do the specialized planning necessary to ensure the continuation of the quality of their loved one's care when they are no longer around to provide for it directly.

This following website contains information to assist families in understanding the process and working with qualified attorneys, as well as state specific information, resources, and protocols.

http://www.nami.org/template.cfm?section=Special_Needs_Estate_Planning

The above site and resources has been made possible by a generous grant from the van Ameringen Foundation.

Get information about mental illness, medications etc. at **NAMI-Albuquerque, 6001 Marble NE, Suite 7**. Free pamphlets are available. A lending library of books and tapes is available for members. The office is usually staffed by volunteers M-F, 10:00am – 1:00pm. Call before coming to the office, to check that it is staffed and open! More resources are available on our website at www.nami.org/sites/albuquerque, or e-mail John Matsko nami_abq@juno.com or call 256.0288

NAMI- ALBUQUERQUE FAMILY SUPPORT MEETINGS: Tuesdays 7:00pm-8:30pm at NAMI Albuquerque Office – 6001 Marble NE, Suite 7
If someone in your family is afflicted with mental illness and you don't know where to turn, come to the support meeting for help.

In Our Own Voice (IOOV)- People living with mental illness are available to speak about their experiences. Contact Mary Tabor 856-0175 for details.

CONSUMER SUPPORT MEETINGS:
Albuquerque Drop-in Center is a Consumer-run self-help and support center with a Computer lab, movies and dinner, food boxes, and employment help. Meetings are held Fridays noon-10pm, Sat and Sun 10am to 6pm at 1027 San Mateo Blvd SE Telephone 256-8289

The Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA) Albuquerque support group meets Thursday 6:30pm - 8:30pm. Meetings are for patients/consumers and family members/friends at Trinity United Methodist Church 3715 Silver Ave. SE Phone 889-3632 or contact via dbsa4albq@yahoo.com

Double Trouble in Recovery (DTR) is a twelve-step fellowship of men and women, designed to meet the needs of those having addictive substance problems as well as a psychiatric disorder. For information call Donald Hume at 256-4995 or email dhume@nm.net

Sunshine Group Has been deactivated. For additional information please contact Mickey at 266-6042 or Maurene 232-3800

Survivors of Suicide (SOS) Meetings held second and last Monday of each month 4:00pm St. Paul Lutheran Church, 1100 Indian School Road NE (just west of University Blvd.) Contact Richard Schwoebel 858-0277 or St. Paul's Church 242-5942

Suicide Survivors Support Group - Santa Fe 6pm-7:30pm. 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month at The Timothy Fleming building 2500 Cerrillos Rd. across the street from the Artisan art supply store. The facilitators are Janet Schreiber, PhD, Ruth Housman, MA, Barbara LoLordo, LPCC, and Joan Murphy. For more information call Janet 577-8261, or Joan 476-7889

Albuquerque Recovery Inc. Group meets every Sunday 1:00pm at the Presbyterian Hospital, 1100 Central Ave SE in Southwestern Room A. For more information, call Larry at (505) 243-4514 in Albuquerque.

Recovery Inc. Meeting Every Sunday 1-2:30pm Presbyterian. Hospital at I-25 and Central in the SW meeting Room A. Go into the main entrance, take the elevator to the basement. The meeting room is beside the food court. Phone 299-0889.

Santa Fe Recovery Inc. Group meets every Tuesday at 7:00pm Temple Beth Shalom, 205 E Barcelona, in the blue classroom across from the parking lot. Call Sarah at (505) 988-2748. Visit www.recovery-inc.org

Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255)

Website for peer to peer help:
http://hospitals.unm.edu/UNMPC/PeerBridgers/PB_Index.shtml

The **Challenger** is published quarterly. Our focus is the promotion of mental health to the local community. We would like to hear from our readers. Ideas and articles are welcome. Published articles do not necessarily reflect the views of NAMI. We reserve the right to edit material.

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Additional resources are available on our website at www.nami.org/sites/albuquerque or email John Matsko at nami_abq@juno.com



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National Alliance for the Mentally Ill of Albuquerque

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Albuquerque, New Mexico 87110

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Detach this form and make checks payable to: **NAMI-Albuquerque**

6001 Marble NE, Albuquerque, NM 87110

Phone **(505) 256-0288** or e-mail **NAMI_ABQ@juno.com**

Name _____ Address _____

Phone _____ City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

e-mail _____ If you wish to receive NAMI urgent news or a .pdf version of our *Challenger* newsletter

Please Check one:

\$33. Individual/Family Annual Membership includes local, state, and national newsletters and library privileges.

\$3. Consumer Annual Membership.

Enclosed is a **donation of \$ _____** (NAMI-Albuquerque is a 501(c)(3) organization;
donations are tax deductible)

I prefer to donate and extend support as a non-member.